



"Enriching Lives"

## LA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION

Wednesday, July 19, 2023  
10:00 am – 12:00 pm

**Lloyd Taber-Marina del Rey Library**  
4533 Admiralty Way  
Marina del Rey, CA 90292



The Library Commission meeting will also be accessible to the public via video conference at the following satellite locations:

**San Fernando Library**  
217 N Maclay Ave  
San Fernando, CA 91340

**Sorensen Library**  
6934 Broadway Ave  
Whittier, CA 90606

### AGENDA

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Minutes**  
Approval of minutes from the regular meeting on May 17, 2023.
4. **LA County Library Report**  
Skye Patrick, LA County Library Director, will provide a brief update on Library activity.
5. **LA County Library Presentations**
  - a. Elizabeth Tanner and Steven Park, Assistant Library Administrators, Education & Engagement, will provide a presentation on the Library's efforts to develop systemwide faith-based programming.
  - b. Patricia Rivera, Library Administrator, South Region, and Crystal Hodges, Compton Library Manager, will provide a presentation on the Library's involvement in a multi-agency collaboration to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Hip Hop.
6. **Library Commission 2022-23 Annual Report**  
Recommendation by the Annual Report Ad Hoc Committee of the 2022-23 Library Commission Annual Report.
7. **Library Commission 2023 Election**  
The Ad Hoc Nominating Committee recommends voting on the 2023-2024 Election of Officers. Appointments to take effect immediately after the July 19, 2023, meeting.

- 8. Bylaws/Ordinance Ad Hoc Committee Update**  
Jim Allen, Chair of the Bylaws and Ordinance Revision Ad Hoc Committee, will provide an update on the committee's efforts to revise the Library Commission bylaws and put forth an ordinance.
- 9. 2022-23 Commission Goals and Objectives Reports**  
Subcommittee Chairs will provide an update on the efforts of their respective subcommittees toward their goals and objectives:
  - a. Commission Benchmarking
  - b. Education & Community Needs
  - c. Legislative Advocacy
  - d. Philanthropy
- 10. Library Foundation Report**  
Andrea Carroll, Executive Director of LA County Library Foundation will provide an update on the Library Foundation.
- 11. Public Comment** (*Limited to 3 minutes per speaker.*)  
Opportunity for members of the public to address the Library Commission items of interest within the jurisdiction of the Library Commission.
- 12. Commissioner Comments, Announcements, or New Business**  
Matters not posted on the agenda, to be discussed and (if requested), placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency or when need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda.

**Accommodations:** For ADA accommodations, such as a sign language interpreter or materials in an alternative format, call (562) 940-8462 (voice) or (562) 940-8477 (TTY), Monday - Thursday, 8 am - 5 pm, at least 6 days prior to the meeting date.

**Supporting Documentation:** Documents distributed to the Commission for this meeting will be made available for public inspection at the meeting location and satellite locations. Supporting documentation is available by appointment at Lawndale Library located at 14615 Burin Ave, Lawndale, California 90260, and may also be accessible on the LA County Library Commission website at [lacountylibrary.org/library-commission](https://lacountylibrary.org/library-commission). To make arrangements, please contact [librarycommission@library.lacounty.gov](mailto:librarycommission@library.lacounty.gov)

# LA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION

Wednesday, July 19, 2023

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.



*"Enriching Lives"*

**Primary Location:** Lloyd Taber-Marina del Rey Library

**Satellite Locations:** San Fernando Library and  
Sorensen Library



## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

### **Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, and Roll Call**

Chair Corey Calaycay called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Commissioner Lesser led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was initiated, and quorum was met.

**Commissioners in Attendance: (13)** Angelita Medina, Celeste Rodriguez, Corey Calaycay, David Lesser, Eric Alfaro, Jim Allen, José Luis Solache, Kim Ting Yu, Lisa Cleri Reale, Nancy Kuechle, Revé Gipson, Steve Croft, Tess Shih

**Library Staff in Attendance: (12)** Skye Patrick, Yolanda Pina, Deborah Anderson, Grace Reyes, Jesse Walker-Lanz, Samangi Skinner, Sara Keating, Elizabeth Tanner, Steven Park, Crystal Hodges, Patricia Rivera, Bryant Chow

**Guests in Attendance: (1)** Andrea Carroll, Executive Director, LA County Library Foundation

### **Approval of Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on May 17, 2023, was made by Commissioner Lesser and seconded by Commissioner Kuechle. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **LA County Library Report**

Skye Patrick, LA County Library Director, provided a brief update on Library activity. Patrick reviewed several issues:

#### **IMLS National Medal for Library and Museum Services**

- This is the highest honor that any Library can receive in the United States. It is a highly coveted award and acknowledges LA County Library's work for its communities. Patrick went to the White House for the presentation and stated that the award goes out to all Library team members as it celebrates the work being done to enhance the lives of those who use library services and demonstrates what is possible for libraries. She thanked the entire team and the Foundation for a donation for each library to celebrate their work.

### **State Budget Funding**

- Patrick thanked Commissioner Medina for her work on the Legislative Advocacy Subcommittee, which resulted in \$500,000 for library programs and services. Medina, Library's Assistant Director Debbie Anderson, and Chair Calaycay met with State Assemblymember Lisa Calderon.

### **Funding for Norwood Library**

- Patrick also reported that LA County Library received funding for Norwood Library in partnership with the 1<sup>st</sup> Supervisorial District toward refurbishment of the Library. This was a combination of funding from a federal earmark supported by Congresswoman Grace Napolitano and LA County Supervisor Hilda Solis' discretionary fund.

### **Supporting Frontline Library Staff**

- Patrick reported that the library lost some staff through attrition, and this has had an impact on how services are delivered, especially regarding administering programs. Staff is having to spend many more minutes with individuals as they enter the library with multiple issues. Leadership has faced the challenge of how to deal with this problem, without increasing staff, by utilizing different resources to supplement staffing and client needs. In partnership with the Internal Services Department, Library has embedded 82 Digital Assistants at 38 libraries to provide technological assistance to customers. They onboarded 30 Library Pages to assist with *Lunch at the Library*. They are backfilling 75 Library Associate vacancies and have onboarded 20 new professionals. There are special youth workers to come in and help with the Summer Discovery program. There is a plan to bring on Mental Health Promoters/Promotores through a LA County Department of Mental Health program to assist people visiting libraries who are experiencing significant mental health issues.

### **Security**

- Patrick stated that this is still a big issue as there has been a significant increase in the number of incidents over the years and they are getting bigger and more aggressive. In addition, LA County Library does not have close to the same levels of security as other systems. Library leadership is trying to mitigate the situation by increasing staffing and security services through one-time dollars from a State infrastructure grant, including embedding security cameras at all library locations. Patrick reiterated that they are serious about the safety of library staff and customers.

### **Law Enforcement Agency Partnerships**

- Patrick stated that LA County Probation closed Central Juvenile Hall, which housed the last remaining institutional library. Library staff helped move that library to Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall and the library is now up and running. They are in conversation with Probation about creating another library at Nidorf Juvenile Hall.

## **Strategic Planning**

- Patrick reminded Commissioners that this was meant to start three years ago and put on hold by the pandemic. Visioning sessions were held in the fall of 2022 and there was lots of community feedback and surveys from all the libraries. The largest and most resounding was the need for tutoring. The executive team is meeting with consultants and hopes to have a plan by end of calendar year.

## **Censorship**

- Patrick reported that censorship is on the rise with the number of book challenges in 2022 nearly double the number reported in 2021. She shared a chart that showed an increase in the number of unique titles challenged by year. She announced the launch of a program in October, in conjunction with 3<sup>rd</sup> District Supervisor Lindsey Horvath's Office, to make digital library cards available throughout the State of California, providing residents access to the entire collection. She stated that Brooklyn Public Library has a similar program which is successful. Discussions are underway with the Supervisor's Office and County leadership to assess the costs of the program and to finalize details.

## **Discussion**

- Commissioner Lesser asked how to best help staff regarding the censorship program and how to promote and raise awareness about the recent award that was received. Patrick shared that she is working with the Library Foundation to elevate the award and utilize it as a means for fundraising. She asked the Commission to elevate the award as an opportunity to raise funds, open doors, etc. Staff is working to update the website to have a donate button. The Foundation board is looking to increase its monthly and regular donors. Patrick reiterated that Commissioners could donate to the Foundation to elevate its work. Related to the censorship program, Patrick shared that the American Library Association has messaging that ideas should be free, and libraries are places that have free ideas.
- Commissioner Solache applauded the work on censorship stating that he is appalled by what's going on. He reiterated that Commissioners should be ambassadors regarding this issue.
- Commissioner Medina asked if any other libraries are doing what LA County is doing. Patrick responded that both Brooklyn and Seattle have implemented programs fighting book banning.

## **LA County Library Presentations**

### **Faith-Based Programming Presentation**

Elizabeth Tanner and Steven Park, Assistant Library Administrators, Education & Engagement, provided a presentation on the Library's efforts to develop systemwide faith-based programming. They shared slides including the following highlights:

- LA County Library has committed to a Faith Culture and Community Initiative which will provide inclusive programs to all patrons.

- This initiative is based on the iCount approach to remove barriers to equity at the Library.
- In February 2023, staff started its work by forming a faith-based programming workgroup of librarians and beginning conversations with community faith leaders.
- The goal is to welcome people of all cultures, faiths and beliefs with a programming plan that includes:
  - Youth Services creating a series of culturally inclusive programs for children and teens around faith-based celebrations and traditions; and
  - Adult & Digital Services developing systemwide programs starting with virtual programs that include conversations with community faith leaders and academics around a variety of inclusive topics on faith, community and culture.

### **Discussion**

- Commissioner Cleri Reale commended the staff on this initiative and asked which religious leaders and interfaith organizations are at the table convened as there needs to be support from all religions for this to succeed. A list will be provided in the materials sent to the Commissioners.
- Commissioner Solache stated that he loves this program and there are many faith communities that will be able to engage with their local libraries. He added that interfaith councils work but if they don't have buy-in they can go south really fast, so buy-in is critical to success.
- Library Director Skye Patrick responded that the initiative is lofty and aspirational but necessary. She added that LA County Library has collections representing different religions and that this initiative is just an extension of that collection. Staff is trying to focus on educational aspect and not preaching or trying to recruit anyone.
- Commissioner Rodriguez stated that this represents an exciting opportunity and some of these conversations can be very difficult. She asked Patrick how the library staff is being prepared to have these conversations. Patrick responded that a script and FAQs will be provided to address any concerns and that this is something that is done with every issue that has potential for controversy.
- Commissioner Kuechle commented that this could be a memorable program with people sharing things like different wedding traditions for different religions.

### **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Hip Hop Celebration Presentation**

Patricia Rivera, Library Administrator, South Region, and Crystal Hodges, Compton Library Community Manager, provided a presentation on the Library's involvement in a multi-agency collaboration to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Hip Hop. She shared slides that are summarized below:

- Through IMLS funding, a Hip Hop Collaborative was formed with 50 partners across the country.
- The program was spearheaded by Queens Public Library and funding has been provided to each partner.
- LA County received \$6,500, in addition to \$10,000 from 2<sup>nd</sup> District Supervisor Holly Mitchell and \$5,000 from LA County Arts and Culture.

- The program is broken into two tracks:
  - Track 1: How hip hop migrated across the US and how it reflects the uniqueness of its community. This was done through programs, author talks and presentations. LA County Library scheduled programs every month.
  - Track 2: The influence and impact of hip hop on other cultures, media, the economy, fashion, visual arts, and social justice through a two-day summit that will include panel discussions that will be live streamed.

### **Discussion**

- Commissioner Medina asked about potential sponsors of this project, citing Tam's Burgers as a possible option.
- Commissioner Cleri Reale also asked about whether funding is needed. Library Director Patrick stated that the collaborative has now ended but there is certainly potential for more programming.
- Commissioner Lesser asked to what extent will there be interest from foundations for this type of programming. Patrick stated that there is star power in LA but when they started the DJ program, there was no real interest. Staff needs contacts.
- Commissioner Shih asked about Track 2 and if there are going to be watch parties for the Summit. She also asked about repackaging and marketing of the programs in Track 1. Crystal Hodges replied that the Library's marketing team is helping with replays and ads for programs, and they do have content and pictures to provide Queens Public Library so they can archive it. Queens will stream the Summit. There will also be a future showcase with kids.

### **Library Commission 2022-23 Annual Report**

Commissioner Cleri Reale reminded Commissioners about the requirement to submit an Annual Report to LA County Commission Services. She thanked each Commissioner who reviewed and submitted edits and suggestions to the draft that was distributed. She presented a motion to approve the Annual Report, contingent on edits that were made being finalized. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lesser and unanimously approved.

### **Library Commission 2023 Election**

Ad Hoc Nominating Committee Chair Jim Allen reviewed the process that was undertaken to secure nominations for the 2023 election. He thanked members of the Ad Hoc Nominating Committee: Commissioners Gipson and Williams. He stated that no new nominations were made so the slate remains the same:

Chair: Corey Calaycay  
 Vice Chair: James Allen  
 Secretary: Lisa Cleri Reale

These appointments will take effect immediately after the July meeting. Allen stated that all three nominees are grateful for the support of the Commission, but urged others to consider running in the future, especially the newer commissioners.

Commissioner Medina introduced a motion to approve the 2023-24 slate of Officers. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Solache and unanimously approved.

### **Bylaws/Ordinance Ad Hoc Committee Update**

Jim Allen, Chair of the Bylaws and Ordinance Revision Ad Hoc Committee, provided an update on the committee's efforts to revise the Library Commission bylaws and put forth an ordinance. A draft was submitted, and a meeting was held with the Executive Office to discuss the process and timeline. County leadership is supportive of the ordinance being passed. Commission Services is currently finalizing its Sunset Review Report and will then reach out to the Library Commission and Library leadership to go over the recommendations, which will go through the LA County Audit Committee. Once that is completed, a recommendation will be made regarding the ordinance. According to Allen, it could be on the December 2023 Board agenda.

### **2022-23 Commission Goals and Objectives Reports**

Subcommittee Chairs provided updates on the efforts of their respective subcommittees toward their goals and objectives:

#### **Commission Benchmarking**

- Commissioner Shih reported that they had set up interviews with Seattle, San Francisco, and other libraries and received survey answers from Toronto. They learned a lot in terms of board member roles and responsibilities and what's going on at libraries. They will finalize a report to share with the Commission and staff. Commissioner Allen stated that each interview is fascinating, and they are interested in LA as well.

#### **Education & Community Needs**

- Commissioner Kuechle met with Debbie Anderson, Library's Assistant Director over Education & Engagement, and is up-to-date on library programs. Kuechle reiterated how important it is to let the world know how great LA County Library is. Social media is a terrific venue for this, and she regularly reposts library programs and activities and encouraged everyone to do so.

#### **Legislative Advocacy**

- Commissioner Medina reviewed the progress of this subcommittee over the last three years, reflecting the very strategic approach of linking funding requests to work that is relevant to individual legislative districts. The lessons learned from the start of the process really helped to strengthen the subcommittee's approach and the result can be seen in the recently earmarked \$500,000 State funding. Medina referred to the importance of capital projects and how they are relevant to electeds, so this will be one of the focus areas for the subcommittee. Any suggestions should be shared with Medina.
- Library Director Patrick responded that she loves the coordinated approach and lessons learned approach. She reiterated that the bigger need is ongoing funding, but she agreed that capital projects provide political collateral and that there are plenty of buildings to be updated.



## **Philanthropy**

- Because of time constraints, Commissioner Cleri Reale ceded her time to Andrea Carroll, Executive Director of the Library Foundation, who provided an update. However, Cleri Reale reminded everyone that support of the Foundation is critical.

### **Library Foundation Report**

Andrea Carroll reviewed the 2022 Impact Report that was sent to the Commission as it reflects the Foundation's progress. She thanked the commissioners who have already donated but pointed out that it's still only 50% of the Commission who donate. Carroll shared some exciting news, including a \$50,000 per year three-year commitment by Seattle Seahawks linebacker, Uchenna Nwosu, who grew up in Compton and wants to give back. The Foundation is currently searching for a sponsor for the Library's annual bookmark contest. The Foundation is also building its board and still has gaps, especially in Supervisorial Districts 2 and 4.

Chair Calaycay thanked all the subcommittee chairs and members for their work and encouraged commissioners who are not yet on a subcommittee to join one.

Commissioner Rodriguez volunteered to join the Education Subcommittee and Commissioner Lesser volunteered to join the Philanthropy Subcommittee. Commissioner Solache will return to the Legislative Advocacy Subcommittee.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Commissioner Comments/New Business**

Chair Calaycay announced that the September Commission meeting will be held at Agoura Hills Library, with satellite locations at AC Bilbrew Library and Sunkist Library in La Puente.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:01 p.m.