



"Enriching Lives"

LA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION

Wednesday, November 15, 2023
10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Angelo M. Iacoboni Library
4990 Clark Ave
Lakewood, CA 90712



As members of the Library Commission have requested this meeting be made accessible via video conference, the following satellite locations will be also available to the public:

El Camino Real Library
4264 E Whittier Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90023

La Crescenta Library
2809 Foothill Blvd
La Crescenta, CA 91214

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Minutes**
Approval of minutes from the regular meeting on September 20, 2023.
4. **LA County Library Report**
Skye Patrick, LA County Library Director, will provide a brief update on Library activity.
5. **LA County Library Presentation**
Jesse Walker-Lanz, Assistant Director, Public Services, and Amy Crow, Assistant Library Administrator, will provide a brief presentation on the Library's *Delete the Divide* Digital Assistants.
6. **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

7. 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.

8. 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.

Those who wish to provide public comment, may also provide written public comment via email to librarycommission@library.lacounty.gov. Deadline to submit written public comment is Tuesday, November 14, 2023, by 5:00 pm. Please include the agenda item and meeting date in your correspondence. All correspondence received shall become part of the official record.

9. 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 Commission meeting, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency or when the need to take action arose after posting the agenda.

10. Adjournment**Upcoming Meetings:**

Wednesday, January 17, 2024
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Location pending

Wednesday, March 20, 2024
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Location pending

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 Bruin Ave, Lawndale, California 90260, and may also be accessible on the LA County Library Commission website at lacountylibrary.org/library-commission. To make arrangements, please contact librarycommission@library.lacounty.gov.



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Primary Location: Angelo M. Iacoboni Library
Satellite Locations: El Camino Real Library and
La Crescenta Library



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

Chair Corey Calaycay called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. Commissioner Croft led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was initiated and quorum was met. Chair Calaycay introduced Sarah Comfort, Library Manager of Angelo M. Iacoboni Library, who welcomed the Commission and announced a tour after the meeting. Calaycay thanked Commissioners Croft and Solache for donating refreshments.

Commissioners in Attendance: (14) James Allen, Jonathan Beutler, Corey Calaycay, Steve Croft, Rick Crosby, Göran Eriksson, Nancy Kuechle, Angelita Medina, Mary Mendoza, Lisa Cleri Reale, Celeste Rodriguez, Tess Shih, Jose Luis Solache, Kim Ting Yu

Library Staff in Attendance: (8) Skye Patrick, Yolanda Pina, Debbie Anderson, Grace Reyes, Jesse Walker-Lanz, Samangi Skinner, Sara Keating, Amy Crow.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on September 20, 2023 was made by Commissioner Eriksson and seconded by Commissioner Croft. The Motion was unanimously approved.

LA County Library Report

Skye Patrick, LA County Library Director provided an update on several key programs and initiatives summarized below.

- Strategic Planning
 - Patrick reminded everyone of the previous year's work collecting information from library users and non-users via several community visioning sessions. Library staff were also engaged as were the Commissioners and the Board of Supervisors. A consultant is being utilized and there are twenty-one individuals on the Design Team. The goal is to have a four-year plan in place by January 2024.

- Summer Tutoring Pilot
 - There was a Board Motion to establish a tutoring program for the summer of 2024. Library staff had heard in the visioning sessions that the single greatest challenge was helping their young children with educational needs. The need is so high that the program will be expanded to 36 of the highest need libraries. The program is comprised of two sessions over the summer. Weeks one to four involve tutoring grades 1 to 3 and the second session involves grades 4 to 6. High quality tutoring is a priority, so staff is exploring options about using a tutoring company or hiring teachers, professors, or student workers. Staff also sent out letters to all school districts and Board Presidents and Superintendents to explore partnerships. There was also a meeting with LA County Office of Education Superintendent Debra Duardo and possible unallocated funds from LACOE are also being explored. There is no funding attached to the motion so Library staff will pursue private funding.

- Assemblymember Calderon Funding
 - Patrick recognized Commissioners Calaycay and Medina for their support in arranging this meeting as it led to \$500,000 in funding. She also acknowledged Debbie Anderson who put together the proposal and attended the meeting.

- LA County Department of Economic Opportunity Partnership (DEO)
 - LA County Library has a history of partnerships related to youth work programs. At this time, the goal is trying to onboard 60 youth, ages 14-24, to gain work experience and participate in the program and unlock economic opportunities. Patrick and Debbie Anderson are working with DEO Director Kelly Lo Bianco to re-launch this program. They are hoping to bring in master level teachers to work with them.

- Public Defender Expungement Partnership
 - Patrick and Jesse Walker-Lanz met with the LA County Public Defender's Office, and they are interested in supporting libraries and providing programs via their mobile unit – offering informational sessions to the public such as providing records expungement support, having low level felony charges reduced to misdemeanors, and others. These workshops will take place at one or two locations per Supervisorial District. This partnership supports both LA County's racial equity goals and LA County Library's goals. The program will launch by Spring 2024.

- One Book, One County
 - This program will launch in summer of 2024. It will bring together multiple library jurisdictions here in LA County including the City of LA system that will collectively host community reading programs. The book chosen by a committee of all participating jurisdictions is *"The Vanishing Half by Brit Bennett."*

- The hope is that this will open a door to other library systems and spark interest with other cities to support a single title and single author every year. The criteria for the book is adult fiction by a living author who is a current or previous resident of CA and a book that affirms the diversity and cultures of LA County.
- The committee has reached out to Bennett to see if the author is interested in participating at an event in July 2024 – possibly at Grand Park.
- Little Libraries
 - Patrick referred to these libraries as unsung community engagement heroes. There have been two little libraries on Catalina Island for years and now it's expanded to five more throughout the county. The Library Foundation is supporting this program by creating sponsorship opportunities to continue to add more locations.
- Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL)
 - This program provides free books to children from birth to age 5 through DPIL and the CA State Library. DPIL works with local nonprofits who pay for half and the State Library pays for the other half. The State Library sent out a request to all Libraries who shared the program with their Friends groups and others but there is a need for funding.
 - Commissioner Cleri Reale suggested approaching the LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment which is a coalition of funders interested in early learning. Commissioner Medina suggested the Kaiser Family Foundation.
- Carson Library Reopening
 - Patrick reported that at long last, this library reopening event is scheduled for Friday December 8 from 1 to 3:00 p.m. and she hopes Commissioners will attend. The renovation includes new furniture, a new floor plan and circulation desk as well as more available seating and three new study rooms with audio visual and white boards.
- Questions/Comments:
 - Commissioner Cleri Reale shared that Families in Schools is launching a campaign focused on Reading by 9 – as third grade reading scores are well below where they should be. She suggested that library staff reach out to FIS President Yolie Aguilar about the tutoring program as FIS may already have a curriculum in place that can be used. Debbie Anderson responded that they had talked to Aguilar a while back but can re-connect.
 - Commissioner Medina asked for clarification of where tutoring is most needed. Patrick responded that the need is all over the County.
 - Commissioner Mendoza stated that it's always exciting to hear the great work that LA County Library is doing and asked whether there is a plan to include high school students in the tutoring program as they also need remedial help before

college. Patrick responded not at this time but there is a separate project with the Community Colleges that she will share in the coming months.

- Commissioner Shih asked about reaching out to corporate sponsors regarding the Little Libraries. Patrick stated that they have not yet done so but she will coordinate with the Library Foundation. The estimated cost for Little Libraries is \$7,000.
- Commissioner Solache stated that the Lynwood School District implemented a Little Library program for elementary schools and suggested that school districts can be potential partners.
- Commissioner Medina asked if Commissioners could donate books for the Little Libraries and Patrick responded in the affirmative and suggested bringing books to the Grand Park location.
- Commissioner Croft asked about the criteria for donated books – adult books or children’s books or both? Jesse Walker-Lanz replied that they accept all types but only children’s books for those Little Libraries near playgrounds.

LA County Library Presentation

Jesse Walker-Lanz, Assistant Director, Public Services, and Amy Crow, Assistant Library Administrator, provided a brief presentation on the Library’s *Delete the Divide* Digital Assistants. Crow shared slides about this program. Following are some highlights:

- They heard from staff that one of their most beloved programs is the Digital Assistants Program (DA). The DA is only one component of a larger program from LA County Library IT.
- The program is meeting a huge need. In LA County 265,000 households are without home computers and fewer than 10% of households lack connectivity.
- LA County Library hires interns who become digital assistants to provide digital literacy training and tech support to library users. LA County Library has been providing tech support for years, but it has evolved over the years and faces increasing challenges.
- People come to their local library with all kinds of questions and many of them are technology related demands. This has been a challenge. Many bring their own devices. Staff is trying hard to keep up.
- In April 2023 LA County Library rolled out the DA project with 35 digital assistants assigned to 20 libraries. Currently there are 125 digital assistants working in 42 libraries in all 5 Supervisorial Districts in areas with the lowest home internet subscription rates or adjacent to these areas. The program has logged over 2300 customer interactions with the most popular being printing and photocopying, etc.
- Crow shared examples of the type of work digital assistants are doing including helping library users search for critical items such as housing. She commented that the Library Managers and the customers really appreciate the digital assistants, and she encouraged the Commissioners to visit libraries and see them in action.
- There has been some ARPA funding for this, but ongoing funding will be needed in the future.

- Skye Patrick commented that this program not only meets the needs of the community but also helps team members who are short staffed.
 - Commissioner Cleri Reale asked when the current ARPA funding will expire. Patrick responded that there is no specific sunset date.
 - Commissioner Medina commented that this is a great program and really addresses equity issues. She plans on visiting to see it in action.
 - Commissioner Kuechle stated that this issue had come up during the Education Sub-Committee work – specifically related to seniors – so it’s nice to see it working so well.

2022-23 Commission Goals and Objectives Reports

Commission Benchmarking

- Sub-Committee Chair Shih reported on progress of creating a comparative report to share with the Commission. The report will include items such as library budget and revenue streams, internal operations, commission goals, support of library foundations, etc. from those libraries interviewed. This report will be shared with the Commission once it’s complete. It’s currently being circulated among sub-committee members.
- Commissioner Allen stated that the work had been a great experience and that the one thing that cropped up all the time is how passionate everyone they spoke to is about libraries.

Education & Community Needs

- Sub-Committee Chair Kuechle met with Debbie Anderson about the tutoring program, and they came up with some ideas for funding. Angie came up with ideas about funding and K pointed them to educators.
- They also discussed the faith-based program and Commissioner Rodriguez raised the incident at San Fernando Library. Rodriguez stated that she proudly serves as Mayor of the City of San Fernando as well as a member of the LA County Library Commission. She added that it’s very important to talk about safety at libraries and how libraries are selected to receive various programming. She stated that in San Fernando, the faith-based event divided the community rather than raising awareness and Rodriguez expressed concern about the lack of conversation prior to the event.
- Library Director Patrick responded that the program at the San Fernando Library was focused on inclusion and censorship and banning of books. She reminded everyone that Supervisor Horvath (SD3) had been instrumental in initiating the Books Unbanned program that provides free access to information and books. This is an issue of great importance to the Supervisor, so she responded when several community organizations reached out about having more LGBTQ program representation at San Fernando. The Supervisor suggested implementing the Drag Story Hour, which is not a new program but is a successful one. Staff at the San Fernando Library were approached and expressed some concerns that were brought to the SD Board office but, as Patrick stated, it is unclear if these concerns were shared with the Supervisor. The result was a pretty significant protest where they rallied at the front and back entrance of the library.

Nobody was harmed but the performer was blocked from entering and the library team was really shaken. Patrick added that she wants to make clear to the Commission that there may be other programs in the future that some communities oppose but as an institution of learning and access, LA County Library must focus on the communities at large. She reiterated that library leadership did engage local library staff and shared that feedback with the Supervisor's office.

- Addressing Commissioner Rodriguez's concern about safety, Patrick announced a new policy about these potentially controversial programs focused on what type of procedures are put in place to ensure the safety of people wanting to utilize libraries especially those from the LGBTQ community. Patrick will bring the policy to the Commission once it is finalized.
 - Chair Calaycay stated that he was sorry to hear about this incident, but this type of protest is also happening at City level meetings as well.
 - Commissioner Croft asked if the new policy would coordinate with local governments and City Managers who can coordinate with law enforcement to support safety efforts. Patrick responded in the affirmative.
 - Commissioner Eriksson emphasized the importance of local agencies being informed and shared that his council meeting had been "zoom bombed."
 - Commissioner Allen referred to the incident in Lancaster where a group called the Satanic Temple requested a room at the library for an after-school program. He alerted Patrick and her team, and he shared that they handled it very well. Patrick responded that staff researched the group, and it is a legitimate community organization that promotes benevolence and does indeed provide after-school programming. They shared these facts and the library policy of allowing community groups to use space to any concerned community members.

Legislative Advocacy

- Sub-Committee Chair Medina shared that they had a meeting to identify Library priorities and how the legislative community can support them. As the tutoring program is a priority, they spent time discussing potential strategies and how to approach soliciting funds from elected officials. They will tighten up the strategy and approach targeted legislators.
- She stated that they need support from the Commission to identify any relationships they might have that Commissioners Medina and Solache do not have. They need doors opened.

Philanthropy Committee

- Sub-Committee Chair Cleri Reale stated that Library Foundation Andrea Carroll is meeting with a donor and sends her apologies. Cleri Reale reported that the reception scheduled to discuss the Books Unbanned program was cancelled due to the small numbers as it was a very busy time of year for many funders. However, the invitation resulted in several potential funding connections. Carroll and Cleri Reale and others will

follow up with these funders. In addition, the David Bohnett Foundation expressed interest in a potential matching pledge.

- Cleri Reale reminded everyone of the upcoming Giving Tuesday and the end of year appeal for the Library Foundation and encouraged 100% participation. She reiterated that there is no shortage of information, sound bites or data about the power of LA County Library as both the library's marketing department and the Library Foundation post social media messages that can be shared with others.

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. He announced that this work is being presented to the LA County Audit Committee – possibly the December agenda. He thanked Samangi Skinner for staying on top of the scheduling. Allen will keep everyone posted.

- Commissioner Cleri Reale thanked Commissioner Allen for staying committed to this issue for a very long time and never giving up.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Comments, Announcements, or New Business

- Commissioner Medina attended one of the sessions in South Whittier about how to be a DJ. She commented that all but one of the participants was female and the instructor was also female and that it was really cool to see this. She thanked the Library staff for initiating the program.

Adjournment

Chair Calaycay thanked everyone and wished everyone a happy holiday season with a reminder of the meeting on January 17, 2024. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.