



"Enriching Lives"

LA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION

Wednesday, March 20, 2024
10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Hawthorne Library
12700 Grevillea Ave
Hawthorne, CA 90250



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

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

Sunkist Library
840 N Puente Ave
La Puente, CA 91746

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**
2. **New Commissioners**
Welcome new Library Commissioners, Nicole Payton and Ruth M. Low.
3. **Roll Call**
4. **Minutes**
Approval of minutes from the regular meeting on January 17, 2024.
5. **Selection of Interim Commission Secretary**
Recommendation and appointment of interim secretary.
6. **LA County Library Report**
Skye Patrick, LA County Library Director, will provide a brief update on Library activity.
7. **LA County Library Presentation**
Samangi Skinner, Executive Services Manager, will provide a brief presentation on the Library's new Strategic Plan.
8. **Commission Goals and Objectives**
The subcommittee chairs will provide a definitive report on the 2022-23 goals and objectives, and the commission will identify its goals and subcommittees for 2024-25:
 - a. Commission Benchmarking
 - b. Education & Community Needs
 - c. Legislative Advocacy
 - d. Philanthropy

- 9. Library Commission 2023-24 Annual Report**
Discussion of the 2023-24 Library Commission Annual Report and formation of the Annual Report Ad Hoc Committee to prepare the report by the end of the fiscal year.
- 10. Selection of Nominating Committee Members**
Discussion and selection of the Commission's 2024 Nominating Ad Hoc Committee Members to initiate the process of selecting nominees and voting on Commission Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. Voting will take place in May 2024 and appointments will be effective July 2024.
- 11. 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.
- 12. 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, March 19, 2024, 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.
- 13. 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 act arose after posting the agenda.
- 14. Adjournment**

Upcoming Meetings:

Wednesday, May 15, 2024
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Montebello Library
Satellites: A C Bilbrew Library &
San Fernando Library

Wednesday, July 17, 2024
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
West Hollywood Library
Satellites: A C Bilbrew Library & Sunkist
Library

Accommodations: For ADA accommodation, 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: Hawthorne Library

Satellite Locations: San Fernando Library and
Sunkist Library



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

Chair Corey Calaycay called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Roll call was initiated, and quorum was met.

Commissioners in Attendance: (15) Angelita Medina, Corey Calaycay, David Lesser, Eric Alfaro James Allen, Jonathan Beutler, Joy Williams, Kim Ting Yu, Mary Mendoza, Nancy Kuechle, Nicole Payton, Rick Crosby, Ruth M. Lowe, Steve Croft, Tess Shih.

Library Staff in Attendance: (7) Skye Patrick, Yolanda Pina, Cliff Cotillier, Debbie Anderson, Grace Reyes, Samangi Skinner, Sara Keating.

Commission Business

With a request to fill the vacant Secretary position, Commissioner Ruth M. Lowe volunteered to fill the vacancy. A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Lesser and seconded by Commissioner Croft. The motion was approved with a majority vote.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on January 17, 2024 was made by Commissioner Kuechle and seconded by Commissioner Croft. The Motion was approved with a majority vote and 2 abstentions.

LA County Library Report

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

- *Smart Start*

The Library has unveiled *Smart Start*, a comprehensive early learning initiative available at all 85 locations, aimed at promoting early education, parental involvement, and community engagement. The program consolidates the Library's early literacy efforts, including updated Smarty Pants Storytime for school readiness with a focus on cultural awareness and equity, guided by

experts from Pollyanna, Inc. and Los Angeles Educational Partners. Smart Start features a dedicated space in each library with resources for children under five and their caregivers, offering activities ranging from art to STEAM, and is specifically designed to evolve with the needs of LA County's diverse communities.

- Primary Election
 - The Library collaborated with the Registrar-Recorder's Office to facilitate the Primary Election by utilizing its locations. LA County's extended voting period enabled registered voters to cast their ballots at 5 libraries for 11 days, 2 libraries for 4 days, and provided 24-hour ballot drop boxes at 48 library sites. Additionally, the Library supported election logistics by offering parking spaces at 4 locations for ballot and material handling. Comprehensive vote center details and election resources were made accessible through a dedicated page on the Library's website, which also featured links and guidance for casting votes effectively.
- Tax Assistance Resource Program
 - The Library offered free tax preparation assistance this tax season, in collaboration with CSUN VITA and Cal Poly Pomona. This valuable service was available at both the San Fernando Library and Sunkist Library. With the help of trained students from Cal Poly Pomona and volunteers from CSUN VITA, over 250 community members have been assisted with preparing and e-filing their taxes. The initiative will be available until April 12th.
- Trailblazers in Conversation
 - The Library recently engaged in a conversation with Emily Hanford about the literacy crisis and the science of reading. The next event is on Thursday, March 21, at 6pm via Zoom, where Director Patrick will discuss transformative leadership with County CEO Fesia Davenport.
- The Generations Project
 - The Generations Project, a collaboration between the UCLA Radical Librarianship Institute and funded by the Mellon Foundation, is led by the Library in conjunction with its Cultural Resource Centers, Teen Culture Clubs, and Youth Services team to create *The Generations Project: LA County Community Histories*. The project has already hosted four events where teens interviewed elders to document their stories. These narratives will be compiled into a book, with the project's completion targeted for July 2024.
- *Delete the Divide* Digital Assistants
 - During the November presentation, Library highlighted the success of the ISD's Delete the Divide Digital Assistants program in LA County libraries, which has placed 179 digital assistants across 44 libraries to help bridge the technology gap

for over 2,500 customers since April 2023. Library staff, overwhelmed by tech-related inquiries, have found the assistance invaluable. However, concerns about the program's future were raised due to its funding set to end in December 2024, with ISD currently seeking alternative funding sources to continue this beneficial service.

- President Biden at Culver City Library
 - On February 21st, Culver City Julian Dixon Library had the honor of hosting President Joe Biden as he delivered remarks on his student loan forgiveness plan. Despite the short notice of just four days, the Library's team from Marketing, Facilities, IT, and Admin worked tirelessly to prepare for the event. The President's address was particularly significant for LA County residents burdened by student loans. The successful event underscored the strong partnership between the Library and the White House.

There were no questions or comments.

LA County Library Presentation

Samangi Skinner, Executive Services Manager, provided a brief presentation on the Library's new Strategic Plan.

- The Library has completed its strategic planning process for a new 5-year plan, set to guide the institution through 2028. This comprehensive plan was shaped by extensive stakeholder engagement, including community feedback sessions across Supervisorial Districts, surveys in multiple languages, staff input during development days, and consultations with key figures such as the Board of Supervisors and Library Commissioners. A Design Team of diverse library staff analyzed this feedback to craft a plan that aligns with both the County's objectives and the Library Director's vision, now in the final stages of preparation for public release.
- The Library has unveiled a new mission statement, "LA County Library belongs to our communities and serves as a portal to learn, grow, and succeed," alongside core values emphasizing trust, hope, leadership, and connection.
 - "Belonging to Our Communities," aims to establish each library as a community hub that is part of a larger, resource-sharing ecosystem. The initiative seeks to make libraries welcoming and safe spaces for literacy and learning by co-creating experiences with the communities they serve, informed by local needs and values. To support this, the Library has requested additional security and social worker roles in its budget, with objectives to cultivate collaborative relationships, engage with community groups for local insights, and leverage staff input to ensure safety and inclusivity for all.

- "Advancing Our Partnerships," focuses on leveraging the Library's role as a community hub to tap into the extensive support network of the county. The aim is to enhance the impact of services available to residents by coordinating with various resources and programs. Objectives under this priority include making intentional use of physical spaces for partner services, building and maintaining programs that align with the Library's goals, and adopting intergenerational and lifespan approaches in seeking and evaluating partnerships.
- "Rising to Our Potential," is centered on the professional development and empowerment of Library staff. Recognizing the diversity and talent within the workforce, this priority aims to foster an environment of continuous learning, knowledge sharing, and process improvement to enhance effectiveness and impact. Objectives include strengthening and modernizing internal knowledge management with increased accessibility, enhancing transparency and efficiency in business processes, and empowering staff career development through mentorship, peer learning, and cross-training opportunities.
- "Telling Our Story," a continuation from the previous strategic plan due to its vital importance. The Library recognizes that many are still unaware of the vast resources available at their public library. To address this, the term "neighbors" has been adopted to reflect the relationship between the Library and the community, moving away from terms like patrons, customers, or users. This priority aims to enhance social connections and communicate the value of libraries, particularly the LA County Library, in enriching lives. Objectives include showcasing the Library as a driver of quality of life, cultivating new advocates and ambassadors, and securing support from officials and funders to achieve a sustainable budget through effective storytelling.
- The next steps for the Library involve the communication and implementation of the new Strategic Plan. The plan has been shared with staff and Library Commissioners, and presentations to Board Deputies and other County Departments are forthcoming. Efforts are underway to finalize the document for public release on the Library's website. Implementation will include forming dedicated task forces from the staff to address the four Strategic Priorities, with a commitment to transparency about progress towards these goals. Over the coming years, the Library will evaluate and refine its strategies, assessing impact areas and expanding successful programs. By 2028, the Library aims to celebrate its achievements and use this experience to guide future strategic planning initiatives.
- Questions/Comments:
 - Commissioner Payton asked for clarity on how the mental health workers' roles contribute services.
 - Assistant Skinner clarified that the program involves mental health ambassadors from the Department of Mental Health conducting targeted outreach that is

linguistically and culturally relevant. Previously, there was a partnership with the same department to place licensed social workers in libraries to support Library staff and provide resources to those in need. Efforts are underway to reinstate this service post-COVID or alternatively, to secure a dedicated social worker for the libraries.

2022-23 Commission Goals and Objectives Reports

Commission Benchmarking

- Subcommittee Chair Shih presented a draft report to the Commission, emphasizing its alignment with the strategic plan of the Library and its role in comparing public libraries across North America. The report includes interviews with major libraries, analysis of governance, budget, operations, and promotion of library use, with a focus on fostering equitable access and community success. Feedback is requested from the Commission members, with the goal to finalize the report for the next meeting and share the findings with partner libraries who have shown interest.

The following comments and questions were offered at the conclusion of this presentation:

- Commission Chair Calaycay acknowledged the value of having a focused discussion on the Commission's goals and objectives, especially with new Commissioners joining. Chair Calaycay suggested that while the current meeting may offer a brief opportunity for reflection, a more dedicated session should be planned to allow for in-depth conversation without staff presentations. The idea is to evaluate the progress of current subcommittees and initiatives and to make strategic decisions moving forward. Recommendation to adjust future meetings to accommodate different schedules, ensuring all members can participate in a meaningful discussion on the Commission's direction.
- Commissioner Lesser commented about the identification and implementation of best practices observed during the study conducted by the benchmarking committee. Commissioner Lesser expressed interest in adding this information to future discussions, suggesting that it could enhance the value of the committee's significant work. Additionally, Commissioner Lesser pointed out the importance of recognizing who the decision-makers are within the County Library system and understanding the jurisdiction over these decisions, implying that this knowledge could contribute to more effective outcomes for the committee's efforts.
- Commissioner Shih acknowledges the feedback and notes that while the Commission does not have governance authority, identifying best practices for consideration is beneficial. They suggest that a closer look at the report reveals standout practices related to internal operations, library use and promotion, diversity and inclusion (DI), and foundation work.

- Commissioner Vice Chari Allen added that governance structures vary significantly, which limits uniformity, but there are still opportunities for the Commission to support library systems through programmatic involvement and engagement in activities like story times and book programs. They propose further research into these areas to guide future discussions and enhance the Commission's role in supporting the library system.
- Director Patrick responded to the report and reminded the Commissioners of the nomenclature used for different library support groups. They note that while some groups are called Commissioners, many advisory groups are simply referred to as library advisory boards, which can be confusing. The speaker suggests that it's important to distinguish between these entities, as their roles and authority differ—advisory boards may not have the same governance power as a board of trustees. This distinction is crucial for understanding what each group can do and what they have control over. Director Patrick believes that clarifying these nuances could help address underlying questions about the nature and scope of the Commission's work and its relationship to other library support structures.
- Commissioner Payton remarked on the unique aspects of different library systems, particularly the city and county structures, and how these might influence governance requesting the importance of understanding if the libraries involved have subcommittees, what their roles are, and if there are any best practices or structural insights that could be applied to their own Commission's work.
- Commissioner Shih acknowledged the comments and feedback reflecting on the work to be completed by this subcommittee to include filtering through best practices, clarifying nomenclature differences between advisory boards and commissions, and investigating the structure and impact of subcommittees in other systems.

Education & Community Needs

- Subcommittee Chair Kuechle shared that they recently discussed the tutoring program with Library Assistant Director, Debbie Anderson, and plans to assist by promoting it, especially in school districts where awareness needs to be raised. They expect to receive a list of these districts from Library, which will also be seeking young people to help with tutoring. The committee sees an opportunity for the Commission to be instrumental in spreading the word.

There were no questions or comments.

Legislative Advocacy

- Subcommittee Chair Medina mentioned that the original goal of the committee was to secure external funding outside of the chief administrative office, which they

successfully achieved last year by securing \$500,000 from Assembly Member Lisa Calderon's district.

- Commissioner Medina remarked that this year presents a challenge due to a tight state budget and the likelihood of unfunded programs. Despite this, they have submitted funding proposals to Assembly Members Anthony Rendon and Mike Fong, who represent underserved areas in terms of funding and programs within the county. While there has been difficulty connecting with Rendon's office, Commissioner Solache has gone to Sacramento to reach out directly to both offices.
- The committee remains hopeful about securing funds despite the state budget constraints.
- Subcommittee Chair Medina, invites new members to join the legislative advocacy committee and encourages them to identify potential legislators, including state assembly members, senators, or congressional representatives, who could support Library initiatives.

The following comments and questions were offered at the conclusion of this presentation:

- Commission Chair Calaycay emphasized that while there are only two official members of the committee, all commissioners effectively serve on it due to their collective responsibility to engage with legislators covering the LA County Library region. Chair Calaycay highlighted the importance of leveraging personal connections with legislators to explore interest in Library support and to identify those particularly supportive of libraries as potential advocates for funding opportunities and beneficial legislation.

Philanthropy

- Commission Chair Calaycay reported of the importance in demonstrating broad-based support for the foundation, particularly as it competes surrounding library jurisdictions. The concerted effort to build up the foundation by showcasing the positive developments within the library system and confirming support from key groups, including the Commission itself.
- Commission Chair Calaycay reminded Commissioners of the significance of making contributions to the Library Foundation, noting that several members have already made their 2024 contributions and thanking them. Chair Calaycay encouraged those who haven't yet contributed to do so, stressing that no amount is too small and that 100% participation from the Commission would be impactful. The goal is not just to have a record of contribution but also to reflect genuine engagement and support for the library system.
- Commissioner Payton recommended using QR codes at Library locations to allow for easy contributions to the Library Foundation.
- Commissioner Payton volunteered to join the Philanthropy Subcommittee.

There were no questions or comments.

Library Commission 2023-23 Annual Report

Vice Chair Allen requested volunteers to participate in the production of the Annual report. Commissioners Williams, Lesser, Mendoza, and Calaycay volunteered to contribute.

Commissioner Lesser requested assistance from the Library team to support the completion of the report.

Selection of Nominating Committee Members

Vice Chair Allen will be leading the Nominating Committee and additional volunteers are needed to complete the committee.

Commissioners Medina and Crosby agreed to join the committee.

Bylaws/Ordinance Ad Hoc Committee Update

Vice Chair Allen shared the good news that the sunset review for the Library Commission has been completed. The audit committee, which is one of the steps in the process, heard it in February, and the board agenda included the sunset review report. The report recommended that the Library Director and County Council work together to finalize the proposed ordinance for the Library.

The next steps involve working with the Library and County Council to finalize the ordinance and then getting it approved by the board.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Comments, Announcements, or New Business

Commissioner Lesser attended a Manhattan Beach City Council meeting where the work plan of their City Library Commission was reviewed. Although they defer to LA County Library for operations, the Commissioner wanted to report that the work plan will be moving forward. It includes improvements to the library, engagement in the *One Book, One County* program as described by Director Patrick at the last meeting, and participation with the rest of LA County, with 17 library jurisdictions joining the project.

One aspect of the plan may involve having Director Patrick or another Library representative attend Manhattan City Council meetings as part of the program to help the community engage with the county-wide initiative. Additionally, there are plans to add more speakers and authorize funding for these events at the county level, welcoming all interested parties.

Manhattan Beach has the unique situation of having a surplus due to taxpayers formerly paying for two libraries. The City Council, in consultation with the County Library, approved funding for a feasibility study to explore setting up a second cultural library in the city, which would be open to the entire county and beyond.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:41 pm.