



"Enriching Lives"

LA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION

Wednesday, September 17, 2025
10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Claremont Helen Renwick Library
208 N Harvard Ave
Claremont, CA 91711



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

A C Bilbrew Library
150 E El Segundo Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90061

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

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Minutes**
Approval of minutes from the regular meeting on July 16, 2025.
- 4. LA County Library Report**
Dr. Skye Patrick, County Librarian & Director, will provide a brief update on LA County Library activity.
- 5. LA County Library Budget Presentation**
Grace Reyes, Administrative Deputy, will provide a comprehensive update on the Library's budget.
- 6. Tool Lending Library Presentation**
Steven Park, Assistant Library Administrator, and Jose Parra, Adult Services Coordinator, will give a presentation on the Tool Lending Library.
- 7. Library Commission 2024-25 Annual Report**
Recommendation: Review and approve the 2024-25 Annual Report summarizing the Commission's activities and initiatives, which will be presented to the Commission by Commissioner Lisa Cleri-Reale, Chair of the Annual Report Ad Hoc Committee. Authorize submission to the Board of Supervisors.

- 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. 2025-26 Commission Goals and Objectives**
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. Public Comment** (*Limited to 3 minutes per speaker.*)
Opportunity for members of the public to address the Library Commission on 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, September 16, 2025, 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.
- 11. 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.
- 12. Adjournment**

Upcoming Meetings:

Wednesday, November 19, 2025
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
La Mirada Library

Wednesday, January 21, 2025
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
TBD

Accommodations: If you require a reasonable accommodation to participate in this event, such as materials in an alternative format, call (562) 940-8462 (voice) or (562) 940-8477 (TTY), Monday - Thursday, 8 am - 5 pm, at least six business days prior to the meeting date to discuss your accessibility needs.

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. To make arrangements, please contact librarycommission@library.lacounty.gov.



**LA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, September 16, 2025
10:00 am – 12:00 pm**

Primary Location: Claremont Helen Renwick Library
Satellite Locations: A C Bilbrew Library and
San Fernando Library



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, and Roll Call

Chair Calaycay called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. with a welcome to Claremont. He noted that the Commission had met in Claremont ten years prior but there have been renovations since then. Everyone joined in the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll Call was then taken and a quorum met.

Commissioners in Attendance: (15) Bill Uphoff, Corey Calaycay, David Lesser, Dean Francois, Emmanuel Estrada, Janae Cannon, Jim Allen, Kim Ting Yu, Linda Freedman, Lisa Cleri Reale, Marianne Riggins, Mary Mendoza, Nicole Payton, Rick Crosby, Ruth Low

Library Staff in Attendance: (9) Dr. Skye Patrick, Yolanda Pina, Debbie Anderson, Grace Reyes, Jesse Walker-Lanz, Samangi Skinner, Sara Keating, Jeffrey Sichaleune, Jose Parra

Chair Remarks

Chair Calaycay introduced Claremont Helen Renwick Library's Manager, Katherine Loeser, who he described as a great Library Manager. Loeser shared that she had worked in many library systems but there was something special about LA County Library. Chair Calaycay also introduced Claremont City Manager Adam Pirrie and Assistant City Manager Jamie Earl. He then introduced new Library Commissioner Janae Cannon who represents 3rd District Supervisor Lindsay Horvath. Chair Calaycay asked each commissioner to introduce themselves starting in Claremont, then San Fernando, then A C Bilbrew.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on July 16, 2025, was made by Commissioner Crosby and seconded by Commissioner Riggins. The motion was approved with a majority vote and abstentions from Commissioners Allen, Cannon, Freedman and Uphoff.

LA County Library Report

Dr. Skye Patrick, County Librarian & Director, provided a brief update on LA County Library activity.

- **Lunch at the Library:** From June 16th to August 8th, LA County Library and LA County Parks & Recreation partnered to provide 9,898 total meals at 20 library

locations in all 5 supervisorial districts. Patrick explained that the children served don't have enough food to eat while schools are closed for the summer. She also stated that this year the number of meals decreased with 2,000 less meals due to funding and other variables.

- **Summer Discovery Program:** Patrick described this as one of the largest and longstanding library programs. From June 2nd to August 10th, a total of 11,974 participants, ages 0 to 18+ engaged in literacy activities. The goal of the program is to impact the common "summer slide" in reading. This year, there were new ways to connect with youth. Patrick stated that there were challenges bringing young people back to the library post-pandemic, but the young people are coming back slowly but surely.
- **Summer Stars and Reading Stars:** Patrick explained that this is the second year that this program has been offered. It is a live, in-person tutoring program that took place from June 17th to August 8th. Over 3,000 students enrolled and there were 16,000 tutoring appointments. Patrick referred to it as a very unique program that resulted in an average increase of 18.5% in reading and math skills. The program was launched last year with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. There is now Care First Community Investment (CFI) funding that will allow the program to continue for another five years at 30 high need libraries. This will enable year-round tutoring and reinvigorate Homework Help Centers. Patrick stated that library staff are thrilled with this as there is so much benefit from this program.
- **Next Chapter Writers' Summit:** This inaugural event will take place on October 5th from 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. at three venues in West Hollywood and is free to everyone. It is designed for aspiring writers, avid readers and communications professionals. It will amplify LGBTQ+ and BIPOC writers, which is especially timely in the current climate. Patrick thanked Assistant Director Debbie Anderson and her team who worked hard to ensure that the event brings in great writers and helps the next generation of writers. There will be 2-hour workshops, consultations with agents, etc. A writing contest was launched, and winners will be announced and honored at the Summit. Winners will receive cash prizes and 30-minute consultations with agents. Patrick explained that the Summit will officially kick off National Banned Books week, which is from October 5th to October 11th. Patrick ended by stating that the Summit will take place in odd years and One.Book?One. County will take place in even years.
 - Commissioner Mendoza asked what the target age group is. Patrick replied that it is teens and adults.
- **Banned Unbanned Initiative:** Patrick reminded everyone that LA County Library joined the Books Unbanned Initiative in 2023 in partnership with Brooklyn Public Library and Seattle Public Library. Additionally, County Supervisors Horvath and Hahn introduced a Motion to launch the Unabnned Books Digital Library Card so that LA County Library can share its digital collection with teens across the State of California. Additionally, the Library is holding programs and events during national Banned Books Week; this year's theme is "Censorship is so 1984. Read for your

Rights.” On October 11th, LA County Library is hosting a Teens Unite Symposium at ten libraries.

- **Library Engagement and Access Program (LEAP):** This program is a collaboration with LA County Department of Mental Health that places mental health clinicians into high need library locations. A Motion by 2nd District Supervisor Holly Mitchell to examine the feasibility of the program led to new and additional funding. The clinicians have engaged almost 600 users in the first few months.
 - Vice Chair Allen asked about intake and hours. Patrick deferred to Assistant Director Jesse Walker-Lanz, who explained that LEAP Teams have assigned locations and office hours, but other libraries’ Managers can reach out to them as needed. Vice Chair Allen stated that he can see the value of the program but pointed out that LA County Department of Mental Health is one of three departments with major funding issues due to federal cuts and asked if that puts the LEAP program in jeopardy. Patrick responded that this program benefits from State funding.
 - Commissioner Payton stated that she is happy to hear that social workers are back. She suggested that, if additional workers are needed, LA County Library could consider partnerships with university graduate students. Patrick responded that they really want credentialed individuals, but if there is a need to supplement the program, they could look into this.
- **Commission Assessment:** Patrick shared that a review of the County’s current commission system is underway via the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors. It is an objective assessment with a goal to establish greater efficiency. Right now, there are 225 various commissions. The assessment is taking a comprehensive look at commission structures, reviewing all Annual Reports, Sunset Reports, Minutes, etc. It will also look at overlap and duplication, engagement and operations, and productivity and relevance.
- **Administrative Matters:** Badges for Commissioners just came in and will be mailed out and given out at Claremont. Patrick stated that they are looking for a venue for the Library’s annual Staff Development Day – about 1,000 people. The event will be in-person for the first time in 5 years and will be held in March 2026.

LA County Library Budget Presentation

Grace Reyes, Administrative Deputy, provided the annual overview of the Library’s funding structure. She reviewed library funding sources and expenditures. She reminded everyone that the Library is not a County general fund department and the majority of its funding source is coming from a portion of property taxes. There are also other sources of funding that support the Library such as one-time funding, County funding, etc. She discussed the reserve, reminding everyone that in 2018 the reserve was expected to be spent but because of extra funding during the pandemic and operational efficiencies, LA County Library is able to carry a pretty healthy reserve; however, reserve funding is a financial resource that can be depleted suddenly, making it an unreliable indicator of the Library’s financial stability. She stated that LA County Library does not receive federal funding; however, other

departments that the library partners with have been impacted by federal cuts and this indirectly impacts library programs.

- Vice Chair Allen asked about the Utility User Tax sunset date. Reyes stated that she is not sure but will check.
- County Librarian Patrick added that the depletion of funds has been pushed out 10 years thanks to all the partnerships but has not solved the issue of the deficit, so when staff talk about hours at various libraries, this is why.

Reyes continued by saying that the wildfires mostly impacted LA Public Library and Altadena Library, which is its own district. Reyes stated that LA County Library faces several challenges:

- Staffing (attrition and hiring challenges)
- Cost of Living increases
- Property tax potential impact from wildfires
- Operational Needs such as aging infrastructure, books and materials, contracts and leases.

Reyes stated that they are constantly looking for grant revenues. She ended by sharing several accomplishments:

- CFCI grant of \$15 million over 5 years
- New Grant Manager position who will collaborate with the Library Foundation and who submitted 14 applications from October to June.
- CA State Library Grant
 - Chair Calaycay asked if there will be potential changes in library hours. Patrick responded that it is not immediately on the table, but it is possible. Calaycay asked if any libraries are open on Mondays and Patrick responded that half of them are.
 - Commissioner Lesser asked who to follow up with to better understand the numbers. Calaycay asked Lesser to email Reyes, who oversees the budget, and copy Patrick.

Tool Lending Library Presentation

Jeffrey Sichaleune, Adult Services Coordinator, and Jose Parra, Adult & Digital Services Coordinator, provided an overview of the Tool Lending Library program. Highlights of their remarks are below:

- This program was created in 2022, and it has significantly evolved to include a wide and diverse array of tools and equipment (power tools, hand tools, cookware, bike repair tools, etc.) as well as musical instruments and music lessons.
- Sichaleune and Parra showed pictures of the various tools and equipment, stating that the power washer is one of the most popular items along with the cordless drill and the cricut machine.
 - Commissioner Croft asked if there is a wait list. The response was that each library has a list of customers who need equipment.
- Common needs among library patrons are auto, bike and home repair. Art, sewing, cooking and crafting are also popular. The sewing machines are extremely popular.

- There have been a total of 5,028 checkouts and customer feedback is very positive with many customers expressing deep appreciation as they cannot afford the equipment on their own.
- Recently, the program added keyboards, drums and guitars. In partnership with LA County Arts & Culture Department, Library staff identified instructors who provided beginner music lessons over 6 weeks during the summer for youth, ages 11 to 13.
- Sichaleune and Parra shared testimonials and next steps:
 - In 2026, blogging equipment will be added to help adults and teens to learn blogging and podcasting.
 - A partnership with LA County Department of Public Works may result in repair clinics.
 - The American Heart Association will provide blood pressure kits.
 - Staff is always looking for more funding to consider more locations and more items to loan to library patrons.
 - Vice Chair Allen stated that everybody he talks to loves this program. He added that we take a lot of this for granted but the need is huge.
 - Commissioner Uphoff asked if the Library will take tools that homeowners no longer need.? County Librarian Patrick responded that there are liability issues with used tools.

Library Commission 2024-25 Annual Report

Commissioner Cleri Reale, who serves as Chair of the Annual Report Ad Hoc Committee, reviewed the revised 2024-2025 Annual Report to be submitted to LA County Commission Services. She summarized the various edits that were made to the Report after the July Commission meeting discussion. She thanked all the Subcommittee Chairs for reviewing their sections. She thanked Commissioner Lesser for his extraordinary editing skills making the Report a better read. She thanked Samangi Skinner for her additional edits. She noted that at the July meeting, a recommendation was made to revise the DEI section to better reflect the current climate. Cleri Reale reported that she spoke to County leaders and reviewed the County website and both prioritized a focus on equity and inclusion; thus, she decided that it was best for the Annual Report to align with County priorities. She asked commissioners what they thought.

- Commissioner Francois questioned why the Annual Report did not include redlined edits so commissioners could compare the July version with the September version. Cleri Reale explained that there were so many small edits that a redlined version would have been unreadable and that is why she reviewed the various edits. She added that the report follows a template provided by Commission Services.
- Commissioner Lesser thanked Cleri Reale for juggling multiple edits while honoring the content and following the process.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Allen and seconded by Commissioner Lesser to approve the revised 2024-2025 Annual Report and submit it to LA County Commission Services. The Motion was unanimously approved.

Bylaws/Ordinance Ad Hoc Committee Update

Vice Chair Jim Allen, Chair of the Bylaws and Ordinance Revision Ad Hoc Committee, provided an update on the committee's efforts to review the Library Commission by-laws and put forth an ordinance. Allen reported that there have been some delays. He thanked Library staff and stated that the committee needs to regroup on the status of this work.

- Commissioner Lesser brought up the pending new County governance structure and suggested meeting with County Counsel to expedite and finalize the ordinance before any further interruptions.

2025-26 Commission Goals and Objectives

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

Commission Benchmarking

New Subcommittee Chair Allen stated that they had compiled data and will finalize the report by the end of the calendar year. He added that the future of the subcommittee – whether to sunset or pivot – is a discussion for their next meeting.

Education & Community Needs

Subcommittee Chair Crosby shared that they are working with Debbie Anderson who provided materials for them to review. The subcommittee decided that making connections with school districts will be a top priority. Croft shared that he is currently serving as Interim Superintendent for Duarte Unified School District and he will start the process of connecting districts with libraries as there is great value from these partnerships.

Legislative Advocacy

There was no report given regarding legislative advocacy as the Subcommittee Chair was not present.

Philanthropy

Subcommittee Chair Cleri Reale thanked everyone for the great ideas and suggestions made at the July Commission meeting. She added that the subcommittee will be following up with each commissioner to ensure that the ideas are implemented. She explained that the Library Foundation has limited capacity as does Library staff, so it's up to the commission to jumpstart new ideas. Cleri Reale added that the subcommittee will prioritize the suggestions and focus on low-hanging fruit. In the meantime, she suggested that everyone review the July minutes and see what they suggested. Cleri Reale shared an update from the Foundation:

- On September 30, there will be an appeal for Books Unbanned and materials will be sent to the commission prior to the launch.
- There will also be an end of year appeal that gives everyone another opportunity to donate.

Cleri Reale ended by asking everyone to donate to the Foundation as 100% participation goes a long way.

- Commissioner Cannon suggested thinking about holiday corporate gifting.
- Commission Uphoff suggested that city council members should invite libraries to council meetings to raise awareness about their work and strengthen communications.

Public Comment

Samangi Skinner read an email from a South Whittier patron who thanked LA County Library for its various programs and resources, as well as the staff at her local library. She spoke of the positive impact the Library has had on her family and asked them not to change a thing.

John Davis, President of the Avalon Gardens Community Association was present at A C Bilbrew and apologized that it was only his first time attending a commission meeting. He thanked the commissioners and Library staff for what they do. He explained that A C Bilbrew Library is especially appreciated by the community and gave special recognition to the former A C Bilbrew Library Manager for attending the Community Association meetings to share library activities. He added that he will do a better job of attending the commission meetings and pay close attention to the work being done.

Commissioner Comments, Announcements, or New Business

- Chair Calaycay thanked commissioners at Claremont for attending and invited them to stay for the official rededication event at noon. The library will officially be named the Claremont Helen Renwick Library.
- Calaycay also introduced Sam Pedroza, the former Mayor of Claremont who is now the Assistant City Manager for the City of Industry.
- Commissioner Lesser expressed his concern for not being at Claremont in person. He congratulated Chair Calaycay and others regarding the pending rededication event.
- Commissioner Payton suggested the idea of people sharing why they love libraries as a potential public relations opportunity.
- Commissioner Cleri Reale noted that County Librarian Skye Patrick is now Dr. Skye Patrick after receiving her Ph.D. Patrick received applause from everyone.

Adjournment

Chair Calaycay adjourned the meeting at 11:56 a.m. with a reminder about the next meeting on November 19th.