



"Enriching Lives"

LA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Monday, May 18, 2026
10:00 am – 12:00 pm



Location: Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Calaycay called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was initiated and quorum was not met.

Commissioners in Attendance: (9) Angelita Medina, Bill Uphoff, Corey Calaycay, David Lesser, Lisa Cleri Reale, Mary Mendoza, Nicole Payton, Reve Gipson Parks, Ruth Low

Library Staff in Attendance: (2) Samangi Skinner, Sara Keating

Introduction of Board Deputies

Chair Calaycay welcomed the LA County Board Deputies in attendance:

- Chris Ah San, Senior Deputy, Arts, 2nd District
- Rachel Fox, Arts & Community Services Deputy, 3rd District
- Judi Clarke, Commissions Deputy, 4th District
- Michelle Vega, Assistant Chief Deputy, 5th District

Calaycay also introduced Alex Gomez, Jr., an international student who just completed an exchange program at Pitzer College, and his father Alex Gomez, Sr.

Judi Clarke of the 4th District shared that Supervisor Janice Hahn is very big on libraries and funded the renovation of several libraries. On March 20, Leland Weaver Library in South Gate opened and the Supervisor expects that Maywood Library will be open in June and Lynwood Library in August. Clarke invited everyone to attend the openings.

Rachel Fox of the 3rd District stated that she has worked with several different Commissions and it's helpful to see how the Library Commission is structured and how the Commissioners interact. Fox thanked County Library staff for always being readily available for 3rd District community events, including a Palisades fire recovery event at Pepperdine University and a community watch party for the World Cup. Fox said that she is thinking about the possibility of various commissions coming together at some of these major events to build relationships and partnerships. For example, the Arts Commission might be interested in collaborating on the Library's Bookmark Contest. She ended by saying that the 3rd District wants to support that type of opportunity.

Michelle Vega of the 5th District thanked Commissioners for their hard work and acknowledged 5th District appointees Allen and Shih for their efforts. She stated that Supervisor Barger believes in the importance of libraries as they provide unique services to different communities. She stated that the Supervisor is committed to the issues of mental health and homelessness and appreciates the partnership between LA County Department of Mental Health and LA County Library. She commented that the Commission is doing wonderful work and, if it needs anything from the Board Offices, Commissioners should let the Board Deputies know.

Chris Ah San of the 2nd District thanked the Commission for hosting the Deputies. He stated that Supervisor Mitchell continues to be focused on several key priorities. The biggest priority is figuring out a more enhanced funding model for the Library as LA County is facing severe headwinds over the next 30 years mostly due to the long-term effects of lawsuit settlements, decreased revenues and other factors. This raises concerns for County departments, especially those depending on general funds. The 2nd District is in discussions with many departments and commissions about fiscal issues and strategizing how to increase private investment in some of the work. Ah San stated that the Supervisor's other priority is expanding and promoting services in unincorporated areas and the Library is an important vehicle to do this. Libraries are one of the few County buildings that constituents can visit without an appointment. Lastly, Ah San stated that the final priority is the continued implementation of the program where social workers and mental health clinicians are embedded in local libraries to assist patrons.

Discussion and Questions

- Commissioner Lesser stated that the Commission's priority is to support the Library, but he asked how the Commissioners can also assist the Supervisors.
 - Board Deputies encouraged Commissioners to reach out to their respective Board Offices if they need help with anything or to find out what each Supervisor's priorities are for local libraries.
- Commissioner Medina thanked Deputy Clarke for always being so helpful and accessible.
- Commissioner Mendoza shared that a constituent raised the issue of San Fernando Library being adjacent to restaurants serving alcohol. She asked if there is a policy in place about this.
 - Sammy Skinner responded that there is a policy in place for alcohol use on Library property, which the Library can do something about, but not in the plaza since that is not Library property.
- Chair Calaycay thanked Deputy Clarke for always making sure all Commission vacancies are promptly filled. He also added how effective Commissioner Medina has been in relation to advocacy.
 - Clarke responded that she appreciates the 5th District commissioners as they attend meetings, are kindhearted, vocal and engaged.
- Commissioner Medina responded to Deputy Fox's reference to Commissions working together by sharing that her friend on the Arts Commission has exchanged information about that commission experience.

- Commissioner Payton agreed that more collaboration would result in deeper impact as Commissioners can share best practices, etc.
- Chair Calaycay supported the idea of collaboration and acknowledged that Commissioner Payton is a strong collaborator and contributor. He also explained that the Commission schedules six meetings per year at different libraries in all Supervisorial Districts.
- Commissioner Lesser asked how the Commission should explore programming given the large challenges facing the County.
 - Ah San responded that Supervisor Mitchell is a big fan of community engagement and this becomes even more important during tough fiscal environments. He reinforced the importance of spending extra time to ensure that services are being used and to promote library initiatives. He stated that sometimes local libraries are the jewel in their community and people don't know it.
- Commissioner Cleri Reale stated that Chris Ah San has done a great job connecting with 2nd District appointees and sharing information.
- Chair Calaycay acknowledged that Commissioners Cleri Reale and Gipson are doing a great job and that Commissioner Gipson is the longest serving member on the Commission.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on March 18, 2026, was tabled as there was no quorum.

2025-26 Commission Goals and Objectives

Subcommittee Chairs provided an update of their respective subcommittees' efforts toward their goals and objectives:

Commission Benchmarking

Subcommittee Chair Jim Allen was not present so there was no formal report; however, Chair Calaycay reviewed the subcommittee goals. Commissioner Cleri Reale noted that the subcommittee still needs to release its final report and that there was some discussion of the subcommittee sunseting as it completed its original goals. Commissioner Uphoff stated that the subcommittee members asked, "Now that we have captured data across the country, how do we measure ourselves?"

Education & Community Needs

Subcommittee Chair Rick Crosby was not present; Commissioner Lowe stated that there is no update but she will coordinate with Crosby to ensure an update at the next meeting. Chair Calaycay stated that he connected LA County Library to someone at Claremont School of Music to discuss a potential partnership to expand the Library's Music Stars program to Claremont, La Verne, or San Dimas Libraries.

Legislative Advocacy

Subcommittee Chair Angie Medina reported that she met with Debbie Anderson and Grace Reyes about potential opportunities to target congressional representatives for

funding. She reminded everyone that the proposed project has to be a fit for the specific congressional district and that it's a lot about relationships. Follow up is planned in a few months.

Philanthropy

Subcommittee Chair Lisa Cleri Reale referred to a recent announcement sent by County Librarian and Director Dr. Skye Patrick about the new LA County Library Foundation Interim Executive Director Ellah Ronen. Cleri Reale stated that she recommended Ronen for the job and reviewed Ellah's credentials and the work she has already done to move the Foundation's efforts forward. She explained that Ronen and the Foundation board are committed to raising both funds and awareness for the Library but with a new strategy. Cleri Reale added that the Philanthropy Subcommittee has been on pause as she has assisted the Foundation with its transition, but Ronen intends to help re-convene it. Lastly, Cleri Reale thanked Commissioner Gipson for her donation, reminding everyone that the goal is 100% participation with every Commissioner giving whatever they can.

Discussion and Questions

- Commissioner Medina stated that she has set up automatic withdrawal for her donation and it works well.
- Commissioner Gipson asked if the address for donations will change with new Foundation leadership. Cleri Reale will send information to everyone.
- Commissioner Payton suggested that there are some Commissioners not serving on subcommittees. Skinner confirmed that all commissioners are serving on a subcommittee but there will be an opportunity to shuffle around when discussions regarding next fiscal year's goals take place at the July meeting.
- Commissioner Lowe asked if anything will be done to acknowledge Commissioner Shih who stepped down. Chair Calaycay stated that a Board scroll is given to departing Commissioners.
- Chair Calaycay suggested looking at former Commissioners for the Foundation board.
- Commissioner Cleri Reale suggested that Commissioners share their individual congressional districts with the Legislative Subcommittee.
- Commissioner Medina shared that Commissioner Payton already created a spreadsheet matching commissioners with legislators. The spreadsheet also includes library priorities that overlap with elected officials' interests. The spreadsheet will be re-distributed.
- Commissioner Uphoff stated that his district will have new representation as of January 2027 and that outreach should be scheduled at that time.
- Commissioner Cleri Reale suggested outreach to outgoing elected officials who may need to distribute their remaining discretionary funds before they leave office.
- Commissioner Payton suggested joint meetings with newly elected officials. Chair Calaycay suggested small meetings to comply with Brown Act provisions.
- Judi Clarke thanked each Commissioner for their service and for representing and serving the County and its residents.

2026-27 Commission Goals and Objectives

In the absence of a larger group, Chair Calaycay postponed this discussion for the July meeting.

Library Commission 2025-26 Annual Report

Ad Hoc Committee Chair Cleri Reale explained that the Annual Report is required of every commission. It is due by the end of September. A draft will be reviewed at the July meeting for feedback, and the Commission will vote to approve it at the September meeting. Also on the Ad Hoc Committee are Commissioners Allen, Lesser, and Medina.

Library Commission 2026 Election

Chair Calaycay reviewed the process for elections. The Ad Hoc Nominating Committee, chaired by Vice Chair Jim Allen and consisting of Commissioners Cannon, Gipson, and Uphoff, will convene to accept nominations and report back at the July meeting.

Discussion and Questions

- Commissioner Lesser stated that the Chair is doing a great job.
- Commissioners Lowe and Gipson stated that the current slate is not broken so doesn't need a change.

Bylaws/Ordinance Ad Hoc Committee Update

Vice Chair Jim Allen, Chair of the Bylaws and Ordinance Revision Ad Hoc Committee, was not present so committee member Cleri Reale provided an update stating that the only item pending related to the Bylaws revision is a question about Measure G's impact. This will be resolved prior to the July meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Comments, Announcements, or New Business

- Commissioner Lowe announced the Diamond Bar Friends of the Library annual fundraiser on June 7. All proceeds will go to Diamond Bar Library. Lunch with former Library Commissioner and State Senator Bob Archuleta will be an auction item. A flyer will be distributed to the Commission.
- Commissioner Medina suggested bringing back the drag queen bingo event to West Hollywood Library.
- Commissioner Payton stated that the Ballmer Foundation made a \$100 million gift to Cal State and UCLA related to mental health. Payton connected UCLA public health officials with LA County Library to explore utilizing grad students at library sites as part of their practicum. She also announced a Death Café event on June 20 and August 22 at West Hollywood Library.
- Commissioner Mendoza announced that she is up for re-election on June 2.

Adjournment

Chair Calaycay thanked everyone for attending as the meeting took place on a different day and with no satellite locations. He adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.