

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

Members

Wendy Urushima-Conn, Chair
Marshall Anderson • Elizabeth Fitzsimons • Elizabeth Hansen • Ben Moraga • Linda Sotelo

MINUTES

BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS
SAN DIEGO PUBLIC LIBRARY
Wednesday, August 4, 2021

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners:

Present: Wendy Urushima-Conn, Elizabeth Hansen, Ben Moraga, Elizabeth Fitzsimons,
Marshall Anderson, Linda Sotelo

Absent:

Staff: Misty Jones, Director – Library, Raul Gudiño, Deputy Director – Library; Bob Cronk,
Deputy Director – Library; Tricia Nool, Executive Assistant – Library; William Curtis, Program
Manager – Library; Oscar Gittemeier, Program Manager – Library; Charlie Goldberg, Director
of Marketing – SDPLF, Monee Tong, Marc Chery – SDPL Staff

Public:

Joan Reese, Ann McDonald – FSDPL; Patrick Stewart, CEO – SDPLF, Kim Laru, Jennifer Jenkins

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Commissioner Urushima-Conn at 12:31 pm via Zoom. Their last meeting was on June 2, 2021.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The June 2, 2021 minutes was approved unanimously.

REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCE

None

NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

From Janet Russell: Just as covid cases started rising again, contactless pickup was discontinued at the Carmel Valley Branch as well as other branches of the library. The Delta variant, which carries a viral load 1000 times the original strain of Covid is now dominant and breakthrough infections in fully vaccinated people are rising.
PLEASE reinstate contactless pickup and protect us from Covid.

REPORT FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY:

Joan Reese
President, Friends of the San Diego Public Library

The big news for many of our Friends' groups has of course been the reopening of additional branch libraries. For a number of chapters, reopening has posed significant challenges as they attempt to re-engage volunteers and board members while forging relationships with new staff including branch managers.

As previously reported, a number of Friends' chapters have held outdoor book sales—some monthly, some weekly—l which have been quite popular among customers and help engage volunteers. Even some chapters at libraries which remain closed except for contactless pickup service have been able to hold successful sales and recruit new members. Several chapters have reopened their used bookstores with a 50% capacity limit—which means in some cases only one or two people at a time. The “greater” FSDPL held an outdoor book sale in June, which was quite successful, especially considering the very limited outdoor space available. FSDPL also had a robust presence at the North Park Book Fair which occurred a couple of weeks ago – the pace never let up, and in addition to selling books and raising significant funds, many new members were recruited for various chapters—overall a highly successful day. Online book sales continue to bring in some income for the “greater” FSDPL and several of our chapters.

FSDPL is in the process of renovating half of our book sale space on the lower level of the University Heights Branch Library with “new” donated library shelving, which will increase the capacity and is expected to eventually make the used book sales more efficient. At some point before too much longer, it is hoped that the legendary monthly book sale will be possible once again—and will be better than ever.

In view of the very concerning public health situation, meetings for both the FSDPL board and the monthly meetings with chapter leaders will continue to be held virtually.

LIBRARY FOUNDATION UPDATE:

Patrick Stewart, CEO – SDPLF

The big part of our focus and our priority continues to be the library master plan. Thank you, Wendy and the Commissioners, for allowing the presentation of the draft of the preliminary findings of the phase I report of the library master plan at the June 2nd Commission meeting. It that has sent quite a bit of feedback, which is exactly what we wanted. and it's gotten quite a bit of attention and so we're rounding out the final part of the draft phase I document. I just wanted to give you all an update that there will be more dates and specific information to follow, but just so that this is in the record today, also to let you know we're beginning to schedule Council member meetings to share draft final document for the phase I. We intend to have this draft complete no later than August 9th, giving Misty and her team an opportunity to spend some time with it and comment and report back to G4 and Carson Block Technology,

after which the document will be made available on a special web page on the library site. On August 24 at 4:00 PM, we will be hosting a virtual town hall presentation of the draft final document, it will be presented as a recorded presentation by Jill Eyres and Carson Block from G4 and Carson Block Technology, after which immediately following that, will be a live opportunity for public comment. We will also make sure that the recording is up on the library site and we're going to be able to share that, along with the document itself with our community, with planning commission's community town councils. We're also going to host a second virtual Town Hall, on September 18 at 2:00 PM.

We, Misty and her team, the foundation anybody else that needs to, will be able to present the September 22nd public safety and livable neighborhoods committee. We will continue to accept public comments and solicit public comment, we have a communications plan designed specifically to reach as many neighborhood and community members.

October, I believe we may end up back at the public safety and local neighborhoods committee. We will be presenting it to you all at either the November/December meeting, hope that we end up with this being presented to Council no later than January. Our hope, as with the Community survey, we are making this public feedback phase available to everyone, and anyone who wants to participate in lending their voice, not only to the development, thus far, but to what these findings are and the way that this draft is being presented so that we are presenting to not only you, but the committee and to the Council. More information in September to make sure that we get all of the requisite links and information and specific to everyone here throughout this process.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

a. Report on Library Construction Projects

The Pacific Highlands Ranch Branch Library:

The City Contracts Specialists rejected the Pacific Highland Ranch Branch Library contract bids and canceled its solicitation. This project will be readvertised at a later time. We started working with the design consultant and the City contracts team, to readvertise the contract.

The Scripps Miramar Ranch Library Parking Lot Expansion:

The project is in its Final Design Phase, and currently is with the City DSD's plan check review, for the building permit issuance and environmental review / approval.

b. Update from the Library Director

In the FY 22 Budget, we received funding to covert hourly positions into 175 benefitted positions. We need to hire a lot of positions but luckily, we have many hourly employees that are perfect candidates for these benefitted positions. Opening on Sundays and being able to restore all services really hinges upon us getting those positions filled. We are lending wi-fi hotspots, looking at lending laptops and starting a digital navigation program.

We are now the official home of the Robert Frost Society, but we haven't really kicked it off in person yet. The Foundation had this really excellent symposium and showed a film a couple of months ago but our first in person program is on August 14 at 4:00 PM. We have Robert Bernard Hass, the Executive Director of the process and Jim Hurley, the catalyst for getting San Diego named as the home of the RFS will be speaking. San Diego's Poet Laureate, Ron Salisbury, will also be speaking. It's going to be an event and a reception.

During the month of July, we had several pride storytimes in four different locations and we had for drag Queens story times. We had such a very, very positive response, but we always get protesters to those events as well. I want to share an email I received from one attendee.

Good day,

I attended yesterday's storytime event at Logan Heights with my two-year-old daughter. I got your contact information from literature distributed from San Diego Mass Resistance, who were in front of the building. Their presence leads me to this communication.

This event was phenomenal. Exposing my young children to brave human beings who are well aware of the cultural opposition to their sense of identity and nonetheless expressing themselves publicly, in a kid-friendly educational format, and in bright colors are precisely the type of role models I'm looking to show to my young child. The fact that our own San Diego Library is among the leaders of this brilliant idea fills my family with regional pride.

Absolutely none of the ideas opposing this event proved to be true - the performers (Raquel Ita & Barbie Q) were perfectly appropriate for the audience and were splendidly wholesome.

The literature I received opposing the event also pointed to the higher suicide and depression rates among transgender people. It is precisely these types of events that are part of the effort to combat those tragic numbers. Thank you for this event and I look forward to many more.

Another attendee was a young child who was about seven named Charlie, and Charlie uses they/them pronouns. Charlie wrote Thank You letters and drew pictures and presented to the queens after the event. They were really excited to be celebrating pride and we do these programs for kids like Charlie. I wanted you to hear the positive response and positive feedback. Regardless of any opposition, we're going to continue to be a place of inclusivity and really celebrating everybody's diversity.

AGENDA ITEMS

a. Reopening - We had 26 the beginning of July that opened, and then we were able to add University Heights and Kensington-Normal Heights this past Saturday, so we have eight more to go. We started our new hours on the 31st and those are Monday and Tuesday from 11:30 AM -8PM, Wednesday-Saturday 9:30AM-6:00PM. We're doing some limited indoor programming and people can book the meeting rooms again. We're still at 50% capacity so we're going to continue that for the foreseeable future until things really start to turn better and we get through this. We're still taking things kind of slowly, still doing all of the cleaning and the safety protocols that we've been doing before but we're excited to finally have people back in the building. There's nothing sadder than a library that has no one in it, so it is great to have the public.

b. Rebellious Miss Breed Project - Monee Tong and Marc Chery presented to the commissioners about The Rebellious Breed: San Diego Public Library and the Japanese American Incarceration.

The Library is hosting a series of programs and events from September - December reflecting

on the experiences of Japanese Americans during World War Two. The programs are going to be exploring themes of social justice activism, and the power of the written word and the goal of this project is to raise awareness and encourage discussion of historical and contemporary issues faced.

COMMISSIONER COMMENT

None

OTHER BUSINESS

The next Board of Library Commissioners meeting will take place on September 1, 2021 at 12:30 PM via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wendy Urushima-Conn adjourned the meeting at 1:22 PM.



Misty Jones
Director, Library Department

/tn