

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, December 1, 2021

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners:

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

Absent: Linda Sotelo

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, Hafsa Kaka, Director - Homelessness Strategies Division; Kristina Peralta, Deputy Chief Operating Officer; Capt. Shawn Takeuchi, San Diego Police Department; Lisa Jones, San Diego Housing Commission

Public:

Joan Reese – FSDPL, Ann McDonald – FSDPL, Patrick Stewart, CEO – SDPLF, Corrine Wilson, Kymberly Mueller, Scott Ehrig-Burgess, Steve Hermes, Allison Phillips – SD Chamber, Ady Huertas, Christine Tinker, Jerry Tomaszewicz, Robyn Gage-Norquist

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Commissioner Urushima-Conn at 12:30 pm via Zoom. Their last meeting was on November 3, 2021.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The November 3, 2021 minutes was approved unanimously.

REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCE

None

NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

None

REPORT FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY:

Joan Reese

President, Friends of the San Diego Public Library

The corporate (“greater”) Friends of the San Diego Public Library (FSDPL) has been unable to resume monthly weekend book sales due to a series of issues, which has been extremely challenging. The last sale was 22 months ago. We are hopeful that 2022 will bring resolution.

Online book sales continue to bring in some income for the “greater” FSDPL and several of our chapters.

At the chapter level, the Friends have continued to hold both outdoor and indoor book sales, and Friends’ used bookstores are up and running at many branch libraries—most still on curtailed schedules relative to pre-pandemic times due to limited volunteer availability. The greater FSDPL will again host a booth at the North Park Book Fair on Saturday, December 11. We hope to repeat the success of our experience at the first such event this past July.

The FSDPL board and the Presidents’ Advisory Council will not meet this month.

LIBRARY FOUNDATION UPDATE:

Patrick Stewart, CEO – SDPLF

The Foundation is going to host an event this month called Libraries Lead the Way. This will be the second year and celebratory virtual event to learn more about the impact of course of the library, the Library Foundation and to celebrate our continuing support within communities through the library. We’ll have three featured speakers to elaborate more on their library leadership and the amazing work that they do every day. The event is scheduled for December 16, 2021 from 5:00 PM to 6:15 pm, will be held virtually and, like last year attendees will be encouraged to participate with their favorite celebratory drink.

The second thing I wanted to bring up is our series of year-end fundraising campaigns are underway and I just want to let you all know that for many foundation supporters and library patrons, they use this as the opportunity to let us know just how important the library is to them and how much value the library brings to their communities, and so this year with more branches open and more programs running you can imagine, we are hearing many, many more stories about how much the library means to them, but I just wanted to pass this along to you all San Diego certainly loves its libraries.

We are beginning our advocacy efforts for this year's budget cycle. I just want to extend some gratitude to the Friends, and the Commission for being such great partners in the Libraries Transform SD campaign.

A recent piece submitted from the UT editorial board lays out what I believe is a pretty stark reality of the city's financial picture currently and it's headline, San Diego's budget woes may

lead to pain for library and park fans reminds us, of course, of how important the advocacy efforts that we do are to ensure that our libraries have the tools and the resources needed to continue delivering their impact. Obviously we're going to have a lot more conversation and updates from the Libraries Transform coalition in the coming weeks and in the coming months, but I just wanted to start off by saying thank you to all of you for your partnership in this.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

a. Report on Library Construction Projects

The Pacific Highlands Ranch Branch Library:

This project will be re-advertised in early December 2021

The Scripps Miramar Ranch Library Parking Lot Expansion:

The project is in its Final Design Phase, it is currently with the design consultant to address the City DSD plan check review comments, towards the building permit issuance, ADA and Storm Water compliances. The E Contract process is in progress.

b. Update from Library Director

Hiring- We have completed the hiring process for Library Assistant 3. There were 9 FT positions and 40 HT positions, and all positions have been filled. Thirty-seven of these positions were filled internally and there are 12 new hires. The 12 new hires are in the process of background checks and should be able to start in mid-December to early January. The Librarian I/II hiring process is also complete, and we will begin making offers this week. There are 27 HT vacancies. Once these positions are filled, we will be able to open all remaining locations Monday-Saturday. The Library Assistant I/II process will begin in early January and there are 10 FT and 127 HT positions. These positions need to be filled before we can start resuming Sunday hours. Deputy Director for Customer Experience interviews took place Monday and Tuesday and a decision is expected to be made in mid-December.

Vaccine Mandate- An Emergency Ordinance to implement the City's Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy was approved by City Council on November 29, 2021. City staff have until December 1 to be fully vaccinated or to engage in the Reasonable Accommodation process for a medical or religious exemption. Exemptions will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Human Resources Department.

SD Access 4 All- 88% of hotspots are currently checked out and many branches have 100% of theirs checked out. We just added another 1100 to total 2000 and will soon be adding 2000

Chromebooks for Circulation. The Digital Navigation Program is nearly ready to implement. We have begun training staff that will help residents looking to add affordable internet to their home. We are also working with the SD Futures Foundation on a technology training program in several branches.

Discover and Go- The program officially launched on November 9, 2021 and within a week there were over 1000 reservations. The top 3 zip codes represented are 92130 (Carmel Valley),

92131 (Scripps Ranch) and 92126 (Mira Mesa) but there are reservations from 66 different zip codes.

Conference Funding for Staff- The Library pays for registration for all staff approved to attend conferences each fiscal year. However, the cost of travel and hotel often prevents many staff from being able to attend, especially national conferences. This year, the SD Public Library Foundation provided \$25k in funding to cover travel and hotel for staff members that would like to attend conferences. We received a large number of requests and through the donation and match, we will be sending 20 staff members to PLA, ALA, CLA or other conferences, with all travel expenses paid.

AGENDA ITEMS

a. Public Safety and Security

Misty shared an Incident Summary and overview of efforts being made to address safety and security issues in the Library to the Commissioners.

Hafsa Kaka, Director, Homelessness Strategies Division - The City of San Diego is working with regional partners and is taking dramatic action to address the needs of our homeless population with a dual and coordinated purpose: to address short-term needs while advancing long-term goals. This is a very complex problem, but we are committed to addressing it. In my experience, I have never seen the cooperation and collaboration that has come together in this City. When Misty reached out, all the partners immediately came together to provide assistance and resources and we will continue to be a support.

Lisa Jones, San Diego Housing Commission - The San Diego Housing Commission is recognized nationally as a model public housing agency, creating programs that provide housing opportunities for low-income and homeless individuals and families. For sheltered housed any type of mental health crisis, mobile crisis line: 888-724-7240. We are working with the Library Department to provide more resources such as mental health workers and social workers. We are also in the process of implementing a Harm Reduction Team that will work to reach our most vulnerable citizens.

Capt. Shawn Takeuchi, Neighborhood Policing, San Diego Police Department - This division was created to address the quality of life issues that were affecting the Community members of San Diego specifically as it related to unhoused individuals. The pandemic has created challenges like we have never seen before, and crime has increased significantly. We have met with Misty and her team on several occasions and are working with her to actively address safety and security issues. We will continue to be a support for the Library and all other City departments.

Commissioner Urushima-Conn: First, thank you, Misty for bringing our special guests and really the thing that just strikes me I'm really proud of the collaboration in our city and I'm really grateful for the work of our library employees. It's a very, very complex issue with multiple levels and I love that were leading from a human centered position. We are in different times right now on many, many, many levels so while it's upsetting in some ways to hear the reality is just like small businesses are being affected, of course, we're seeing that in our

libraries but I'm really very grateful. Sometimes one life loss or one overdose of course it's too many or one person with a mental break is too many.

But it is very complex and so I just want to thank you for all of your efforts and looking in compiling all those stats and programs because on top of everything else people are doing as libraries and promoting education and access and resources. There is this complex Community challenge that we're all faced with on many levels on top of everything else that we're trying to do. And I think that as being retired journalist, you know I follow crime and all sorts of things, but it has become more complex, working with our unhoused and mental illness which used to sit in the shadows and so thank you for your work, please know that we appreciate your presentation and your work.

Commissioner Fitzsimons: On the Commission we've talked about having more of a police presence at the downtown library. Maybe like a home base for a small team, so that you know just officers are coming in and out or they're sitting doing their reports, but they're just kind of like part of the environment and wondering if that's possible.

Commissioner Anderson: I do want to note that the topic for today is public safety, so apologies and if some of these comments don't apply to your department, but I do think the intersection between homelessness and public safety is an interesting one. When I think of our Institutions and systems especially related to homelessness and even our environment, I can think of no better systemic improvement than how providing our youth with safe access to our parks, safe access to our libraries and safe access to transit so kids have an ability to safely learn and expand their minds, keep their bodies active and kids off the street. So first off, let me quickly just say how brave you are Misty for carrying around Naloxone. I don't know if I would have agreed to do the same and I don't mean to belittle your bravery from literally putting your life at risk to administer or aid your fellow human, but that is a reactive band aid approach that does nothing to prevent the problem in the first place. I think we should all be furious that in the last year, some 100,000 people died of fentanyl overdoses in California, deaths increased by 40% and yet the best we can come up with is equipping our libraries down with naloxone.

Since our last meeting I've been in touch with the district attorney's office I've mentioned this to several elected officials, I spoke to parks groups, community groups, police officers and transit activists and I think what we would all proposes this let's make our city parks, libraries and transit stations, zero tolerance areas for crime of any kind. None of this progressive enforcement where an officer has contact with an individual shooting up five times before they do anything and let's be serious no one's even tracking that. As the PD needs to enforce the law, make arrest as they see warranted the Sheriff needs to book, none of this in one door out the other like we're seeing today and the city attorney and the district attorney need to prosecute. I don't want to hear the word backlog with respect to the court system anymore. This would mean criminals get the rest of the city to commit crime with no accountability, but if I have to hear about one more guys shooting up in a public library, one more sexual assault, one more guy masturbating like I just saw the transit stop right down the street... I'm not sure what I'm supposed to do, outside of taking matters into my own hands, because frankly the system seems to be failing all of us. If we want to keep kids off the street make our parks and libraries safe for them to learn and play, if we're serious about reaching our lofty Climate Action Plan goals then make trains a safer option. I know it wasn't noticed but I'm going to do it anyway Wendy, I would like to make a motion that the library Commission adopt an official position that libraries parks and transit stations be zero tolerance zones for crime and request

that the Mayor's office, the City Attorney, the District Attorney, MTS and the Sheriff's office form a task force with the objective of enforcing crimes in those three areas.

Commissioner Hansen: I would be supportive of something similar to what Marshall is asking of us as long as we maintain the purview of our Commission the focus of our mission as a Library Commission. Bring attention to the issues is good. I just think that we, we need to as a Commission, be very careful like when we have the other issue come up a couple years ago right, we were very clear about making sure that we weren't speaking beyond our reach so I just want to, I want to be sensitive to that and also sensitive to what we're asking our departments, whether it's PD, Park, Libraries to make sure that it's not unreasonable, you know, in terms of demand, so I support the mission behind what you're asking the Commission to do, I think we just have to be a little careful and navigating that we're not overreaching our purview.

Commissioner Anderson: I rescind the motion, as I know it is likely beyond our purview, but I do want to see more effort put towards this matter.

Kristina Peralta, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, City of San Diego: Commissioner Anderson, I thank you for bringing this matter forward and would like to meet with you to discuss your ideas and concerns in more depth and strategize how we can work together.

b. The Adoption of the Library Masterplan with Amended Language

For the Board of Commissioners to adopt the master plan with the amended language, including our collaboration with the Office of the Childhood and Youth success and for other organizations to be identified as appropriate

Motion by Commissioner Urushima-Conn to approve. Second by Commissioner Hansen. Passed by unanimous vote.

Commissioner Moraga suggested to make that language more inclusive for potential new partners that would come along during the tenure of this this master plan. I'm assuming there'll be multiple offices and groups and nonprofits that could come aboard in the next decade. Misty will recommend adding the language on the second phase.

c. User Fee Approval

Two new fees are for the City Heights performance annex special events space \$428 corporate rate fee per day and a \$321 a day rate for nonprofit. In Fiscal Year 21, six fees that are proposed to be eliminated are: the damaged binding-\$1; adult lost item processing fee-\$10; juvenile lost item processing fee-\$5; book jacket fine-25 cents; media container damage fine-\$1; The reason why we have decided to eliminate these fees is because now that we are in this materials recovery model and these fines are incorporated into the cost of the item if damaged or lost. If a book is extremely damaged under this policy, the patron pays for the for the for the book if the book is lost and not returned, then they also pay for it for the book. Therefore, these fees are no longer required, we would essentially be double charging them so are proposing to eliminate them.

Motion by Commissioner Moraga to approve. Second by Commissioner Hansen. Passed by

unanimous vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next Board of Library Commissioners meeting will take place on January 5, 2022 at 12:30 PM via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wendy Urushima-Conn adjourned the meeting at 2:00 PM.



Misty Jones
Director, Library Department

/tn