



LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION (LAC) FINAL MINUTES

DATE: September 25, 2017

LOCATION: Main Library Brad Walters Community Room

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was convened by Chairperson Barbero at 5:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: 11 Victoria Barbero, Chairperson
Andrew Racle, Vice Chair
Reginald Constant
Ain Bailey
Susanne Perkins
Sarah McClung
Rosa Montgomery
Aurea Lewis
Ken Lupoff
Lesley Mandros Bell
Kerrick Goodman-Lucker

COMMISSION MEMBERS EXCUSED: 4 Laura Liang
Charles Sanchez
Nidhi Khosla
Rebekah Randle

STAFF PRESENT: Gerry Garzón, Director
Jamie Turbak, Associate Director
Sharon McKellar, Community Relations
Rosalía A. Romo, Recorder

Members of the public: Tracy Brown, Melvin Cowan, Desmond Jeffries, Stephanie Hamilton, Tyron Jordan, Catherine Smith, Claudia Noble-Levingston, Collette Winlock.

1. Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Barbero called for a motion to approve the minutes of July 31, 2017. Commissioner Mandros Bell moved to approve the minutes as amended; Commissioner Lupoff seconded. All approved.

Votes: Yes – 11; Noes – 0; abstentions - 0

2. Fines and Fees Pilot Program Update – Director Garzón

Last year the Library presented to City Council the Oakland Promise Card report, a joint School District identification and library card. As part of this project, there was a proposal to do away with fines for youth 18 and under for late materials. There are a large number of young people who can't use the library because of their fines, impacting a lot of youth in East and West Oakland. Council gave approval to the Library to adjust the fees for lost materials and withdraw the fines, and program was implemented in March 2017. As a result, a lot of young patrons are coming back and using the library. It is more cost effective to waive fines and the Library hopes to go back to Council to do away with fines permanently. Many library systems have gone in that direction, thus reducing barriers to use libraries. Staff will prepare an assessment at the end of program and present an update to the Commission.

3. Chairperson's Commission Activities Report – Chairperson Barbero

- Presented the LAC Annual Report to Council on Sept 12th, and highlighted the Library's \$3-4 million budget deficit in the next fiscal year. Director Garzón informed Council of the plans for a library parcel tax.
- Attended the Library Coalition meeting on Sept 17th, and talked about the tax measure possibility. Discussed raising money for the campaign, lawn signs, buttons, doing research to raise money. Library Coalition will check with Winifred Walters about where we can park any money raised.
- Will continue discussion on ways to raise money for the tax measure, as well as the need to get message out to community, Outreach Committee is working on that.
- Encouraged commissioners to participate in Oaktobefest celebration in Dimond District on Oct 1. Dimond Branch will be part of celebration
- Urged commissioners to attend Branch Friends Network meeting Oct 18, 10 – 12 at Temescal Branch.
- Noted Commissioner Racle is developing a budget presentation to present at various groups in community.
- Reminded commissioners that City Planning continues to work on the Downtown Redevelopment Plan - - we need commissioners to attend these meetings to keep the Library in the spotlight.

4. OPL Staff Activities Reports

a. Director's report highlights:

- Library Tax Measure. Last month the Library hired a consultant to work on developing a parcel tax measure to take to Council to put on the ballot next year. The Library currently has a \$3–4 million budget deficit. Consultant is working with staff and the Library Coalition group, and will probably meet with LAC's committees. Meetings and

polling results will help us determine whether the library measure goes to the polls in June or November 2018. Contemplating a \$75 parcel tax that will help cover deficit as well as tech, programming, capital. Measure Q does not cover this. As soon as polling is complete will bring update.

- Library received \$15 M from the iBond measure to use for renovation (painting, carpeting, plumbing) at West Oakland, Asian, Brookfield branches, and Main Library. Doing initial planning on how to use these funding.
- Last month the Main Library suffered the worst tagging in years, and part of the plan is to install security lighting and cameras at Main using iBond funds. Also, looking at the City's Public Art Program for murals. There is an Oversight Committee for the iBond measure.
- The LAC Sustainability Committee is working on the public message to explain to citizens about the measure. Polling in 2016 at two levels, \$49 and \$75, came favorably for both amounts. For this year's poll, it was decided to go at \$75 level to cover deficit funding and deficiency measures. Polling will be complete this week.
- At the beginning of August there was a change of personnel and direction at AAMLO in terms of vision, and Rick Moss is no longer at AAMLO. The library put out a press release detailing plans to bring an Interim Chief Curator, and hiring a professional consultant to assist with a national search for a Chief Curator, which may take 6-9 months. There will be a public component for community engagement to be part of interview and hiring process. In answer to Commissioner Lewis's comment, Director Garzón stated that change may appear abrupt to the outside because of appearances, but that was not the case, and agreed that programs will continue at AAMLO as planned. The new acting curator will be invited to meet the LAC and the AAMLO community. Sharon McKellar, Community Relations Librarian, added that the comments received thus far has been very positive. Some have come in through the provided form and some have been posted on the Library's blog. Director Garzón has talked to several community leaders, and encourages the public to visit the website and leave comments and contact information in order to invite community engagement. The Library encourages community feedback by visiting the Library's blog (oaklandlibrary.org/AAMLOchanges).

5. Open forum

Members of the public spoke regarding AAMLO changes. The main comments and concerns included:

- Community participation in hiring process, involve the African American community not just in a public forum, but also in designing any sort of public forum.
- Open recruitment to African American local agencies/groups, post announcement to the public. Make sure that we look locally as well as nationally in our search
- Transparency and openness in terms of exactly how public will be involved in process now and all along the way
- Concerns and questions about what we want that we weren't getting from previous curator.
- Would like to see job description
- Restore bookstore
- Fear over losing the African-American history part of AAMLO

- Fear of losing the archives and research materials at AAMLO or the focus on those things
- Do not change AAMLO's name or location, especially with gentrification in Oakland
- Requested founding documents for AAMLO
- Suggestion that in creating a "21st Century Museum" we should look at other museums who have done this well and maintained the important historical information alongside the new innovations. Something to think about when seeking a permanent curator.
- People would like to meet the Interim Curator (maybe at the LAC mixer)
- Suggestion that we should check in with Darlene Flynn and the Dept. of Race and Equity during this process.

In response, staff made the following clarifications and comments:

- Reassurance that we are not moving AAMLO from its current location. It has never been the intention to remove or change the focus from African Americans or the name of the institution.
- No plans to take away African American history from AAMLO. AAMLO has a unique research collection and archives, which makes it special. We will continue to build its collections.
- Once a professional consultant is hired, they will conduct a national search and recruitment will be open to all who are interested.
- Staff cannot discuss/comment on the previous curator situation, as it is a personnel issue, but the job description can be shared in terms of what is wanted.
- We should post the job description publicly as soon as we can to share what we are looking for in a new curator.
- The tax measure will help with continuing programs and events at AAMLO and all branches.
- AAMLO needs its Friends group resuscitated. AAMLO volunteer, Claudia Noble-Levingston, indicated that she will begin a Friends group at AAMLO.
- Library Commissioners adopt branches as their assigned branches, including AAMLO
- The Bookstore was put on pause until the financial aspect is sorted out (difficulty how funds were being collected). A friends group would help on this issue.
- People are invited to attend the next Branch Friends Networking meeting on Oct 18 at Temescal Branch, 10am – 12noon. This is a great networking opportunity.

6. Outreach Standing Committee Update – Commissioner Mandros Bell

- Talked about ballot measure, list of contact people, outreach larger groups, ideas for products to promote, ideas to get younger voters. Look at renters for ballot measure. Commissioner Constant will handle the Google apps.
- Will start planning the LAC Social Mixer, scheduled for Dec 3. Need to get invites out. Commissioner Lewis and Perkins will co-chair the Social Mixer, and Commissioners McClung and Mandros Bell will help as well.

7. Sustainability Committee Update – Commissioner Racle

- Talked about ballot measure as well.
- Build talking points, and Commissioner McClung will put together a series of points in Google doc to share with commissioners.
- Reaching out to Helen Bloch to compare talking points. Does not want to reinvent wheel.
- Director Garzón added that Tom Clifford, ballot measure consultant, wants to meet with supporters and committees.

7. Commissioner’s Advocacy Reports

Tabled for next meeting

10. Agenda Building

Tool Lending

11. Open Forum/Announcements

- Acknowledged Commissioner Ain Bailey’s end term. She will be missed after serving on the LAC for 4 years.

12. Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 7:33 pm.

Submitted by: Gerry Garzón, Library Director