



LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION (LAC) FINAL MINUTES

Date: November 30, 2020

Recording: http://oakland.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=a14a0aa7-338f-11eb-bc32-0050569183fa

Location: Zoom video conference

Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20, all members of the Oakland Public Library (OPL) Advisory Commission joined the meeting via phone/video conference and no teleconference locations were required.

CALL TO ORDER: Co-Chair Dumas called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: 12

- Ada Chan
- Alternier Cook
- Angelica Valentine
- Caleb Smith
- Carolyn Moskovitz
- Cathy Smith
- Jessica Jung
- Joseph Karwat
- Mary Forte
- Mary Going
- Nathaniel Dumas, Co-Chair
- Viola Gonzales, Co-Chair

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: 2

- Mary Jo Cook
- Tyron Jordan

STAFF PRESENT:

- Jamie Turbak, OPL Director
- Kere Gonzales, Executive Assistant to the Director

1. Approval of Draft Minutes: October 26, 2020

Commissioner Cathy Smith made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Caleb Smith seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion approved.

2. Co-Chairpersons' Report

Co-chair Viola Gonzales discussed reaching out to commissioners regarding their interest in serving as co-chair. Co-chair Nathaniel Dumas discussed reviewing applications for vacant commissioner seat. He will speak to Councilmember Taylor regarding representation from District 6 for future vacancies.

3. Oakland Public Library (OPL) Director Report

To: Library Advisory Commission

From: Jamie Turbak, Director, Oakland Public Library

Date: November 30, 2020

Re: Oakland Public Library (OPL) – Director Report

Ongoing Projects/ Initiatives and Operations:

- In mid-November, Alameda County Public Health Department returned to the “purple tier”, a more restrictive health order. However, Oakland Public Library services remain unchanged as outside “sidewalk check-out” is allowable under the purple tier.
- OPL was notified that World Central Kitchen can fund meals through the end of December, so food distribution will continue at 81st Ave and Chavez Branch Libraries until the end of the calendar year. This is good for the community as demand remains high.
- The Library’s Race and Equity Team has completed a draft of the Library Equity Action Plan. In December, we will roll out the plan to all library staff and the City of Oakland Department of Race and Equity for additional feedback. We will continue to share drafts of the plan more widely after this initial staff feedback.
- We are about to launch a migration of the Library Department intranet. We estimate a 10-week migration, so hope to be complete by March 2021.
- In February 2021, the Library will launch a 10- month migration to “Bibliocommons”, an online platform that integrates the catalog (stuff patrons can check out) with events, activities and online services for patrons. This will be an enormous improvement to our 24-7 “e-branch” (online library services) sought by library patrons and the Library Advisory Commission for several years.
- Library Administration met with SEIU Local 1021 for the first discussion regarding re-opening plans. Another meeting is scheduled on December 4th. The union’s primary areas of concern were security guards, staffing levels, increased cleaning of facilities and equipment and ventilation/air filtration. The initial library re-opening “conceptual plan” is approved and the next step is for small staff workgroups to refine 4 areas of service:
 - Greeting/Orienting Patrons
 - Browsing materials
 - Check-out/Self-assist
 - Computers
- I was present at a City-OUSD school safety meeting. I’m interested in aligning library suspension policies and staff training on de-escalation with OUSD’s models, if possible. As part of our upcoming Race and Equity Action Plan, the Library will be re-writing our “code of conduct” and the policy for “handling difficult situations with patrons” which includes our process for calling 911 and/or banning patrons from libraries. Also, I’d like to pursue replacing or supplementing contract security guards with

MACRO. Analysis of library incidents demonstrates that the majority of our incidents involve mental health and behavioral problems, as opposed to “crimes” like theft or vandalism.

- I applied for a \$100K State of California grant to distribute cell phone “power banks” (portable cell phone chargers) to unhoused populations. If awarded, Oakland Public Library will partner with Operation Dignity to provide this alternative method for staying connected while libraries are closed. After distribution and initial use, the power banks could be exchanged at public libraries for charged devices similar to book lending, but not requiring a library card. This service would help alleviate the existing need for library patrons to come inside to charge their phones.
- Working with Human Resources to update library job specifications, such as Library Aide, Library Assistant, Senior Library Assistant, Librarian I, Librarian II, Senior Librarian and Archivist. The job specs have not been noticeably revised since their creation in 1993. A significant change is to remove a mandatory requirement of a B.A. for Library Assistant and a mandatory requirement of a Masters in Library Science (MLIS) for librarians. This change will help increase the racial and language diversity of our applicant pool for librarian. For Library Assistant, this change will allow existing city employees, including Library Aides with many years of experience, to advance to Library Assistant without completing a 4-year degree which has been an obstacle for many excellent employees. The educational requirement may be substituted with relevant experience.

Kudos / Items for Media or Communication’s Team

- The OPL Advocates Holiday Mixer: All are invited to the 8th Annual Oakland Public Library (OPL) Advocates Holiday Mixer, **Sunday, Dec. 6, from 1-3 p.m.** Guests will receive easy-to-follow instructions for the zoom mixer after they **RSVP**.
- Article, [“Oakland adult literacy students find ways to continue learning during the pandemic”](#) published October 27, 2020 in OaklandNorth, an online publication.
- Article, [“Dimond Library adapted to the pandemic and remains a vital community hub”](#) published November 16, 2020 in *The Oaklandside*, an online publication.
- Article, “Our Library Today” published in November 15, 2020, *The Hoot*, a publication of the Friends of Piedmont Avenue Branch Library (see excerpt below).

Our Library Today

One of the rewards of sitting at a table outside the Piedmont Avenue Library is seeing the variety of patrons and hearing, if you ask, their stories. Sometimes you might even learn something.

For instance, Michael, who lives across the street and subscribes to the HOOT, uses a number of the library’s services. He checks out books, but he also receives them on his Ipad. He gets some books on Libby and others on Hoopla, both library programs. He streams movies and can access older media. He says that in non-COVID times the staff librarians are helpful and knowledgeable and he thinks the current team, brought together from several branches, is doing a remarkable job during this difficult time.

Cora, who walked over, makes her requests online and picks up the books when she gets a notice they’re on site. Her children, six and four, really miss being able to go inside, attend Storytime, and browse through the books.

Deborah joined us and couldn’t say enough praises about the regular staff and the current service. “They deserve five stars,” she said. “No, more. Seven, at least seven. It’s amazing how they’re coping.”

In the midst of patrons coming and going, collecting and returning books, a van with the library system logo on its side pulled up in the loading zone on the street. Todd, the driver unloaded several bins full of books onto a dolly and pushed them to the back door of the library. Soon he returned with a bigger load he had collected inside, hauled them to the van, then headed to the main library. Three of these vans and drivers provide this service to all the branches.

It took a minute to realize that Sumona had a tiny baby strapped to her chest. At three weeks old and sleeping, the baby didn’t stick out very far and wasn’t moving. Her four-year-old sister, at home, has been coming to the library since she was a baby. Sumona likes books on Kindle; her husband prefers hard copy, hold-in-your-hand books.

With Sumona was Sara, the girls’ grandmother, from Michigan. She was using Sumona’s library card to get the book her reading group at home will be discussing at their next meeting.

Keeping library services available for readers and listeners is a real challenge these days, but five days a week, from 10 to 1, Emily Odia, whose usual job site is Eastmont, and her crew are there, making sure patrons get the books they ordered. Be sure to say thanks when you go to pick yours up.

By Ruby Long, a neighbor whose work has appeared in local and national publications.

4. Strategic Plan Discussion

There were minor edits to formatting and language made to the Action Plan. The committees will provide a purpose statement for Action Plan.

5. Life Enrichment Committee Annual Report

Committees will discuss contents at their individual meetings and come back with a draft report in January. Current topics that may be included are: COVID-19 work, maintenance, audit, and budget.

6. Election of Co-Chairs and Vice Chair

Commissioner Nathaniel Dumas made a motion to elect Commissioner Carolyn Moskovitz as Vice Chair. Commissioner Alternier Cook seconded. All in favor.

Commissioner Viola Gonzales made a motion to elect Commissioner Nathaniel Dumas and Commissioner Caleb Smith as Co-chairs. Commissioner Mary Going seconded. All in favor.

7. Open Forum/Public Comment (two-minute time limit)

8. Meeting with Electeds Update

Councilmembers have been invited to mixer. Commissioner Mary Going will reach out to Auditor regarding audit and will also invite her to mixer.

9. Standing Committee Reports

- Outreach – Annual Mixer on December 6, 2020. Has been working on Strategic Plan.
- Sustainability – Hoping to have OPW at next meeting to discuss backlog. Has been working on Strategic Plan.

10. Commissioner's Advocacy Reports

11. Agenda Building

Committees will discuss potential speakers for 2021 meetings and bring list of suggestions in January.

12. Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

/ s /

Kere Gonzales, Executive Assistant to the Director

