



LIBRARY COMMISSION DRAFT MINUTES

Date: January 29, 2024

Recording: Due to a technical issue, this meeting was not recorded.

Location: Main Library, 125 14th Street, Oakland CA 94612

CALL TO ORDER: Co-Chair Caleb Smith called the meeting to order at 5:50 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: 10

Chiye Azuma
Bradley Boyd
Alternier Cook
Mary Forte, Vice-Chair
Carolyn Moskovitz
Karen Roye
Gabrielle Sloane Law
Caleb Smith, Co-Chair
Cristina Tostado
Alex Weinberg

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: 3

Brittany Buckmire
Ayushi Roy, Co-Chair
Karen Zukor

STAFF PRESENT: 1

Jamie Turbak, OPL Director

STAFF ABSENT: 1

Kere Gonzales, Executive Assistant to the Director

1. Roll Call

2. Open Forum/Public Comment

There were no members of the public present.

3. Approval of Draft Minutes: November 27, 2023

Commissioner Mary Forte reported two errors in the minutes and asked that the minutes be amended to include the corrections. Commissioner Chiye Azuma made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Commissioner Alex Weinberg seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion approved.

4. Annual Elections

There was discussion about what it means “in practice” to build the meeting agenda with Co-chairs and a Vice-chair. It was explained that Executive Assistant, Kere Gonzales, emails the draft agenda topics to the Co-chairs and Vice-chair in advance of the meeting based on topics requested during the prior Agenda Building portion of the Library Commission meeting. The three recipients of the email respond with any suggested changes in a casual and informal process. It was shared that this process is more streamlined and much easier than the previous process which included a formal agenda planning meeting each month. Participation in the agenda building discussion by all commissioners also helps simplify the process and is appreciated by the Co-chairs and Vice-chair.

There was a call for questions regarding the roles of Chair and Vice-chair.

Commissioner Caleb Smith clarified that he will not seek reelection. Commissioner Chiye Azuma expressed willingness to consider the Vice-chair role if Commissioner Mary Forte would accept the role of Chair or Co-Chair. Commissioner Gabrielle Sloane Law expressed willingness to run as Co-Chair in six months after gaining experience on the Library Commission. Commissioner Mary Forte reminded the group that her term ends in August. Commissioner Caleb Smith motioned that Commissioner Mary Forte and Commissioner Gabrielle Sloane Law be elected as Co-chairs and that Commissioner Chiye Azuma be elected as Vice-chair. Commissioner Alternier Cook seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.

5. 2024 Action Plan

Commissioner Mary Forte provided an overview of the background of the Action Plan that was created in 2021. There was general discussion about the plan including questions about if the Committees have stayed with the plan and a suggestion that the plan should align with the mission and vision of Oakland Public Library. It was shared that the format of the plan is optional and can change if others have ideas on how to better present strategies and goals. The Community Engagement and Sustainability Committees have meetings in February and can report back to the Library Commission in March. Director Jamie Turbak shared that there will be a new 18-month plan of the Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP) which serves as a strategic planning document for Oakland Public Library and Both the REAP and the 18-month plan can be shared with the Library Commission. In addition, Director Jamie Turbak stated that Race and Equity Team will present a report to the Library Commission at an upcoming meeting.

There was discussion about the Committees. Commissioner Gabrielle Sloane Law stated that she would join the Community Engagement Committee. Commissioner Christina Tostado requested verification of the dates of the Committee meeting. Commissioner Chiye Azuma verified that Sustainability Committee will meet in February and that the meeting information will need to be publicly noticed in time by Executive Assistant Kere Gonzales.

The conclusion was that some areas, including dates, of the Action Plan are outdated and need to be updated. Also, it was noted that there was language that needs to align with the REAP.

6. Quarterly Maintenance Report

Commissioner Mary Forte gave an overview of the Quarterly Maintenance Report and an explanation of the open service requests. The overall total number of service requests effective December 31, 2023 was down to 109 open tickets. This represented a significant reduction from last year. The report is a document that Commissioners can use as a tool when advocating for a branch.

Commissioner Karen Roye acknowledged the hard work and persistence that produced this effective outcome. Commissioner Chiye Azuma discussed the service tickets at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch which had 12 open tickets at the end of the year, one of which is electrical and creates a safety and tripping hazard as well as looking bad. This has been an issue for a long time. MLK Branch does not have a Friends Group to advocate for this location. When asked the best way to bring up or follow up on an issue, it was shared that there is no wrong time to raise issues either directly with library staff, through the 311 system or with City Council staff. Also, the Capital Improvement Program process which occurs in conjunction with the City Council budget approval is a good time to engage with Council Members about library facility needs. Commissioner Karen Roye talked about the importance of staffing levels and using talking points from Sustainability Committee. Commissioner Alternier Cook reminded everyone that it is important to visit elected officials and build allies. Commissioner Chiye Azuma described visiting Council Member Jenkins and discussing the Maintenance of Effort. When he was told about the problems with the electrical and extension cords, he wanted to go and see the library himself. This is an important talking point.

7. Director's Update

Director Jamie Turbak covered the following:

- **Audit update**

Library Department met with the City of Oakland Auditor's Office in December to initiate the audits of Measure Q (Library Services Retention and Enhancement Act) and Measure D (2018 Oakland Public Library Preservation Act) through Fiscal Year June 30, 2023. The audits will determine whether the Library spent Measures Q and D proceeds as intended by the respective measures' requirements. The audits should be complete soon and reports published in the next couple of months.

- **Bylaws Update**

After submitting the draft of the Library Commission bylaws to the City Attorney, we received feedback that will be reviewed with the adhoc committee.

- **Commission vacancies**

There are currently 3 vacancies and several applications.

- **Library Card Design Contest**

The winners have been selected! To celebrate the national theme for Black History Month 2024 – African Americans and the Arts –OPL will offer 9 different limited-edition library cards. The new library cards will be available starting on Monday, February 5th. Please join us for a celebration of the artists and an exhibition of the winning designs on February 3, from 2-4:00 pm, at the Dimond Branch. Visit this page to see the winning designs:<https://oaklandlibrary.org/artcontest/winners/>

- **Bike Giveaway**

Thanks to a generous in-kind donation from the Bay Area Bike Project, the 81st Avenue Library gave away 73 small bikes, bike helmets, and bike locks on Saturday, December 9. The giveaway was followed by a Youth Bike Rodeo to promote safe cycling. (pictures below)



- **Little Town Libraries**



OPL-branded “Little Town Libraries” were installed recently at four East Oakland recreation centers: Arroyo Viejo, Carmen Flores, Ira Jenkins, and Tassafaronga. In partnership with the Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation, OPL will be stocking these libraries regularly with beautiful new books for youth.

- **Robert C. Toll in memory of Judith Toll** – Longtime Friends of the OPL volunteer and board member Judy Toll passed away on May 20, 2023. A former school librarian (retired from San Leandro High School after more than 20 years of service), Judy began volunteering at the Bookmark in 2001. She joined the Friends of the OPL Board in 2003 and chaired the Bookstore Committee from 2011-2017. When she stepped down from the board in 2017, Judy continued to volunteer at the Bookmark

until 2020. Judy’s husband, Bob Toll, recently sent a generous gift in Judy’s memory offering to fund an entire year of service for the West Oakland Story Bus.

8. Co-Chairperson’s Update

Co-Chair Caleb Smith reviewed his discussion with the City Auditor and explained that he’d emphasized the commission’s concern about the maintenance of effort and the need to refine the definition of a fiscal emergency. He also shared that the Spring Mixer is tentatively scheduled at the Main Library for April 14. Baked goods or treats might be needed. Commissioner Alternier Cook volunteered to help with planning the refreshments. Commissioner Caleb Smith can provide contact info if there is interest in joining the OPL Advocates which meets on the 3rd Monday of each month.

9. Ad-Hoc Committee Updates

Commissioner Karen Roye reported on the activities of the Sustainability Committee.

10. Agenda Building

- **February 2024-** Talking Points for Electeds, Ad-hoc Committee for Annual Report to City Council, Committee Updates on the Action Plan
- **March 2024-** Approve Final Draft of Annual Report, Racial Equity Team update
- **April 2024-** Budget overview, Budget 101, Spring Mixer Recap
- **May 2024-** Survey from Sustainability Committee, Presentation on Feasibility Plan.

11. Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 7:34 PM

Respectfully submitted,

/ s /

Jamie Turbak, Library Director