



LIBRARY COMMISSION DRAFT MINUTES

Date: March 24, 2025

Recording: https://oakland.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=b7dfc0b6-0a6e-11f0-ab6a-005056a89546

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

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Gabrielle Sloane Law called the meeting to order at 5:51 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: 11

Chiye Azuma, Vice-Chair
Bradley Boyd
Mary Cain-Simon
Gay Plair Cobb
Carolyn Jones
Anand Patel
Karen Roye
Justus Samuels
Gabrielle Sloane Law, Chair
Cristina Tostado
Alex Weinberg

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: 3

Brittany Buckmire
Zacharias George
Karen Zukor

STAFF PRESENT: 2

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

1. Roll Call

2. What are Commissioners Reading?

Chair Sloane Law opened the floor for sharing during the icebreaker. Various commissioners shared what they are reading and details about the materials and the authors.

3. Open Forum/Public Comment

There were four members of the public who spoke during open forum:

Regina Chavarin spoke in support of the Cesar Chavez Branch remaining open.

Annette Oropeza spoke in support of the Cesar Chavez Branch remaining open.

Rodrigo Duarte Clark spoke in support of the Cesar Chavez Branch remaining open.

Ms. Williams spoke to give kudos to staff and volunteers regarding the service received on her visit to the library to have her taxes prepared.

4. Approval of Draft Minutes: February 24, 2025

Commissioner Roye made a motion to approve the minutes as published. Commissioner Azuma seconded. Commissioner Patel abstained. Commissioner Cain-Simon was not present for the portion of the meeting and did not cast a vote. All others in favor. Motion approved.

5. Finalize Talking Points

Chair Sloane Law introduced the final version of the talking points. She highlighted that the talking points should not be given to the councilmember, but instead should be used for preparation for the discussion. Chair Sloane Law also clarified that commissioners should be unified on the Part II, The Ask, while the contextual talking points can be customized to the branches in the district and the councilmember that they are speaking with.

Chair Sloane Law encouraged commissioners to start reaching out to councilmembers immediately to get on their calendars since they will get very busy as the budget season proceeds.

Various commissioners thanked the Community Engagement committee for their work on the talking points which they found very helpful.

Following brief discussion and suggestions, a motion was made by commissioner Cain-Simon and seconded by Commissioner Azuma to adopt the talking points as published. All in favor. Motion approved.

6. Racial Equity Training

Staff Gonzales reminded commissioners to activate their NeoGov accounts, so they have access to the city's training platform. Once activated, commissioners can enroll in and take the Reducing Bias and Cultivating Inclusion (RCBI) training that was recommended by the Racial Equity Team.

Staff Gonzales also shared that the Racial Equity Team also recommended that commissioners read the [City's Equity Indicator Report](#) as a prerequisite to taking the training.

Once all commissioners have activated the accounts, registration instructions will be sent by staff Gonzales.

7. Tips and Tricks for New Commissioners

Chair Sloane Law introduced the tips and tricks for talking to elected official and decision makers. She thanked Commissioners Roye and Jones for their input and assistance with drafting the document.

The document details how to build relationships, schedule meetings, and keep the conversations going with elected officials and decision makers. In response to Commissioner Cobb's question regarding follow up and reporting back, Chair Sloane Law stated that she would modify the document to add a section which covers how to report feedback received to the rest of the commission. Vice-chair Azuma also suggested that the report could happen during the advocacy updates section of the agenda.

It was also suggested that commissioners' meetings with councilmember are tracked. Commissioners Cain-Simon and Samuels will work on a document which acts as a form to track meetings and bring the document to the commission.

Chair Sloane Law will get the updates incorporated into the document and sent out to the commission by the week of March 31, 2025.

8. Informal Mentorship

Chair Sloane Law introduced the informal mentorship concept which pairs newer commissioners with experienced commissioners to familiarize with a branch, the branch managers, commission processes, etc. The mentor is a resource that can be called upon for help, clarity, guidance.

Commissioner Cain-Simon thanked Commissioner Azuma for being her informal mentor already. Chair Sloane Law asked anyone who is interested in being a mentor or mentee to reach out to her to let her know.

9. Spring Mixer Preparation

Staff Gonzales circulated a sign-up sheet for the potluck at the mixer. After discussion, it was decided that commissioners would wear red. Commissioner Tostado stated that she would provide the backdrop to staff Gonzales because she could not be present at the mixer.

It was requested that staff Gonzales re-send the RSVP for the mixer following the meeting.

10. Director's Update

Director Turbak covered the following:

- On Monday, March 31, all libraries are closed for the Cesar Chavez holiday.
- Director Turbak, Associate Director Lindsay, and Chief Financial Officer Montu presented the departmental budget proposal to the mayor and city leadership.
- The fiscal year 25-27 budget will be published on April 28th.
- Renovations will soon begin on the Brookfield branch. We expect a six-month closure with an approximate start in May.
- OPL submitted a \$100K grant to replace the furnace at Temescal with electric heat pump system.
- The skylights at the Main library are being replaced. Most of the second floor is done. The large lobby skylight is next.
- The SF Giants are having a “We Love Libraries” game on Monday, April 7th at 6:45p.
- Librarian Erica Siskind was honored at City Hall as District 1’s woman of the month for Women’s History Month.
- The Institute of Museum and Library (IMLS) Services has lost funding due to an executive order. While OPL doesn’t get direct funding from IMLS, the state library has lost funding to the Library Services and Technology Act which received \$16M for fiscal year 24-25.

11. Chairperson's Update

Chair Sloane Law reported that she is meeting with the Finance department and along with advocates for the Parks and Recreation measures to get more information regarding the answers to the questions in the annual report that was given to the Life Enrichment Committee last year.

Staff Gonzales reminded Commissioners that the Annual Form 700 is due on April 1st. It was clarified that if the most recent form was submitted on or before September 1, 2024, then a new filing is needed. As an aide to the process, staff Gonzales will send the Office of the Clerk’s Netfile link as a follow up item.

12. Standing Committee Updates

Commissioner Brad Boyd announced his resignation from the commission.

Sustainability Committee

Commissioner Cain-Simon reported that Sustainability Committee discussed tracking the Planning Commission meetings. She will follow up with Commissioner Weinberg regarding tracking the capital projects that affect libraries.

Commissioner Azuma shared that she will be the commission’s liaison for questions and concerns regarding. Staff Gonzales stated that the full process will be agendaized for the April meeting.

Community Engagement Committee

Commissioner Sloane Law reported that Community Engagement discussed the updates to the talking points and tips and tricks documents.

13. Commissioner Advocacy Updates

Commissioner Cain-Simon reported that Elmhurst had hosted coffee with a cop and it was a success. She suggested that other branches could do the program as well. She also mentioned that there is an issue with parking now that the owner of the parking lot across the street from Elmhurst has closed it and asked if Director Turbak could discuss or advocate with the business owner.

14. Agenda Building

It was requested that the Action Plan be included as a standing attachment for agenda building.

April 2025- Mixer Debrief, Cesar Chavez, Quarterly Maintenance Report, New Service Ticket Liaison, Commissioner Assignments.

May 2025- Budget Presentation

15. Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,

/ s /

Kere Gonzales, Executive Assistant