



LIBRARY COMMISSION DRAFT MINUTES

Date: October 27, 2025

Recording: https://oakland.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=3e41873a-b502-11f0-8df7-005056a89546

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

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Gabrielle Sloane Law called the meeting to order at 5:50 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: 10

Mary Cain-Simon
Gay Plair Cobb
Kevin Covarrubias
Andrea Henderson
Carolyn Jones
Anand Patel
Justus Samuels
Gabrielle Sloane Law, Chair
Cristina Tostado
Alex Weinberg

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: 3

Chiye Azuma, Vice-Chair
April Bell
Karen Zukor

STAFF PRESENT: 2

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

1. Roll Call

2. Approval of Draft Minutes: September 29, 2025

Commissioner Cobb made a motion to approve the minutes as published.

Commissioner Tostado seconded. Commissioners Covarrubias, Henderson, Patel, and Samuels abstained. All others in favor. Motion approved.

3. Open Forum/Public Comment

There were no members of the public present; public comment was closed.

4. Commissioner Introductions

Newly appointed Commissioners Covarrubias and Henderson introduced themselves and shared about their passions and path to the commission. Other commissioners briefly introduced themselves and the branches they represent.

5. East Oakland Engagement Team

The East Oakland Engagement Team is a group of four library staff who work together to engage the East Oakland Community through outreach and various programs. Team members Anthony Propernick and Manny Hernandez shared about the team's commitment to community outreach and highlighted its programs:

- The Bike Fix Program is a free weekly bike repair clinic at 81st Avenue branch on Friday afternoons and MLK branch on Wednesday afternoons. They teach youth patrons how to perform light repairs such as fix broken chains and tire repair. The youth can volunteer and earn a free brand-new bike.
- The Bike Library Lounge is a newer way of outreach which brings the library to meet people where they are. It has sofas, chairs, a seating area, and books. Community members can sit, read, sign up for a library card, and experience the library outdoors.
- The Father Circle takes place at 81st Avenue and there is a pilot at the Dimond branch. It is a space for fathers and father-figures to exchange stories and support each other. The Father Circle has been invited to participate in the Fatherhood Summit which is sponsored by First 5 Alameda County. At a recent event, fathers and their children made picture frames during a craft activity. They were later photographed and left the event with a framed photo.
- The Little Town Libraries are in partnership with Stephen and Ayesha Curry's Eat, Learn, Play Foundation and consists of 24 little libraries in Oakland's flatlands. These little libraries contain culturally relevant books and are in East Oakland, West Oakland, Chinatown, and Fruitvale. They are filled with brand new books and are installed and maintained by team members. Since 2022 the Little Town Libraries have distributed over 22,000 books.

Commissioners were very impressed with the outreach and programming they learned about and asked how to contact the East Oakland Engagement Team. Staff Gonzales will share the contact information for Anthony and Manny with commissioners.

6. Annual Report to Life Enrichment Committee

Chair Sloane Law led the discussion about the annual report to the Life Enrichment Committee. She started by explaining that the report will be different from last year's report. It will focus on commission accomplishments rather than statistics to avoid duplicating information that can be found in OPL's annual report.

Chair Sloane Law asked commissioners to send an email with bullet points of things that they have accomplished or are proud of at their branches to be included in the report. It was also suggested that the commissioners think about recommendations that can be included as well. This report will be discussed and finalized at a future meeting before going to the committee in the Spring of 2026.

7. OPL Room Naming

Director Turbak shared that a request to name a room had been received by OPL. She explained that the process and legislation for room naming was very old and asked for an ad hoc committee to review the current request, and review and update the process. Commissioners Cain-Simon, Cobb, Covarrubias and Weinberg volunteered. They will review the current request and use it to inform changes that are needed to the policy.

Director Turbak and Staff Gonzales will take the lead on pulling the group together for the first meeting and discussion.

8. Commissioner Reports and Updates

These were the commissioner reports and updates:

- Commissioner Jones reported that she and Commissioner Patel had attended the Friends of OPL network meeting.
- Commissioner Cobb had nothing new to report.
- Commissioner Cain-Simon reported that there was a litter walk at Elmhurst that had been very much appreciated by the seniors who live in the area. She also reported that she is planning to attend the Amigos group at Chavez.
- Commissioner Sloane Law reported that 81st Avenue is having an elevator issue and that the fire panel needs to be inspected by the fire department.
- Commissioner Weinberg reported that he'd gone to the Halloween parade at Rockridge and enjoyed seeing the kiddies in costume.
- Commissioner Tostado reported that she'd participated in the litter walk around MLK with Commissioner Azuma. She also reported that Asian branch has parenting classes online. Commissioner Tostado also reported that Asian branch staff have been seeing cockroaches and asked that the branch be swept and mopped daily.
- Commissioner Samuels reported that West Oakland has the Taste of West getting very popular. He also reported that book club has grown from a handful of people to over 30. The items at West that need the most attention is the carpet needs to be shampooed and the roof leaks during rain. On the bright side, the windows are being replaced, and they bring lots of light in.
- Commissioner Patel reported that there have been small events at Montclair, and he would like to get connected to Director Turbak about outreach and marketing for OPL.

9. Quarterly Maintenance Report

Commissioner Weinberg shared the quarterly maintenance report and described the how the branch summary aggregates open service requests on a quarterly basis to identify trends, hotspots, branches where tickets are open longest. The report itself contains specific details and can be used to troubleshoot with branch managers.

10. Director's Update

Director Turbak shared the following:

- Federal agents and immigration officers were stationed on Coast Guard Island and a community resistance group encouraged people congregate at libraries to have vigils. City has issued a protocol for staff response to immigration officers.
- OPL now has an executed lease for Chavez branch.
- Lakeview branch is getting a new floor this week.
- Carnegie Foundation is giving grants of \$10K each remaining Carnegie libraries. AAMLO, Temescal, Golden Gate, and Melrose will each get a grant.
- Pacific Library Partnership is giving OPL a \$9K grant for celebrating immigrant roots which will allow OPL to do more programming around immigrant populations.
- There is a project to renovate the teen area at West Oakland.

11. Committee Announcements

- **Sustainability-** No update because committee did not meet
- **Community Engagement-** No update because committee did not meet
- **General Plan Ad Hoc-** No update because Planning meeting was cancelled.
- **Action Plan Ad Hoc-** No update because committee did not meet.

12. Chairperson's Update

Chair Sloane Law shared that there were three new commissioners appointed. She also asked commissioners to complete the survey about their interests and areas where they can be useful on the commission. Kere will resend the survey.

13. Agenda Building

November 2025- Annual Report, Hidden Treasures at Main, Commissioner Assignments
December 2025- Recess

14. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:09pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kere Gonzales, Executive Assistant