



LIBRARY COMMISSION DRAFT MINUTES

Date: February 23, 2026

Recording: https://oakland.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=d484ed62-129a-11f1-bb28-005056a89546

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

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Gabrielle Sloane Law called the meeting to order at 5:47 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: 11

Chiye Azuma
April Bell
Mary Cain-Simon
Kevin Covarrubias
Andrea Henderson
Carolyn Jones
Anand Patel
Justus Samuels
Gabrielle Sloane Law
Cristina Tostado
Karen Zukor

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: 2

Gay Plair Cobb
Alex Weinberg

STAFF PRESENT: 2

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

1. Roll Call

2. What are Commissioners Reading?

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

3. Approval of Draft Minutes: November 24, 2025

Staff Gonzales made an amendment to the minutes to correct the name of the public speaker; it had been noted as Byron. The public speaker should have been noted in the minutes as Kye Ocasio-Pare. Commissioner Bell made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Commissioner Zukor seconded. Commissioners Azuma and Cobb abstained. Commissioner Henderson was not present for this portion of the meeting and did not cast a vote. All others in favor. Motion approved.

4. Open Forum/Public Comment

There were two guests present who did not make public comments.

5. Advocacy Coordination

Chair Azuma introduced this item which had been requested on agenda by Commissioner Sloane Law who has been the liaison to the OPL Advocates. Chair Azuma asked for 2-3 volunteers to serve as liaisons alongside Commissioner Sloane Law and provide regular reports to the full commission at the meetings regarding the advocacy coordination.

Commissioner Sloane Law described the work with the OPL Advocates as working on communication with councilmembers, developing talking points in conjunction with the Community Engagement committee, conducting budget analyses, and generating calls to action from library supporters.

Chair Azuma shared that Kevin Covarrubias will be a liaison and asked other members of the commission to think about it and let her know.

6. Quarterly Maintenance Report

Chair Azuma introduced the Quarterly Maintenance Report for the period ending December 31, 2025, and explained that it is based on open service requests from the 311 open tickets log. She further explained that the summary is a report that compiles the number of open requests by branch and the amount of time they have been open.

Chair Azuma encouraged commissioners to speak with their branch managers to ensure the information on the report is accurate and make note of items that need to be escalated.

Director Turbak noted an error in the summary in the column labeled 12/31/2025. The total in the column should be 63 rather than 150.

When asked, Director Turbak explained that different leases have different requirements and that OPW may not have the same level of responsibility in leased buildings as they do in City-owned buildings.

Commissioners will keep monitoring the reports and checking with their branches.

7. Commissioner Reports and Updates

These were the commissioner's reports and updates:

- Commissioner Zukor reported that the monthly repair clinics at Temescal have been hugely successful.
- Commissioner Tostado reported the CM Brown suggested a cheat sheet from the commission for ongoing issues at libraries. She also reported a clean up at MLK and that staff had reported smelling the products from the janitor's closet.
- Commissioner Sloane Law reported that she had not visited her branch but had been working with the OPL Advocates on the call to action for the Finance Committee and City Council meetings.
- Commissioner Samuels reported that West Oakland has a good book club that is growing. He also reported that the Taste of West program has been very successful.
- Commissioner Patel reported that things are going well at Montclair and foot traffic is up. He also reported that there have been individuals hanging around outside of the branch after hours and neighbors are keeping an eye on the branch.
- Commissioner Jones reported that she had not visited her branches but had been on a crusade to get the seniors in her neighborhood signed up for Libby, Hoopla, and Canopy. She reported that she had been working with them to show them ebooks and how the apps work.
- Commissioner Henderson reported that she met with the Chavez branch manager who reported things were going well but that the branch isn't cleaned often enough. She also reported meeting with the Melrose branch manager and attending the Melrose friends' meeting. Commissioner Henderson wants to help drum up foot traffic at Melrose.
- Commissioner Covarrubias reported that he and Chair Azuma had met with CM Brown's community liaison and discussed coordinating branch visits. He also reported that he had attended a park cleanup on February 7th where he'd met with CM Wang. He continues to nurture the relationships with councilmembers and their staff.
- Commissioner Bell reported that she had visited AAMLO on February 21st and the fire alarm went off during an event that was ending. She also reported that she attended the friends' and stewards meeting. Commissioner Bell that commissioners who share councilmembers coordinate their conversations and visits with them.
- Commissioner Cain-Simon reported that Elmhurst is looking good. She also reported that there was a trash pickup on Saturday. She reported a skills trade job fair took place January 31st was a success. The event was put together by the branch manager Nicole and a volunteer Christina Jenq. Dimond is doing well and they have a very active friends' group.
- Commissioner Azuma reported that MLK had a litter walk on Valentine's Day which was attended by current and former commissioners. She also reported that the MLK friends' Instagram account now has 56 followers.

8. Director's Update

Director Turbak shared the following:

- OPL participated in Black Joy parade and festival on Sunday, February 22nd. It was a beautiful day with a great turn-out. OPL distributed over 500 books.
- OPL has two grant-funded projects that encourage outreach to immigrant communities.
 - The American Library Association's \$10,000 Capacity Building Grant for "Serving New Americans." The library's project team has worked closely with local organizations that serve the Mayan Mam community here in Oakland to develop activities, programs, and outreach strategies to better serve Mam-speaking patrons.
 - \$9,000 from Pacific Library Partnership, which OPL applied for to create a program called "Celebrating Immigrant Roots." The project will occur this spring and will involve outreach and programming with Yemeni community partners.
- Capital project meetings on Brookfield Library, MLK Bike Spot (released for bid), AAMLO and Melrose Branches.
- Met with the Friends of San Antonio Park to discuss their vision for a neighborhood library.
- Prepared Agenda Report and Ordinance to purchase property for Hoover Branch Library at 3105 San Pablo Avenue. Expect to go to Life Enrichment Committee on March 24 (same day as Library Commission Annual Report)

9. Committee Announcements

- **Community Engagement-** Committee did not meet due to lack of quorum, but will form an ad hoc committee to draft the talking points. The ad hoc members will be Commissioners Sloane Law, Bell, and Henderson. Commissioner Tostado will join if she is available.
- **Sustainability-** Had a wonderful meeting and decided to continue to meet on the 3rd Thursday of every other month. The next meeting will be March 19th.
- **General Plan Ad Hoc-** Has not met. There will be a presentation from the Planning Commission in March. General Plan ad hoc members are Commissioners Cain-Simon and Weinberg.
- **Action Plan Ad Hoc-** Does not meet but operates by updating the action plan and has just released the most recent iteration of the Action Plan. The ad hoc members are Commissioners Sloane Law, Cain-Simon, and Azuma.
- **Room Naming Ad Hoc**
Committee met and gave their update at the January meeting. Director Turbak is currently working on the room-naming policy and will update when available. The ad hoc members are Commissioners Cain-Simon, Cobb, Covarrubias, and Weinberg.

10. Chairperson's Update

Chair Azuma shared that interviews for the commission will happen in April. The commission is looking for individuals in districts 5, 7, and people who are enthusiastic about service. She also shared that there will be an AAMLO tour on Saturday, April 18th.

11. Agenda Building

March 2026- OPL Facilities Manager, OPL Advocates, General Plan Update

April 2026- Auditor Presentation, Annual OPL Advocates Mixer, Christina Jenq,
Talking Points

May 2026

12. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:39pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kere Gonzales, Executive Assistant