



**LIBRARY COMMISSION DRAFT MINUTES**

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**Date:** March 30, 2026

**Recording:** [https://oakland.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish\\_id=c03cb246-32c5-11f1-bb28-005056a89546](https://oakland.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=c03cb246-32c5-11f1-bb28-005056a89546)

**Location:** Main Library, 125 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Oakland, CA 94612

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**CALL TO ORDER:** Vice-Chair Mary Cain-Simon called the meeting to order at 5:49 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: 9**

April Bell  
Mary Cain-Simon  
Kevin Covarrubias  
Gay Plair Cobb  
Andrea Henderson  
Carolyn Jones  
Justus Samuels  
Cristina Tostado  
Alex Weinberg

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: 4**

Chiye Azuma  
Anand Patel  
Gabrielle Sloane Law  
Karen Zukor

**STAFF PRESENT: 2**

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

**1. Roll Call**

**2. What are Commissioners Reading?**

Vice-Chair Cain-Simon 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: February 23, 2026**

Commissioner Samuels made a motion to approve the minutes as published. Commissioner Covarrubias seconded. Commissioners Cobb and Weinberg abstained. Commissioners Henderson and Tostado were 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 no members of the public present during this segment.

**5. General Plan Update**

Daniel Findley and Genan Suleiman of the Planning and Building Department presented their progress on the General Plan. They explained the General Plan as a guiding document that lays out the citywide vision, supporting goals, policies, and implementation measures for long-term planning.

They described the Phase 2 Elements as:

- Land Use and Transportation- Addresses population growth, housing, arts and cultures, and jobs; outlines what can be built and builds a transportation system.
- Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation- Creates equitable and accessible parks and recreation facilities; preserves open space and enhances connections to open space.
- Infrastructure and Capital Facilities- Plans for resilient systems such as water, sewage and electricity; supports equitably distribute public facilities such as libraries, schools, and civic buildings.
- Noise- Minimizes the adverse effects of noise pollution on public health.

Over the next year, the timeline moves into community inputs and then goes to decision makers for consideration.

Commissioners were encouraged to provide comments on the draft framework via a portal available through April 23, 2026 and to visit the website [www.oaklandca.gov/gpu](http://www.oaklandca.gov/gpu) to sign up for the newsletter or see upcoming events.

**6. OPL Advocates**

Colleen Haikes, Director of Friends of the Oakland Public Library (FOPL) introduced herself and introduced FOPL as a non-profit organization supporting OPL systemwide. She described it as distinct from the branch friends' groups as it does not belong to a specific branch. Colleen also shared that FOPL was established in 1950, has granted \$4.5M since 1993, and has over 1500 dues-paying members. FOPL is comprised of 18 volunteer directors, four paid staff, and over 200 volunteer. FOPL exists to:

- Supplement public funding
- Provide advocacy and a civic voices for the library with elected officials and the broader public.
- Mobilized volunteers, donors, and community members.
- Serve the full OPL system.

FOPL raises funds via the The Bookmark Bookstore, annual memberships, and donations and grants. In closing, Colleen recommended commissioners save the dates of May 17<sup>th</sup> 1-3p for the Spring Mixer and June 5<sup>th</sup> 7p for the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Youth Poet Laureate.

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 Jones reported that the Eastmont branch needs signage.
- Commissioner Samuels did not give an update.
- Commissioner Tostado reported she participated in the MLK cleanup, spoke at the recent LEC meeting and visited the Chavez branch and got a tour.
- Commissioner Weinberg did not give an update.
- Commissioner Bell thanked Director Turbak for removing the broken marquee at AAMLO. She also reported that the fence had been vandalized. Commissioner Bell also volunteered to coordinate the tour of AAMLO.
- Commissioner Cain-Simon reported that she visited Lakeshore and Dimond and it appears that the gutters on branches are not being cleaned.
- Commissioner Cobb did not give an update.
- Commissioner Covarrubias visited Melrose, Chavez, and Eastmont. He reported that Eastmont is trying to find ways to expand. He also reported that he attended OPL advocates and looks forward to continued advocacy.
- Commissioner Henderson did not give an update.

## **8. Chavez Library**

Director Turbak requested that the commission consider renaming the Cesar Chavez branch to the Fruitvale branch and then vote on the name at the April meeting. She described the process as follows:

1. The commission makes a name recommendation.
2. Director Turbak drafts a report and recommendation for Life Enrichment Committee.
3. Life Enrichment Committee votes on recommendation and then sends it to full council for a vote.

The item will be added to the April agenda for a vote.

## **9. Director's Update**

Director Turbak shared the following:

- At their regular meeting on Tuesday, 3/24, the City's Life Enrichment Committee considered the purchase of the former Community Foods Market at 3105 San Pablo for the purpose of establishing the Hoover Durant Branch Library. In front of a large crowd of library advocates in person and online, the Committee (Chairperson Fife, Councilmember Gallo, Councilmember Houston, and Councilmember Wang) unanimously approved the action. The purchase of the property will move forward to the next step: the consent calendar at the City Council meeting on April 14 at 3:30 pm. I want to thank all the public speakers for supporting this Ordinance and asking Council Members to vote yes.
- I attended a capital campaign kickoff hosted by Friends of Piedmont Avenue Library (PAL) on March 24. There is currently no site identified due to the

termination of lease agreement with Oakland Unified School District's Piedmont Avenue CDC but community turnout at the meeting was strong and several volunteers offered to form a capital campaign committee.

- I attended a Branch Friends Network meeting at Melrose Branch Library on March 7 that was attended by 26 Friends representing 11 different groups. The group held a roundtable on membership and fundraising, and Sara DuBois shared an overview of the FOPL grant process. It was the strongest turnout I recall and indicates building momentum with community and volunteer support for OPL.
- The Oakland History Center's Diorama contest was so successful last year that they are doing it again! Don't miss your chance to participate. Come to the [Search for Treasure in Old Newspapers](#) program on April 18, 2:00-3:30 for a full walkthrough of newspaper search methods. Completed dioramas can be dropped off at the library between Saturday, June 13 and Sunday, July 5. Find out how to get started and see all the guidelines [here](#).
- OPL broke 17,000 followers on Instagram in January. There were 1,032 follows this month in March. This is way above our approximate average 350. Also reached 90% more accounts, received about 212,000 views during this period, and 29.8% increase in profile activity compared to last period.
- On Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup> the Oakland Public Library will receive the Making Democracy Work Award from the League of Women Voters.
- April is Arab American Heritage Month and there are some great programs coming up such as embroidery workshops, Yemini coffee and tea, belly dancing, author talks, music, art and culinary sessions. Please check out all the offerings on OPL's webpage.

## 10. Committee Announcements

- **Community Engagement-** Commissioner Henderson reported out regarding the meeting. The goal is to meet with the Community Relations Director. The May meeting will be held on May 4<sup>th</sup>.
- **Sustainability-** Commissioner Cain-Simon reported that Sustainability had a very productive meeting. They talked about the Life Enrichment Committee meeting and continuing advocacy for the restoration of the maintenance of effort.
- **General Plan Ad Hoc-** Did not meet; no update.
- **Action Plan Ad Hoc-** Did not meet. Commissioner Azuma will update when she returns.
- **Room Naming Ad Hoc-** Director will report out after Chavez renaming.
- **Talking Points Ad Hoc-** Did not meet; no update.

## 11. Chairperson's Update

Chair Azuma was not present and Vice-Chair Cain-Simon had no update.

**12. Agenda Building**

**April 2026-** Auditor Presentation, Annual OPL Advocates Mixer, Job Resources with Christina Jenq, Talking Points, Renaming Chavez.

**May 2026-** OPL Facilities Manager, OPL Community Relations Manager, Quarterly Maintenance Report.

**13. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kere Gonzales, Executive Assistant