



CITY OF RICHMOND  
LIBRARY COMMISSION MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
MAIN LIBRARY  
MADELINE F. WHITTLESEY COMMUNITY ROOM  
325 CIVIC CENTER PLAZA, RICHMOND, CA  
November 13, 2018  
6:30 P.M.

**Library Commission Members:**

David Duer, Chairperson; Cordell Hindler; and Mimi Vitetta [2 vacancies]  
Eduardo Martinez, City Council Member Liaison

1) **Call to Order:** Chairperson David Duer called the regular meeting to order at 6:45 P.M.

2) **Roll Call**

**Present:** David Duer, Cordell Hindler, and Mimi Vitetta  
**Absent:** None  
**Staff:** Katy Curl, Library and Cultural Services Director  
**Guest:** Satine Walz

3) **Welcome and Meeting Procedures:** Chairperson Duer identified the meeting procedures.

4) **Agenda Review**

The Library Commission accepted the agenda, as submitted.

5) **Open Forum**

Samantha Carr, Management Analyst in the City Manager's Office, advised that the City Council had approved a plastic straw and stirrer ban in May 2018, which would become effective on December 15, 2018. Anyone who wants a straw or stirrer at a restaurant would have to request an alternative straw or stirrer, and retail establishments could not sell plastic straws or stirrers. She also introduced the *Richmond in SF Business Times*, and stated the City Council had adopted a Richmond Climate Action Plan.

Cordell Hindler reported that some patrons had defaced property in the Library; some patrons had gotten into shouting matches; and some patrons had poor personal hygiene.

6) **Approval of Minutes**

a. Approval of October 9, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Hindler, seconded by Commissioner Vitetta to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2018 meeting, as submitted. Motion passed by Duer, Hindler, and Vitetta. Noes: None. Absent: None.

7) **Department Reports for Information:** The following reports were received and filed with no additional discussion.

- a. Adult, Teen, Children's, Mobile and Branch Services
- b. Circulation Statistics

8) **Presentations, Discussions and Action Items**

- a. **DISCUSS elimination of Library fines and propose options to present to City Council for consideration** (Katy Curl)

Satine Walz, Richmond resident, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the proposal to eliminate children's late fees and to reduce the late fee for other materials, specifically DVDs. She noted that Richmond's Library Card System had an adult card and a child card with adult late fees at \$.20/day and child cards at \$.10/day. She referred to Berkeley's system where there was one card with fees based on the materials and not on the card and there were no late fees. She explained why late fees should be eliminated, noted that children were dependent on their parents to pay the fees and for transportation to the Library, fines were especially hard in vulnerable situations, the late fees for DVDs are \$1/day while Berkeley's late fee for DVDs is \$.25, and late fees were not revenue earners and should be eliminated to avoid limiting children's opportunities. She also suggested that children would go up to their limit of late fees and then would stop visiting the Library.

Ms. Curl provided a correction: Richmond's late fees are currently based on materials and not on the card the same as Berkeley. The most recent fee schedule update for 2018-19 reduced the DVD late charge so that the fees for all materials were the same.

In the discussion, it was clarified that while Berkeley had eliminated late fees, it did not appear to have eliminated replacement fees for lost books.

Ms. Curl referred to the matrix in the Commission packets, identifying the fees and fines from other jurisdictions, described Councilmember Recinos' interest in reducing library fines no matter the action taken by the Commission, and explained while there was no conclusive data as to whether the presence of fines positively influenced return rates, it had been found that circulation rates among low-income families were lower due to the presence of fines. Other than that, studies had not found a big difference and the conclusion had been that policy decisions surrounding overdue materials, especially children's materials, must be based on the careful consideration of the role of libraries in the community and their members. In the Richmond community, she suggested that late fees came down to barriers in service.

Ms. Curl identified the options the Commission could consider, explained how those options could be implemented, and advised that the Library Commission would be making a recommendation to the City Council, which would make the decision of whether or not to eliminate fines.

Motion by Commissioner Hindler, seconded by Commissioner Vitetta to recommend that the City Council eliminate library fines (late fees) for all borrowing of children, teens, and adult materials. Motion passed by Duer,

Hindler, and Vitetta. Noes: None. Absent: None.

- b. **UPDATE and DISCUSSION of recruitment/appointment of Library Commissioners for two remaining vacancies, and proposed changes to Library Commission Ordinance including adding language to reestablish staggered terms** (Katy Curl)

Ms. Curl advised that there were currently no applicants for the two vacancies on the Library Commission and an extended outreach was recommended.

Commissioner Vitetta recommended ways to promote the Library Commission and encourage interest to attract applicants.

- c. **DISCUSSION of Rules and Procedures as related to Library Commission Ordinance** (Dave Duer)

Chairperson Duer explained that provisions in the Library Commission Ordinance established the Library Commission as an advisory board to the City Council intended to recommend to the City Manager rules and regulations with an annual report. There were also capital improvement recommendations to be made along with considerations of the safety of patrons, the selection of library materials, and acquainting the public with operational problems. He recommended looking at those provisions to determine how the Library Commission could become a more active body.

Ms. Curl suggested the language could be submitted to the City Attorney's office of draft rules and procedures that could be returned to the Commission for consideration.

- d. **UPDATE and DISCUSSION of Facility Improvements and the Library Commission's role** (Katy Curl)

Ms. Curl presented an update of the recent walk-through of Library facilities by the Maintenance Operations Division, a review of the priority list, and a follow-up with the Public Works Department to address some of the needed safety components, such as the alarm system. She explained that the walk-through had not yet included the branches. Noting the continued efforts to secure funding, she identified a cycle of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding due December 10<sup>th</sup>, and would determine whether there was sufficient time to apply for that cycle.

- e. **BRAINSTORM about partnering with parallel organizations** (Commission as a whole)

Chairperson Duer reiterated the need to get together and connect with the Friends and Foundation board members and other parallel organizations, which would have to be done as a meeting, preferably as an annual gathering of organizations that had an impact on the Library publicly.

Ms. Curl offered some examples of potential connections with the Richmond Arts & Culture Commission (RACC) and its annual poetry contest and mini-grant program,

or with the Richmond Arts Center.

Commissioner Vitetta cited an unnamed quote that the key to maintaining an organization's relevance was keeping it connected to its community.

f. **INFORMATION and DISCUSSION on the Library Policies for Adult/Parent Supervision of Children in the Library** (Cordell Hindler/Katy Curl)

Commissioner Hindler explained that he had raised the issue of unattended children in the Library because of a situation he had witnessed at the Library and the liability concerns it had raised.

Ms. Curl reviewed the Library's current policy regarding children's use of the library and provided the current informational handout for parents. Staff addresses situations of unattended children mostly in the case of behavior and or safety issues.

The Commission recognized there were rules in place to address the concern.

g. **INFORMATION and DISCUSSION on writing a grant to set up an informational booth either in the Library or somewhere in the Civic Center to help draw people to the Museum** (Mimi Vitetta)

Commissioner Vitetta noted the recommendation to coordinate between the two organizations given the similarities between the Library and the Museum, with a potential grant to place a booth or exhibit case in the Library to help draw people to the Museum. She expected the exhibit would entail information about historical issues which might also encourage people to read books, and to show relevance of the two institutions to the community.

The Commission liked the idea and Ms. Curl recommended setting up a meeting with the Richmond Museum to pursue that possibility.

h. **INFORMATION and DISCUSSION on putting a small number of books in the Museum as a tiny branch so people could check out books from there** (Mimi Vitetta)

The Commission supported the idea of placing a small number of books in the Richmond Museum, and Ms. Curl suggested that the Book Van could visit the Museum, although it was currently funded to go to senior centers only and there were times when staffing was an issue.

In the discussion, free books, reference materials, or an on-deposit collection were suggested, along with the potential coordination with Commissioner Vitetta's school field trips at the Museum. It was acknowledged that grant money would have to be pursued for some of the options to occur.

i. **INFORMATION and DISCUSSION on doing some kind of photo history exhibit in the Library** (Mimi Vitetta)

Commissioner Vitetta reported that she was writing a grant to reopen the analog dark

room in the basement of the Richmond Museum. The dark room would serve as a resource for museums with film, and also a resource for people who wanted to teach traditional photography, as a way for the Museum to keep its photography relevant. If the grant was approved, she would like to do a historical exhibit in the Richmond Public Library.

Ms. Curl explained that the Library had very little wall space although there was some upper space available. She explained that an upgrade of the capacity to be able to hang exhibits or art was something she had wanted to pursue and the Museum could help identify space where rotated art could be accommodated, which would be another discussion to pursue with the Museum.

j. **INFORMATION and DISCUSSION possibly partnering with RYSE Youth Center to have an art exhibit in the Library** (Mimi Vitetta)

Commissioner Vitetta also expressed a desire to accommodate revolving art in the Library and would like to partner with the RYSE Youth Center to do that.

9) **Items of Interest to the Commission and Announcements**

Commissioner Hindler announced the performance of *Ripcord* at the Contra Costa Civic Theater from November 16<sup>th</sup> to December 9<sup>th</sup>; the Santa Fe Neighborhood Council would hold its annual Hug-a-Bear Dinner on December 6<sup>th</sup> at the Galileo Club from 4:00 to 8:00 P.M.; the Santa Needs a New Sleigh Fundraiser hosted by the Richmond Main Street Initiative would be held on December 6<sup>th</sup> at the East Brothers Beer Company from 6:00 to 10:00 P.M.; and the Commission on Aging would hold its Senior Winter Ball on December 15<sup>th</sup> in the Auditorium from 6:00 to 10:00 P.M. He also reported that he had participated in 32 activities during the month of October.

a. **Director's Report: Director will report on items of interest to Commissioners** (Katy Curl)

Ms. Curl announced that the Library would be closed during the holidays, from December 22, 2018 to January 2, 2019. The book drop would be locked and there would be no fines assessed during that period. In addition, the Library had agreed to run the Municipal ID Program, which provides IDs to those who may need extra identification.

10) **Agenda Setting for Next Meeting and Future Topics**

Chairperson Duer recommended that Items 8a. through 8e. of Presentations, Discussions and Action Items be forwarded to the next meeting agenda; and Commissioner Hindler requested that Item 8f. also be forwarded to the next meeting agenda.

11) **Adjournment:** Commissioner Hindler moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 P.M., seconded by Commissioner Vitetta; passed by Duer, Hindler and Vitetta. Noes: None. Absent: None

**NEXT MEETING:** January 8, 2019 at 6:30 P.M. in the Madeline F. Whittlesey Community Room.