

**MINUTES OF A JOINT MEETING OF THE
LIBRARY COMMISSION AND TORRANCE CITY COUNCIL**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Library Commission convened in a joint session with Torrance City Council at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, 2009 in the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library Meeting Room.

II. FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner Chappell led the Pledge of Allegiance

III. ROLL CALL

Library Commission

Present: Commissioners Chappell, Gerber, Ross, Stapleton, Wermers, and Chairperson Haig.

Absent: Commissioner Sheldon.

City Council

Present: Councilmembers Barnett, Brewer, Furey, Numark, Rhilinger, Sutherland, and Mayor Scotto.

Absent: None.

Also present: City Manager Jackson, City Clerk Herbers, Finance Director Tsao, Community Services Director Jones, Senior Business Manager Minter, City Librarian Weiner, Principal Librarian Theyer, Library Services Manager Reeder, and Youth Services Supervisor Van Vranken.

Mayor Scotto offered his apologies that he and Councilmember Furey needed to leave the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

IV. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Gerber moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Chappell seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

V. DISCUSSION OF LIBRARY OPERATIONS, FACILITIES, AND PROGRAMS

V.I FRIENDS OF THE TORRANCE LIBRARY

Commissioner Ross provided background information about Friends of the Torrance Library formed in 1967 and welcomed President Helen Ball and Secretary Teresa Covey.

Friends Secretary Covey reported on activities of Friends over the past year that include two paperback book sales, two hardback book sales, and Internet book sales. She stated that current membership is over 400 and that Friends continues to search for

active volunteers as donations and workload expands. She distributed Gifts to the Torrance Library for Fiscal Year 2007/2008, Spring Hardback Sale on April 17-18, 2009, and "What Should You Read Next?" on April 15, 2009.

V.II TORRANCE PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION

Commissioner Wermers introduced the item and welcomed Harvey Horwich, President of Torrance Public Library Foundation.

Foundation President Horwich described the Foundation's mission and recent accomplishments that include new bylaws, logo, brochure, newsletter, web page, and sale of book bags. He distributed the new Foundation brochure and the first edition of its newsletter. He discussed gifts to the Library that include funding for Live Homework Help and Southeast branch's Homework Center and circulation desk. He shared future goals to hold an author event in September 2009 and to support a mobile computer lab for Katy Geissert Library.

VIII SUNDAY SERVICE AT THE LIBRARY

Commissioner Gerber expressed appreciation to City Council for providing funding so that Katy Geissert Library could resume Sunday hours of operation concurrent with the school year.

City Librarian Weiner echoed her appreciation and reported that circulation and gate count continue to grow and that telephone reference service is now being offered. She noted that Katy Geissert had 738 visitors and 1,305 items checked out on March 22, 2009, adding that this year average circulation is 860 items compared to 611 last year. She stated that each Sunday staff from the Library and a contract agency staff four desks and that Torrance residents make up more than 70% of patrons.

Responding to Councilmember Numark's inquiry, she stated that Library usage has increased in the economic downturn and that she expects the trend to continue.

Mayor Scotto indicated that as usage increases they may need to consider extending Sunday hours from its current 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

V.IV REVIEW OF LIVE HOMEWORK HELP AND OTHER HOMEWORK ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Commissioner Chappell introduced the item and welcomed Principal Librarian Theyer.

Principal Librarian Theyer provided a power point presentation on the Library's Homework Assistance Programs. She discussed reasons how & why the Library helps students with their homework, who they serve, barriers and limits, and the three types of assistance currently being offered: Homework Centers at Katy Geissert Library and Southeast branch, Homework Helpers using high school students and adult volunteers at Katy Geissert Library and Henderson, North Torrance, and Southeast branches, and on-line Live Homework Help being offered seven days a week from 1:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. She stated that future goals are to find the \$35,000 necessary to continue the subscription to Live Homework Help, to design and look for funding to have a

Homework Center at every branch, and to add the Homework Helpers program at El Retiro and Walteria branches with a high level volunteer to manage it.

In response to inquiries by Councilmembers regarding Live Homework Help, she stated that the descending grant came from the State Library and expires July 1, 2009, that tutors are paid by Tutor.com and are experts in their topics, the year-round program serves Kindergarten to adult basic education students, and that the cost quoted is based on current usage and will increase as usage increases.

A brief discussion centered on making Live Homework Help a fee-based program and the Library's policy not to use fee-based services.

Chairperson Haig stated that it is unlikely that the Library will find a grant for Live Homework Help and that they are asking City Council to help them to keep this important program as part of the Library.

Mayor Scotto voiced support for Live Homework Help, stated that \$35,000 is a cheap way to change a life, and noted that the reinforcement that is offered through the program is critical. He received clarification from City Manager Jackson that sponsorship of the program would be acceptable and tax deductible. He stated that City Council would try to help find necessary funding to continue the program and would speak with potential sponsors.

Mayor Scotto and Councilmember Furey left the meeting at 6:15 p.m. and Councilmember Brewer took the Mayor's place.

V.V. KATY GEISSERT CIVIC CENTER LIBRARY MAIN FLOOR REMODEL

Chairperson Haig expressed appreciation to City Council for its support of the remodel and for encouraging the Library to address the safety needs that led to the facility's renovations.

Library Services Manager Reeder thanked Councilmembers for attending the grand opening and noted that feedback from the public has been extremely positive. He showed slides of the renovation and described electrical, audio visual, and physical improvements in the Meeting Room.

V.VI BRANCH LIBRARY REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

Principal Librarian Theyer provided a slide presentation showing the Southeast branch refurbishment project and invited Councilmembers to the April 23, 2009 Open House. She reported that El Retiro branch is scheduled to close on April 27, 2009 and all branch refurbishment should be complete by May 2010.

V.VII TORRANCE PUBLIC LIBRARY LINK (LIFELONG INFORMATION NETWORKS & KNOWLEDGE) PROJECT

Commissioner Stapleton provided background information about the LINK project and the grant awarded to Torrance Library for "Transitioning Life After 50."

Principal Librarian Theyer described the three areas that came out of the community and needs assessment conducted by the Library. She stated that the first is

to host a Travel Fair on May 2, 2009 at Katy Geissert Library as well as a Health and Fitness Fair on May 30, 2009 at Wilson Park. She discussed the second arm that involves marketing and an effort to retool the Library's image and the third to target the volunteer program to baby boomers.

City Librarian Weiner stated that six libraries including Torrance Library were selected to be part of a special initiative called "Get Involved at Your Library." She stated that a team has been formed to look at new ways to recruit, train, and retain baby boomer volunteers who now have high-level skills. She noted that once Torrance Library has tried out the methodology suggested by the State Library that they will hopefully serve as a model to other libraries.

VI. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

VI.I Chairperson Haig read a letter from Commissioner Sheldon expressing his regrets for not being able to attend this meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Gerber moved to grant an excused absence to Commissioner Sheldon for the March 24, 2009 Library Commission joint meeting with City Council. Commissioner Chappell seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

VI.II Councilmembers Sutherland and Rhilinger expressed support for finding resources to support Live Homework Help.

VI.III Councilmember Barnett commended staff, Friends, Foundation, and Commission for their hard work and voiced support for finding resources to sustain Library programs.

VI.IV City Librarian Weiner announced a mandatory Commission Chairperson training on July 23, 2009.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 6:36 p.m., City Council recessed to City Council Chambers for the regular meeting at 7:00 p.m.

At 6:36 p.m., Chairperson Haig adjourned the meeting to April 13, 2009 at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library Meeting Room, at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Submitted January 11, 2010 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
