1) **Call to Order/Roll Call**

The special meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairperson Harrison.

**Present:** Marcela Jaimes-Rodriguez, Thomas Kaun, and Chairperson Thomas Harrison, Jr.

**Absent:** Risa King

**Staff:**
- Christopher Larsen, Administrative Librarian, Library Commission Liaison
- Lisa Carter-Owens, Richmond Public Library Administration
- Gayle McLaughlin, City Council Member Liaison

2) **Welcome and Meeting Procedures:** The meeting procedures were as shown on the agenda for the meeting.

3) **Agenda Review**

City Council Liaison Gayle McLaughlin requested that Item 8 include a discussion about the Literacy Festival since she wanted to share her thoughts for next year’s event, and had been informed that the item did not have to be added to the agenda and could be discussed as part of the broader discussion of Item 8.

4) **Public Comment:** No written comments were submitted, or oral comments made, by any member of the public.

5) **Approval of Minutes**

a. Approval of March 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Chairperson Harrison, seconded by Commissioner Kaun to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2023 meeting, as submitted. Motion passed by a Roll Call vote: Jaimes-Rodriguez, Kaun, and Harrison. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: King.
6) **Department Reports For Information:** The following reports were received and filed.
   a. Library Services
   b. Literacy for Every Adult Program (LEAP)
   c. Circulation Statistics
   d. Director’s Report

7) **Presentations, Discussions and Action Items**
   
   a. **INTRODUCTION of Guest Attendees:** There were no guest attendees at this time.
   
   b. **DISCUSSION/ACTION Library Commission Adoption of Proposed Policy Document**

      Christopher Larsen, Administrative Librarian, reported that the Library Policy Manual had not been reproduced from the past, had been provided to all Commissioners at the prior meeting, and had been reviewed by Commissioners Kaun and Jaime-Rodriguez who had provided feedback, which he had summarized in the May 25, 2023 staff report.

      Mr. Larsen explained that one of the charges of the Library Commission was to establish a policy for the selection of materials to be purchased and circulated so that a collection development policy could be established. A draft of that policy had been sent to the subcommittee.

      Mr. Larsen summarized the recommended revisions and text changes and advised that an amendment to the previously submitted Policy Manual would be made and would include a modification to the definition of Librarian as follows: For the purposes of this section “Librarian” refers to a professional librarian of any classification or Library Associate who is exercising the same public service role in-lieu of a librarian. In addition, the City’s Social Networking (Media) Policy would be attached, which as a City policy would be superior to the Policy Manual that all City workers were subject to, although a Social Media Policy could be developed in-line with the City’s policy that was more strategic for the Richmond Public Library.

      The Library Commission was asked to approve and adopt the proposed Library Policy Manual with the amendment to the staff responsibilities for Library operations by defining librarian. The Library Commission could choose to direct Library staff to develop a Library-specific Social Media Policy and strategy that conformed to Section AP 655.1 of the City’s Social Networking Policy.

      Chairperson Harrison was impressed with the document as a whole, although the section regarding the definition of librarian had been a concern in that most people who entered a library thought anyone in the library was a librarian and as such he wanted the definition and responsibilities of librarian to be better defined.

      Mr. Larsen highlighted the Librarian I and II and Library Associate classifications and definitions for the City of Richmond. The modification to the definition of librarian in the Policy Manual would help to incorporate all of the professional Librarians and Library Associate classifications.
Commissioner Kaun reported that he was a member of the Legislative Committee for the California Library Association (CLA) as a liaison from the California School Library Association, and part of a panel that discussed advocacy in terms of various kinds of libraries. He also represented school libraries and there had been a discussion of ideas for webinars. He suggested it would be interesting to discuss a Library Social Media Policy. Having conducted a Google search, he found that the American Library Association (ALA) had a model Social Media Policy that he had been able to research. He suggested Richmond Public Library staff could look into that to determine whether it would be helpful as a model. He pointed out that social media was a fraught place and it was essential for the Library to have a social media presence and a policy in place to mitigate potential risks.

Mr. Larsen commented that the City’s Social Networking Policy included the guidelines in which the City must operate and which had addressed a number of issues. With all of the staff changes, the Community Services Department team had to reconfigure its social media team to ensure a cohesive unit, which was something that staff could take up when moving forward. That process may provide guidelines and be more strategic for the Library since there had been feedback from social media channels and staff had to respond appropriately and could define specific to the Richmond Public Library which roles had responsibility for engagement.

Council Liaison McLaughlin agreed and announced that the City Council had previously approved $30 million, and recently an additional $15 million for the renovation of the Library to make it a first-class operation, which could be promoted as part of a Social Media Policy specific to the Richmond Public Library.

Chairperson Harrison asked what examples of risks had been foreseen with social media.

Commissioner Kaun commented that the risks could be a staff member responding to someone in an inappropriate way and in a way that had not been vetted. There could be those who objected to certain things the Library was doing and who on staff responded and a process for that response needed to be defined.

Chairperson Harrison understood a Social Media Policy was already in place, and Mr. Larsen explained the City of Richmond used a Social Media Management platform that allowed librarians to create posts that were subject to review before being sent, and that policy would have to be revisited to determine whether its function was appropriate or whether it should be revised.

Motion by Commissioner Kaun, seconded by Commissioner Jaimes-Rodriguez to approve the proposed Library Policy Manual with the amendment to the staff responsibilities for Library operations. Motion passed by a Roll Call vote: Jaimes-Rodriguez, Kaun, and Harrison. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: King.

Motion by Commissioner Kaun, seconded by Commissioner Jaimes-Rodriguez to direct Library staff to develop a Library-specific Social Media Policy and Strategy that conformed to the City’s Administrative Policy Manual, Section AP 655.1. Motion passed by a Roll Call vote: Jaimes-Rodriguez, Kaun, and
Commissioner Kaun asked that the Library Commission go back to Item 6(d), Director’s Report to allow staff to provide an update on the budget.

Mr. Larsen reported that a number of applications had been submitted for the Head of Reference position, there were some good candidates and interviews had been planned in the next week or two. Staff had approved a test for the Library Assistant I and II positions and about 120 applications had been submitted. The Senior Library Assistant position had also received a number of applications but did not involve a test since it was not an entry level position. Once the positions are filled, capacity would be greatly increased.

Mr. Larsen added that the consulting firm planned interviews for the Library Director Recruitment in June with an interview panel to be convened and with a decision and offer expected at the beginning of July. He added that staff was working with the Public Works Department on next steps with another meeting in a week to determine the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for the Library renovation. The state grant funds must be expended by March 31, 2026 and he defined the criteria for the use of the grant funds that would not allow any kind of outreach or relocation of the Library pending the completion of the renovation. The additional $15 million in funding recently approved by the City Council would allow the City to move materials, find a temporary location and engage the public in envisioning what the Library needed to become. He understood there was considerable interest from the City Council and the Library Foundation to do a capital campaign to address continued, ongoing and additional projects. It was hoped that all stakeholders would be able to meet in one place soon to discuss how to move forward.

In response to Commissioner Kaun’s concerns over the fact the Library Commission had not been kept apprised of the City Council’s recent action approving additional funding for the Library, Council Liaison McLaughlin explained that the item had come quickly to the City Council and since the Library Commission met every two months it may not have been aware of the budget review process at which time the City Council had discussed a surplus due to vacant staff positions.

Given the surplus, the City Manager and Library staff had recommended the City Council allocate $15 million for the Library Renovation Project and on May 23, 2023, the City Council had unanimously approved the recommendation. She added that the City of San Pablo had recently launched its new library as part of the Contra Costa County Library system and its facility included numerous amenities. She recommended a tour of that facility.

Mr. Larsen commented that the San Pablo Library had been open for a couple of years.

Commissioner Jaimes-Rodriguez pointed out the majority of the City of San Jose Libraries had also been renovated and if a field trip was considered those facilities would be nice to visit as well.

Mr. Larsen clarified that the additional $15 million the City Council had approved for the Library had been a result of a recommendation from the City Manager’s Office and not Library staff and the recommendation had come up quickly. He highlighted some
of the items in the 2009 Needs Assessment that the additional funds could address, particularly since the state grant funds would only address infrastructure needs.

In response to Commissioner Jaimes-Rodriguez, Mr. Larsen explained the additional funds would not expand the existing Library facility but there had been discussions about moving all staff functions upstairs and renovating the downstairs to create additional space and consider creative uses of spaces such as movement of walls and the like.

If the Library Foundation had additional funds, those funds could be considered for possible expansion, but they were working to line things up to address the work to be done under the state grant. The additional City Council funding could provide a better sense of how to address the desires of the community and how to ensure expansion at a later time. The thought was that the $30 million in state grant funding would keep the Library in its current footprint while preserving the idea of either going up or out.

Council Liaison McLaughlin recognized the low staffing levels and while she was glad there had been candidates for some positions, she asked whether the Library would remain under-staffed when those positions had been filled.

Mr. Larsen advised there was a request for two additional positions in the next fiscal year, which he understood had not been incorporated into the budget but had been signed off by the Deputy City Manager of Community Services, and which included an additional Head of Reference and someone who had experience as a Library Circulation Supervisor. He provided the background of some of the staffing challenges and loss of positions not being filled and while they were moving in the right direction the current staffing levels remained low compared to historical staffing levels.

Commissioner Kaun suggested it would be helpful in the future for staff to go through the items listed under Item 6 on the agenda and ask whether there were any questions on the reports, which was why he wanted to circle back to discuss the Director’s Report and allow the Commission to ask questions.

Mr. Larsen clarified that the bi-monthly report would now include reports from the individual librarians and include their input and identification of what was important. While the formatting in those reports was different, they would be modified in the future to ensure consistency. He wanted to provide the Library Commission the additional information to allow the Commission to see the work the individual librarians were doing.

Commissioner Kaun commented that there was a lot of material in the agenda packet but it did not include a report from the Library Commission to the City Council, which requirement he and Commissioner King had reviewed to ensure a comprehensive report was being provided to the City Council on Library Commission activities, important from a citizen’s point of view. He suggested any future report to the City Council include observations on the programs the Library was providing, circulation statistics and the like. He understood a report from the Library Commission to the City Council was in the City’s charter.

Council Liaison McLaughlin recommended an email report or a PowerPoint presentation from the Library Commission to the City Council.
8) **Items of Interest to the Commission and Announcements**

a. **Recap of observance attending the Literacy Fair at Civic Center**

Council Liaison McLaughlin reported on the Literacy Festival and commented she had requested funds in the past to create the festival, which had been organized predominantly by community groups, although over time City staff had stepped up. The program had included numerous activities culminating in a beautiful event. Given her institutional knowledge about the event, she had played a strong role but may not be able to continue for next year’s event. She was confident City staff would remain involved and wanted the Library Commission, if interested, to play a role. For next year, she suggested a less complicated but equally nice event with all of the tables, free books and food but with more of an open forum for participants.

Chairperson Harrison commented that the Literacy Festival had been a great event and he highlighted some of the activities. Moving forward, he liked the ideas offered by Council Liaison McLaughlin and the possibility that Library Commissioners could become involved. He suggested a subcommittee be formed for next year’s Literacy Festival, which could be an agenda item for the next Library Commission meeting.

Council Liaison McLaughlin commented that planning for next year’s event would likely not occur until November/December 2023 or January 2024.

It was the consensus of the Library Commission to place an item on the July 20, 2023 meeting agenda to form a subcommittee of the Library Commission for the 2024 Literacy Festival.

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

a. **CREATION of Bylaws**

Commissioner Kaun stated he would look into potential bylaws for the Library Commission, and Mr. Larsen advised the City of Oakland had bylaws that could be reviewed as a possible model for the Library Commission since Oakland had a similar Commission formation.

Chairperson Harrison stated he too would review the City of Oakland’s Bylaws.

b. **REVISIT FY 2022-2023 Work Plan As Needed**

Commissioner Kaun commented that the Commission had discussed what the Library Commission was all about prior to forming a work plan. Now the Library Commission had some tasks that could be outlined in a work plan that could include creation and investigation of bylaws, participation in the Literacy Festival and support at City Council meetings. He emphasized the importance of work plans to focus on priorities and making decisions but commented it was difficult because the Library Commission met bi-monthly and no more than two Commissioners could meet outside of a regular meeting or set aside time at a regular meeting to discuss a work plan. He suggested the title be revised to read 2023/2024 Work Plan as Needed, and suggested time be set aside at the July 20th regular meeting to discuss a work plan.
Mr. Larsen suggested that would be timely given there would be a new fiscal year and the Library Commission may also include a new member at that time. He agreed a work plan was important when moving forward with the Library renovation. He also emphasized the importance of providing a report on Commission activities to the City Council.

Chairperson Harrison looked forward to discussing a work plan at the next meeting.

Mr. Larsen expressed the willingness to review former Library reports with Commissioner Kaun and discuss what the Library Commission would like to put forward, report on and identify what it was trying to do while also recognizing where the Commission was at, where it wanted to be, and where the community wanted it to be moving forward.

Council Liaison McLaughlin suggested the Library Director attend the next City Council meeting and introduce himself or herself and the Library Commission. She commended the Commission for doing a great job and was pleased that there was an active group given the upcoming Library renovation.

Mr. Larsen thanked the Library Commission for the approval of the Library Policy Manual which had been beneficial to staff.

10) **Adjournment:** Chairperson Harrison adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m. to a regular meeting on Thursday, July 20, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the Madeline F. Whittlesey Community Room, 325 Civic Center Plaza, Richmond, CA. Motion passed by Jaimes-Rodriguez, Kaun, and Harrison. Noes: None. Abstain: None. Absent: King.