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OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY • 125 - 14TH STREET • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612

June 14, 2005

**LIFE ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE
Oakland City Council****Subject: Annual Report of the Library Advisory Commission**

Chairperson Chang and Members of the Committee:

The Library Advisory Commission (LAC) hereby reports on its activities covering the period from January 1, 2004 to March 31, 2005.

Commission Activities:

During this past fifteen months, the Library Advisory Commission (LAC) has been party to two major victories for Oakland libraries. First, Oakland voters graciously and overwhelmingly (77%) demonstrated their support of libraries by passing Measure Q on the March ballot. This renewed the previous Measure O, which has served our community over the last ten years. With Measure Q, we have ensured that the monies will grow with inflation and that libraries in Oakland will be funded well into the future.

Thanks to the City Council and other elected officials, especially Councilmember Jean Quan, the sponsor committee members, to the volunteers who made phone calls, distributed yard signs, and spoke at community meetings. And thanks especially to the Library staff that volunteered much of their personal time to campaign for Measure Q. The Commission would also like to commend the Library staff for implementation of Measure Q's provisions and making patrons visibly aware of how the monies are being spent by labeling books and placing signage in the branches about expanded hours.

Secondly, the state's Proposition 14 grant committee accepted Oakland's application for a joint library/school project at 81st Avenue/Woodland in East Oakland. The \$6.5 million award will be matched by the city and the Oakland Unified School District. Similar to the new Chávez branch, this new library will demonstrate the future of library services and our ability to reflect and respond to current needs of the public. Not only are books and videos available, but this ideal includes a homework center, café, meeting rooms, study rooms, and a teen center.

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In February, Commissioner Scott spoke at the grand opening celebration of the new César Chávez Branch in the Fruitvale district. Commissioners Lottie Rose, Marian Wilson Sylvestre also attended. As the first library constructed in many years, the Chávez branch has elements of the kind of services needed in all our libraries. These services include self-service checkout, teen section, many computers, expanded children's section and storytelling area, large Spanish language collection, and a community room and access to an outdoor public space.

In support of Measure Q, Commissioner Judi Hirsch wrote an article for the Green Party Voter's Guide; Commissioner Lottie Rose helped with mailings and attended Councilmember Jane Brunner's monthly meeting with constituents; Commissioner Scott made several presentations to community groups and was interviewed on the League of Women Voter's forum on KTOP television.

In March, Commissioner Judi Hirsch met with the newly appointed liaison for libraries from the Oakland Unified School District.

In April, Commissioners Tracey Scott, Genevieve Katz, Judi Hirsch, and Victoria Kelly attended the annual Library Legislative Day in Sacramento. Scheduled meetings were held with Assemblywomen Wilma Chan and Lonnie Hancock, and State Senator Don Perata's aide. Additionally an impromptu meeting was held with Assemblywoman Ellen Corbett's chief aide, whose district includes Hayward, San Leandro and a small piece of Oakland. Overall, our elected representatives in Sacramento are not only supportive of library issues and funding, but they also have a deep understanding of the impact of libraries in our communities.

During 2004, three new commissioners were approved by the City Council:

- Commissioner Genevieve Katz, who is also on the board of the Friends of the Oakland Public Library.
- Commissioner Marian Sylvestre, an executive with the American Red Cross.
- Commissioner Bridgette Berrigan, community activist and member of Arizmendi Co-op.

The LAC thanks commissioners who ended their terms on the Commission:

- Ms. Judi Hirsch
- Ms. Wanda Sabir
- Ms. Lottie Rose
- Ms. Victoria Kelly
- Ms. Rica Amanda Azarcon

In May, Commissioner Bea Wong, who is also chair of the Friends of the Asian Branch, attended its annual fundraiser and led the organization in donating \$10,000 to the Asian Branch.

Throughout the year, Commissioners Katz and Scott continued their involvement in the Citizens Action Committee for the Master Facilities Plan. In generating community feedback on the draft plan, presentations were made to community groups.

In October, Commissioner Katz attended the CALTAC workshop at the brand new Cerritos Library. Built like an information mall, this library is meant to dispel the stodgy image and appeal to a broad section of the community. Services include 200 public access computers, a large children's room with a 15,000-gallon aquarium, café and reading room.

Commissioner Arthur Noble maintains his active involvement with the Second Start Adult Literacy Program and helped celebrate its move to the second floor of the West Oakland Branch.

Throughout the year Commissioners have continued their advocacy and advisory roles by meeting with Council members, City staff, Library staff and individual members of the public. In an effort to increase our visibility, the Commission held its meetings in the Rockridge, West Oakland, Asian, and Chavez branches as well as the Main Library.

Measure Q Update

Measure Q is a reauthorization of the Library Services Retention and Enhancement Act of 1994 (Measure O) and is a voter-approved measure that passed on the March 2, 2004 ballot by over 77%. As passed, it increases the parcel tax rate to retain and enhance public library services in Oakland, expand the library services funded by the act, and extend the life of the measure.

During 2004-2005, Library Staff, with Measure Q funding, accomplished the following service retention and enhancements:

- The Main Library remains open 7 days per week.
- On September 11, 2004, all branch libraries expanded hours to 6 days per week, all open on Saturdays, an event not seen in Oakland since pre-Proposition 13 days.
- The Library's materials budget was restored and increased, with mass purchasing of children's books, teen materials, best sellers, videos, DVD's and CD's, increasing materials circulation in many locations by over 15% and system-wide by 10%, most dramatically at the Main Library where the "Hot Picks" (new books, DVDs, CDs, etc.) and Teen Zone materials have enjoyed an increase of over 65% in materials checked out.
- In the area of technology where the public especially responded when asked about support for Measure Q, new Q funds permitted the purchase of new public access computers in every branch and at Main, allowing the Library's 3-year public access computer replacement plan to unfold. In addition, Council will soon receive the Library's report requesting approval of a new Integrated Library System (Library Catalog) and network upgrade, also made possible with new Q funds.
- While the Library is at least 3 years away from opening and operating the new joint school-public library in East Oakland, the project will soon enter the schematic design phase. Measure Q will fund operation of this exciting joint venture.
- The Library has set aside in its budget the required 5% (approx. \$500,000.) as mandated by Measure Q.
- Strengthen support of the Second Start Adult Literacy Program with a City-funded Coordinator position, rather than dependent upon grants to continue this service priority.

This summary concludes my report for Fiscal Year 2004-2005 regarding oversight of Measure Q funds by the Library Advisory Commission for Fiscal Year 2004-2005.

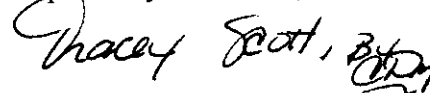
Future Issues and Activities:

The long-term budget planning process (including our concerns about the preservation of Measure Q funds and associated commitments) will be the Commission's main focus over the next few months. Additionally, the Commission's role as the Measure Q Steering Committee requires additional clarification.

The Library Advisory Commission will continue to support and facilitate public input to the Master Facilities Plan.

The Library Advisory Commission will continue to work closely with the Library Director, the City Administrator and City Council to develop a long-term plan that incorporates and addresses the needs of the community and to ensure that the public has a voice in how decisions are made about the future of public libraries in Oakland.

Respectfully submitted,



Tracey Scott, Chairperson
Library Advisory Commission

Forwarded to the Life Enrichment Committee


Office of the City Administrator