

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF LAW LIBRARY TRUSTEES OF  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

**A California Independent Public Agency Under  
Business & Professions Code Section 6300 et seq.**

**July 14, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Law Library Trustees of Los Angeles County was held on Wednesday, July 14, 2025 at 12:15 p.m., at the Los Angeles County Law Library Mildred L. Lillie Main Library Building at 301 West First Street, Los Angeles, California 90012 for the purposes of considering reports of the affairs to the Library, and transacting such other business as might properly come before the Board of Trustees.

**ROLL CALL/ QUORUM**

**Trustees Present:** Judge Mark Juhas  
Judge Laura Seigle  
Judge Rosa Fregoso  
Judge Susan DeWitt  
Judge Cherol Nellon  
Susan Steinhauser, Esquire  
Dan Rosenfeld

**Trustees Absent:** NA

**Senior Staff Present:** Katherine Chew, Executive Director

**Also Present:** Marcelino Juarez, Finance Director

President Juhas determined a quorum to be present, convened the meeting at 12:17 pm and thereafter presided. Executive Director, Katherine Chew, recorded the Minutes.

**1.0 PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mary Garcia and Sharon Boone, library employees, addressed the Board. They spoke to the Board to reiterate their support for the library's recommendations for Items 4.1 and 4.2. They do not believe that the Board should delay efforts to proceed with the library's historic designation on August 8<sup>th</sup>. They also believe that the Trustees should delay any plan for the Gensler firm to assess the library until all of the matters laid out in Item 4.2 have been clarified. They went on to discuss how patrons must feel safe in visiting the library. These days the public is having trouble trusting the courts, and the justice system at large. They also pointed out that the court's timeline does not fit with the library's. They then discussed how many patrons have heard about the save the library website, and that they are concerned about the future status of the library. Patrons are concerned about the courts, and about ICE. The library receives calls from all over the country, and they believe that it is vital the library stays where it is, and remains autonomous.



Joe Edmiston addressed the Board. He discussed how since he has become associated with the effort to save the library, all kinds of people have been coming out of the woodwork to show their concern and offer their support. He believes the best thing those wishing to save the library can do is publicly recognize the historical importance of the library. Some supporters have suggested speaking with a legislator. Mr. Edmiston does not believe that is necessary at this point. He then asked the Board if we need to bring a legislator into this. Mr. Edmiston went on to say that the legislative session is still going on, and will continue through September. Mr. Edmiston suggested that an amendment could be put in the budget act saying that this kind of thing should not happen without further review. He then asked the Board again if we need to do that. Trustee Rosenfeld then inquired if it is proper protocol to have discussions during public comments, or just to listen. Mr. Edmiston then stated that he would leave the Board with that question. He went on to state that he has frequent contact with legislators. He does not want to preempt anything, but he believes that this is too important to leave to the Superior Court. The library is a resource for everybody.

## **2.0 PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Juhas welcomed Dan Rosenfeld to the Board. He is a real estate investor who alternates between private and public sector service. President Juhas went on to discuss some of Trustee Rosenfeld's other accolades. Trustee Rosenfeld stated that he is happy to be here. He went on to say that nobody has done more to improve the county than Joe Edmiston. He believes that it is profound that he is taking interest. Trustee Rosenfeld went on to state that he has a history with the civic center, and keeping it a civic center. Being part of the law library, which is part of the civic center, is very meaningful to him. He looks forward to supporting the mission of the law library.

President Juhas then welcomed Chelsea-Leigh Flucus, the library's new Director of Public and Legal Education. E.D. Chew explained that Chelsea-Leigh started about 35 days ago. She received her J.D. from Brooklyn Law School. She went to the University of Wisconsin for her undergraduate degree. She worked at the UC Irvine School of Law as the Assistant Director of Career Development, and held the same title at St. Johns University School of Law. Chelsea-Leigh went on to state that she loves the library. Katie O'Laughlin helped her write a paper that was published in law school. She is excited to be here at the library. She also agrees with everything Sharon and Mary stated in their public comment.

## **3.0 CONSENT CALENDAR**

- 3.1 Approval of Minutes of the May 28, 2025 Regular Board Meeting
- 3.2 Approval of Minutes of the June 25, 2025 Regular Board Meeting
- 3.3 Approval of Revisions to Job Description-Managing Librarian, Legal Education; Support Supervisor, Branches; Library Associate, Branches; Library Associate, Public Interest; Librarian, Public Interest; Administrative Technician, Education; Community Resources Specialist; Senior IT Project Manager

President Juhas inquired if anyone would like an item taken off of the Consent Calendar. Hearing nothing, President Juhas requested a motion to approve the Consent Calendar. So moved by Vice President Seigle, seconded by Trustee Nellon. The motion was approved unanimously 7 – 0.

Trustee Fregoso requested for Item 4.3 from the June 2025 Board Agenda to be updated. The Item reads: Discussion of Los Angeles Superior Court Request to Delay Nomination of National Historic Landmark Designation for Los Angeles County Law Library. Trustee Fregoso requested the agenda be updated to reflect that the delay was not requested by the LA Superior Court, but by LALL Trustees. This inaccuracy is also reflected in today's agenda. President Juhas stated that we will make those changes to highlight that these were Board driven requests.

#### **4.0 Discussion Items**

##### **4.1 Discussion of LA Law Library's Board of Trustees to Delay Nomination of National Historic Landmark Designation for Los Angeles County Law Library**

Trustee Fregoso stated that, based on public comments, it seems that the belief is that a new library building would be located within a courthouse. In fact, LA Superior Court is not allowed to house any other agency within the site of LA Superior Court. A new library would not be built within a courthouse. President Juhas went on to confirm this. Trustee Steinhauser stated that her understanding was that all of the county courthouses ownership is transferring to the state. President Juhas confirmed this. Trustee Steinhauser then inquired if when we say judicial counsel, are we equating judicial counsel with the state? President Juhas stated that this was correct to the best of his knowledge. Trustee Steinhauser then asked isn't the issue today whether or not to go forward with the August 8<sup>th</sup> meeting for historical designation? President Juhas confirmed this. Trustee Steinhauser then stated that it is the recommendation of staff to go ahead and allow the recommendation to move forward. Trustee Steinhauser then asked the Board for their reasoning of moving forward or not with the historical designation.

Trustee Rosenfeld stated that the designation in question does not limit future options for the library, but enhances some of things we want to proceed with. It is an honor to be designated. He went on to discuss the pros and cons of the library receiving a historic designation. The designation does not prohibit demolition, but it does open funding opportunities. The library would become eligible for new grants with the designation. We could also possibly sell tax credits. Trustee Rosenfeld sees the historic designation as a plus for the institution without a downside. Trustee Steinhauser stated that she did not believe there had ever been discussions about selling the library, or moving locations, prior to learning about the civic center master plan several months ago. She went on to say that it seems that allowing the building to receive the historic designation would not impact whether or not we sell the library. She then stated that generally when a building receives a historic designation the value of the property increases. She went on to say that she is unaware of any committee or staff member looking into the possible sale and relocation of the library. If we were to do that, she believes it would be a very long undertaking.

Vice President Seigle asked what are the sources of grants we could get. Trustee Steinhauser stated that there is a list in the memo. Trustee Rosenfeld then stated that he recently helped procure a national trust for historic preservation grant for the Watts Happening Cultural Center. E.D. Chew then stated that there is a list of available grants attached to Item 4.1. Trustee Steinhauser then read off several of the grants listed. Trustee Seigle then inquired how much money would be included in those grants. Trustee Rosenfeld stated that it varies. He helped acquire a grant for the city recently that was \$150,000. Tax credits can also be sold. He stated that all of these are positive opportunities. Trustee Seigle then stated that the library's deficit is becoming an issue. If nothing changes, we will soon run out of money. She stated that additional sources of funding would be very important. Trustee Rosenfeld mentioned discussing with other Board members the need to develop a capitol plan for the operating and maintenance needs for this building.



Trustee Fregoso added that seismic retrofitting also needs to be addressed in any plan moving forward. E.D. Chew stated that we have already started the process of retrofitting the building. We have already moved past phase one of the retrofitting, and we are in phase two at the moment. Phase two includes paying a company to come up with a design to see if the building can be retrofitted, or if it needs to be demolished. Phase two will cost the library approximately \$385,000. Phase three will be acting on the findings of phase two. Trustee Fregoso asked if Item 4.2 on this agenda will be part of that. E.D. Chew responded no. We have not been told what Gensler would be assessing. We have requested a copy of the contract, but we do not know what David Slayton suggested to Gensler regarding the library. Trustee Steinhauser stated that it is important that we ask for a copy of the assessment between Gensler and the county. There could be a possible conflict of interest there. Trustee DeWitt then stated that there are two different issues. She clarified that Gensler may have a conflict of interest. This is a totally separate issue from whether or not LALL Board Members have any possible conflicts of interest.

E.D. Chew reiterated that we are already in phase 2 of our own seismic retrofit study. We have already paid the company conducting the study. We have also already begun bringing the building up to code on fire suppression. Facilities Supervisor, Mark Rangel, stated that we are just getting started on fire suppression. We are also still working on repairing the parking structure. Trustee Rosenfeld stated that he knows the Gensler company well. There is no such thing as a free lunch. They have a client much bigger and wealthier than us. He believes we should have our own independent assessment. He stated that the cost of retrofitting other buildings in the civic center have sometimes been surprisingly low in his experience. Trustee Fregoso pointed out that it is important to consider the longevity of the repairs as well as cost. Trustee Rosenfeld stated that seismic repairs are permanent, however, codes do sometimes change. Mechanical repairs do have a life span of about 75 years. He thinks that the Gensler offer sounds like a free lunch, but that we will be better off doing it ourselves for the objectivity of having our own study. We may also want a second peer review. He believes it is better to have one with no potential conflicts or other considerations other than what is best for the library. Vice President Seigle then asked why can we not do both. Trustee Rosenfeld responded that it gets confusing. Trustee DeWitt responded that it depends on the scope of what Gensler is offering. Trustee Steinhauser responded that they have never shown us the contract for what Gensler is offering. She feels a little like we are being strong armed into this. The courts have known about this since May of 2019. We first got notice of this in May 2025. The option the judges have talked to us about is an option where the library would sell its space. We do not have any experience in such a sale. She assumes the courts would buy our space because they want to be located here based on what Judge Tapia and Mr. Slayton showed us.





Trustee DeWitt responded that she thinks that is a little unfair. They came to say they want us to be part of the process. They would provide us with free consulting work no strings attached. They wanted us to be in the best position possible to consider all of our options as quickly as possible so we do not get left behind. To the best of her memory, the suggestion that they had a specific thought in mind as to what would happen to this building is inaccurate. The implications from some of the comments that the library would be closed down, or not accessible to the public, or that the library would be somewhere else has never been thought of, suggested, or desired by any of the Board Members. Trustee Steinhauser responded that she assumes the court has a number of options they are looking at. The way it was explained to her, one of the options they were looking at would require us to sell our building. The judge said we would get a lot of money for the building, and you can rebuild. We will find you a location across the street from City Hall. This is why there is some concern, fear, and panic about how quickly we can really move along these lines. Judge Tapia basically said if you do not come along with us we are going to do this anyways. That is not the sign of a patient individual. That is an individual who is fighting very hard for his cause, and I admire him, and I admire his leadership. But his job is to take care of the courts, not the law library.

Judge DeWitt responded that she took Judge Tapia's comments a little bit differently. There was never a suggestion that we would be required to do anything other than to act in the best interest of the law library. He said he was concerned about us falling behind. She did not take that as a strong arm. She interpreted that as them saying we have to move forward because we have certain deadlines. We want to make sure that you are in the best position to lobby for whatever decision you think is in the best interest of the law library. We may not be in the best position if we do not make those decisions earlier. They may make decisions that foreclose other options for us. That is how she took it. She just wants to make sure that we are in the best position to move quickly if we need to in order to maximize the advantage for the law library.

Vice President Seigle asked what a Gensler equivalent report would look like. Does it analyze the question is it more efficient and cost effective to fix up the current building or to build a new one? What is the scope of the report? How much do those things cost? How long do they take? Trustee Rosenfeld responded that is exactly what we don't know. Gensler is an architectural and planning firm. They are not structural engineers. They are not qualified to opine on structural integrity. To have a meaningful product from Gensler, there would need to be a structural engineer as part of their team. We do not know who that would be, and Gensler is not a cost estimator. Vice President Seigle clarified that she is talking about a separate report of our own. Trustee Rosenfeld responded that E.D. Chew has already started that process with a structural engineer. Vice President Seigle responded that that is just for seismic retrofitting. That does not include all of the other systems in the building. We need to make a long term decision about whether or not the building is worth putting money into. Trustee Fregoso mentioned the elevators. Vice President Seigle responded that everything seems to be a problem right now. E.D. Chew responded that we have already begun the elevator project. Trustee Steinhauser responded that everything is not a problem. There are certain things that have been designated in the capitol project that need to be addressed. Vice President Seigle responded that her overarching concern is that we do not have a huge amount money. On a long term basis, how much is it going to cost to keep the building going? Is it worth doing that versus having a long term plan to build a new building. How do we figure that out? Is there someone we can hire to do that analysis?





Trustee Rosenfeld responded that we have already started pieces of it. We have started structural repairs, HVAC, elevators. We could hire someone to fill in the blanks and prepare a complete capitol budget for the library covering 75 years. We could phase it out and look at what the capitol needs will be. That would help us answer the question of what does it take to keep the building. Replacing the building somewhere else is an extremely expensive proposition. Nobody that he is aware of has offered to build us a building. How would we raise the money for a new building? Trustee Fregoso responded that we could sell the current building. Trustee Rosenfeld responded that we could sell the land, but by his estimation, that money would not begin to cover the cost of a new building. E.D. Chew pointed out that other costs would also be accrued in the event we build a new building, such as moving costs. That might go into the strategic plan.

Trustee Steinhauser asked for clarification of the timeline. Her understanding from Judge Tapia's presentation was that we need to move ahead by December this year. She is uncertain if we can do all of this planning, and cost analyses done by then. We would also have to pay for these studies. President Juhas pointed out that some of the capitol projects will have to be done whether we wind up selling the building or not. There are pressing safety issues that must be addressed. He asked if we broke ground on a new building today, when would the certificate of occupancy typically be? Trustee Rosenfeld responded that construction would be about 2.5 years, but it would take about 2.5 years to get from where we are to a building permit. It would generally be about 4 or 5 years from when you decide you want a new building until you could move in. That is assuming that we could pay for it. Trustee Rosenfeld suggests that we follow President Juhas' suggestion that we consider retaining someone to fill in the blanks of our capitol plan. We should do a complete building plan for a 75 year life span if the decision is to keep this building. We need to determine the cost of such a project, and how it might be funded.

Trustee Nellon asked what the other side of the historic designation is. What is the downside for the library? Trustee Rosenfeld responded that he does not see a downside. People will tell you it is easier to get a demolition permit if you do not have a historic designation. It may slow somebody down who wants to tear this building down. It would not benefit us, not having a historic designation would benefit whoever wanted to knock us down. Trustee Steinhauser pointed out that the civic center is already under historic designation. She asked aren't we also subject to CEQA rules already? Wouldn't anyone who wanted to demolish us already be subject to CEQA rules? Trustee Rosenfeld responded that he believes that is correct. CEQA can be a nine-month process, or it can tie you up indefinitely. Agencies are vulnerable to being sued if they do not do CEQA appropriately. CEQA does not have to be an environmental impact report. It can be a categorical exemption, it can be mitigated negative declaration. There are abbreviated CEQA processes. None of that prevents someone from removing this building. It could only slow down demolition.

President Juhas pointed out that the Board is running low on time. He asked the Board if there are any other comments or concerns, or is the Board ready to vote. He personally thinks the Gensler vote is easier because he believes it is premature. We need to know conflict issues, what the scope is, what everyone has in mind. Trustee Rosenfeld added that the cost estimator is so key. He stated that when these things get out of control is when people start throwing around dollars. When someone comes in here and tells us it will cost billions to keep this building, that does not help the discussion. It is not billions. We do not know how much it is, but we know it is not billions. Vice President Seigle stated that if we do go ahead with Gensler, we need to make sure that the library is not going to pay anything. Trustee Steinhauser stated that we need a copy of the contract. Trustee Rosenfeld stated that he would want to know what they are doing, and who is doing it. Who is the structural engineer? Who is the cost estimator? Who is doing HVAC, elevators, fire?

Trustee Steinhauser, Vice President Seigle, and President Juhas pointed out that we need to have a discussion about development ideas for fundraising, and a strategic plan. We need to do agenda building for these issues.

President Juhas moved that we do not delay the nomination of National Historic Landmark Designation for the Los Angeles County Law Library. Seconded by Trustee Steinhauser. President Juhas, Trustee Steinhauser, Trustee DeWitt, and Trustee Rosenfeld voted in favor of the motion. Trustee Fregoso opposed the motion. Vice President Seigle, and Trustee Nellon abstained. The motion was passed 4 – 1.

The Board also wanted to clarify that in Item 4.1, it was not the Court who requested to discuss the delay of the nomination. It was, in fact, members of the LA Law Library Board. Reflected here, and on the title of Item 4.1.

#### 4.2 Update: Superior Court Offer for Gensler Firm to Assess LA Law Library

President Juhas believes that there are too many unknowns at the moment to vote on Item 4.2. We need more information about what Gensler is doing, who is paying for it, what the scope is, etc. He stated that if someone wants to make a motion, he is happy to vote on it. Trustee Steinhauser stated that we need to know the scope of the work, who will be doing the work, costs, how the library is positioned in the contract. If we will be part of this, we must have better cooperation. Vice President Seigle stated that she suspects the scope will depend on what library is interested in. What kind of information will Gensler want?

Trustee Nellon left the meeting at 1:20pm.

Trustee Rosenfeld stated that he is worried about allegations showing up in the press or social media saying there is deficiencies with safety in the library. Until our study has been done, he worries that rumors about building safety might hurt us. If we did accept the Gensler study, how do we control the dissemination of that information? Vice President Seigle stated that should be a legal issue. Are studies public record? LALL Board Meetings are public record. Trustee Rosenfeld discussed how during his involvement with City Hall, they dealt with a lot of misinformation. Trustee Steinhauser asked what if studies come back with conflicting information? Trustee DeWitt stated that she believes more information is better. Trustee Fregoso stated that we would discuss that after seeing the reports. She discussed what should be included in our request from Gensler. What is more cost effective, retrofitting or rebuilding? Vice President Seigle suggested we put these items on next month's agenda. Trustee DeWitt suggested asking Gensler about conflicts of interest, cost promises, timeline, etc. Trustee Rosenfeld added that we should also ask who the consultants are.

No actionable measures were taken.

Trustee DeWitt left at 1:28pm.

#### 5.0 CLOSED SESSION

- 5.1 Conference with Labor Negotiator (G.C. 54957.6). Library Negotiator: Executive Director Katherine H. Chew, with Finance Director Marcelino Juarez; Employee Organization: SEIU Local 721

The Board convened in a closed session at 1:28pm.



No actionable measures were taken.

**6.0 RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION/ CLOSED SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT**  
(Pursuant to Government Code §54957.1)-Katherine H. Chew

The Board reconvened in open session at 1:40pm.

President Juhas and Trustee Fregoso left at 1:40pm.

**7.0 AGENDA BUILDING**

Items not on the posted agenda may be presented by a Trustee and, if requested, may be referred to staff or placed on the agenda for consideration at a future meeting of the Board.

**8.0 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

**9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 1:45pm by Vice President Seigle. The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Law Library Trustees is scheduled for Wednesday, August 27, 2025 at 12:15pm.



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Katherine Chew, Executive Director and Secretary  
Los Angeles County Law Library Board of Trustees

