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## **Library Advisory Board Minutes March 10, 2009**

For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB)

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The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, March 10, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Meeting Room. Chair Virginia Koontz called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

Board members present were: Heidi Beebe, Marian Creamer, George Feldman, Mark Garber, Ethan Johnson, Kate Kerns, Virginia Koontz, Henry Li, Alice Meyer, Henise Telles-Ferreira, John Potter, Carlene Weldon and Sola Whitehead. Board members David Blount, Robert Brading and Rick Gustafson were excused.

Staff members present were: Don Allgeier, Becky Cobb, Linda Fenster, Cindy Gibbon, Penny Hummel, Brett Lear, David Miles, Lance Murty, Vailey Oehlke, Molly Raphael, Patricia Welch, Leila Wrathall and Yvonne Chambers.

Also in attendance were: Multnomah County Commissioner Diane McKeel; Corie Wiren from Commissioner Diane McKeel's Office; Lori Bauman, attorney, community member; Brenda Clark, community member; and Steven Joiner, Friends of the Library.

The minutes of the January 13, 2009 and February 10, 2009 meetings were approved.

Chair Virginia Koontz opened the meeting by encouraging Board members to visit the various neighborhood libraries throughout the county whenever they have an opportunity.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Access Policy Committee**

Ethan Johnson reported on behalf of the Access Policy Advisory Committee (APAC). The consensus of the APAC is for Multnomah County Library to move forward with using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology. The benefits for the Library include improving materials handling systems, accommodating increased use of library materials with an unchanging number of employees and reducing workers compensation claims. Library employees will also be able to spend more time providing customer service by spending less time handling materials. Cindy Gibbon, Access Services Coordinator, MCL, pointed out that RFID technology will also fulfill security recommendations for the collection at Central Library.

When MCL looked into implementing an RFID system in the past, concerns centered around privacy issues for library patrons. At present, RFID technology is used all over the world, and in Oregon, and those concerns have been addressed especially in terms of protecting individual privacy. The American Libraries Association (ALA) and a book industry study group have developed best practices for RFID technology in libraries.

Concerns discussed by the Committee included the cost, in relationship to the local and national economic climate, and the longevity of a new system. The Committee agreed that the benefits of using an RFID system would outweigh the initial cost, and implementing the system would provide cost savings in other areas of the library that are indirectly impacted by the use of RFID tags, such as on-call staffing expenditures.

Alice Meyer made a motion that the Library Advisory Board give its unanimous consent to the March 10 memorandum from the Access Policy Committee and furthermore instruct them to use it in any way appropriate to inform the County. The motion was seconded and passed by a unanimous vote.

### **Nominating Committee**

Marian Creamer reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee. She introduced the Board's newest member Heidi Beebe. On February 19 during the Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) meeting, the BCC approved the LAB's recommendation of Heidi Beebe's appointment to the LAB.

Heidi is an architect; she and her husband founded their firm Beebe and Skidmore. She has made presentations to and worked with a number of different museum boards and one college board – the Seattle Art Museum, the Clifford Still Museum in Denver, the Berkley Art Museum and the Pacific Northwest College of Art.

Marian commented on her appreciation of Chair Wheeler's request for a member of the LAB and in-coming Board members to be present during the BCC meeting when new members are being appointed.

Recently, the Nominating Committee interviewed and unanimously agreed to recommend Katie Lane to serve on the LAB. Katie, a graduate of Lewis & Clark Law School, is currently employed by Portland General Electric, negotiating, managing and implementing all information technology contracts for PGE.

Katie is a past employee of Multnomah County where she served as Assistant County Attorney and in that capacity worked as MCL's primary attorney for three years during her tenure from 2003 to 2007.

Her professional activities and other accomplishments include:

Award of Merit Recipient of Multnomah Bar Association Young Lawyers Section  
Art of Leadership, Graduate of the Northwest Business for Culture and the arts

Mentor at Lewis & Clark Law School First Year Program

She is currently serving on the Board of Young Lawyers of the Multnomah Bar Association and would be able to join the LAB upon completion of her board term with the Bar Association at the end of June.

Marian Creamer, on behalf of the Nominating Committee, made a motion recommending Katie Lane to fill Position #5 on the LAB and that the recommendation is to be forwarded to the BCC. If approved by the BCC, Katie will assume LAB position 5 on July 1, 2009. The motion was seconded and passed by a unanimous vote. If approved by the BCC, Katie would serve the remaining 2 years of her predecessor's term, Ruth Gundle, who resigned last month, and her term would expire June 20, 2011.

Marian asked Board members to forward names of people who they would like to recommend to the LAB. The Committee will be filling upcoming vacancies and would like to have additional recommendations.

### **Finance Committee**

Mark Garber reported on behalf of the Finance Committee. He brought everyone's attention to the draft Citizen Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) report which will be forwarded to Chair Wheeler for the executive budget review. The CBAC's final report will go forward to the entire BCC during the budget process.

The report summarizes the Library's commitment and requirements to the voters in terms of levy funding. Those requirements include maintaining the hours and the other services that are specifically spelled out in the levy. In addition, the General Fund reduction taken by the Library for FY 2009-10 is detailed including reducing the book budget by \$500,000, cutting travel and training by more than \$100,000, taking out more than \$40,000 in repairs and maintenance costs, and reducing the Library's beginning working capital by \$1.3 million.

In closing, the Committee expressed concern that, while the County had asked the Library, like all other County departments, to make some 12% General Fund reduction, the Committee wanted to ensure that the reduction does not become permanent. There were certain expectations for the contributions from the County's General Fund towards the Library's operating budget. Even though the levy is the majority of the funding the library now receives, the Committee does not want the General Fund reduction to become permanent, which may prevent the Library from maintaining the services promised in the levy.

Virginia, John, Henry, Alice, Carlene and Mark, the members of the Finance Committee, along with former LAB member Steve Feltz, recommend moving this report forward to Chair Wheeler and the BCC.

Becky Cobb, Support Services Manager, reminded everyone the budget process is still on-going and a CBAC meeting is scheduled with Chair Wheeler for this evening. Virginia will be attending on behalf of the Finance Committee and as a CBAC member. Chair Wheeler is scheduled to make his budget decisions for the Executive Budget by Friday, March 13. He will then let the departments know what his decisions are by the middle of the following week and they will be published when the Executive Budget is released on April 23. There is then a six week period following the release date when the BCC considers the budget and holds public hearings as well as individual department hearings before the BCC.

Chair Wheeler has announced that all management and supervisory employees will not receive a cost of living or merit increase during FY 2009-10. Yesterday, March 9, Local 88 AFSME, which represents unionized library employees, voted to determine whether they would modify contract language to allow for no cost of living or step increases FY 2009-10 for union members.

Alice commented on the last sentence of the CBAC report and requested it read as follows:

“Without such funding the library will not be able to continue to provide the quality and scope of services, as outlined in the levy language, and upon which its national recognition is based.

A motion was made to accept the report and forward it to the Citizen Involvement Office. The motion was seconded and passed by a unanimous vote.

## **DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Molly Raphael, Director of Libraries, opened her report by providing an update on the status of the new Kenton and Troutdale libraries. The County now has a signed contract with the Kenton property owner which will enable the project to move forward. Vailey Oehlke, Deputy Director has been leading the program planning and June Mikkelsen is continuing to be involved in all of the development phases of the new libraries. MCL hopes to open the Kenton Library in December 2009 or early in 2010.

MCL received response submissions from the owner/developers of the four different Troutdale sites and we are currently in the process of evaluating and comparing the proposals. A recommendation is expected to go forward to the BCC in late March.

Each LAB member received a copy of the book featured for Every Family Reads (EFR) 2009; Jon Scieszka’s The True Story of The 3 Little Pigs! The book has been published with English and Spanish versions of the story in one volume, which allows the Library to do outreach to the Spanish speaking community. It is also a book that is intended for families to read together. This year the Library is combining EFR with the Children’s

Author Lecture (CAL). Jon Scieszka is the featured author and will be speaking on Monday, April 20, 7:00 pm at the First Congregational Church, 1126 SW Park in downtown Portland. The program is funded by The Library Foundation.

Molly gave a brief update on the Library Director search. The search is being handled by the Chair's Office and the successful candidate will be confirmed by the BCC. The Chair's Office hopes to appoint the new director prior to Molly leaving at the end of April. The Chair's Office will be involving input from library stakeholders including the LAB.

MCL is a five-star rated library system, according to the *Library Journal*, and is the only five-star system in the Northwest. The rating is based on circulation, number of people coming into buildings, number of people participating in programming and the use of public access computers.

### **FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

Steven Joiner reported on behalf of the Friends of the Library (FOL). The FOL has decreased their projected sales budget for the Central Library store by \$10,000 this year. They are also implementing a purchasing freeze due to the change in the economy and an overstock of inventory.

FOL membership guidelines have been revised and will be made available in the FOL newsletter.

The FOL annual meeting, for members only, will be on May 13, 2009 at the Old Church. Molly Gloss and Ursula Le Guin will be the guest speakers.

The spring book sale will be April 25 and 26. It is at the Gresham Town Fair Shopping Center which is the same location as 2008.

The Library Store has a great selection of books and cards. FOL members receive a 10% discount.

### **GOOD & WELFARE**

Diane McKeel, Multnomah County Commissioner, reported that one of the focuses of her office will be relaying good news of the Library to the BCC. Earlier this month Molly and Terrilyn Chun, Programming Supervisor, appeared before the BCC to inform them about Everybody Reads 2009. Corie Wiren, Chief of Staff for Commissioner McKeel organized a book group for staff on the 6<sup>th</sup> Floor of the Multnomah Building to discuss Stubborn Twig, the featured book for 2009.

Commissioner McKeel thanked LAB member Marian Creamer for coming before the BCC and introducing the LAB's newest member, Heidi Beebe.

Cindy Gibbon, Access Services Coordinator, reported that the SW Connection, a neighborhood newspaper, featured an article about the Hillsdale Teen Council which included a photograph of LAB member Henry Li, who is a member of the Council. The article was about a study performed by the Council, in recognition of Oregon's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday, that focused on patrons' birthplaces.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Yvonne Chambers  
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Multnomah County Library, Oregon