

Library Advisory Board Minutes: June 13, 2023For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met virtually on Tuesday, June 13, 2023. The meeting began at 5:01 pm.

Board members present were: Cassie Duprey, Clare Wilkinson, David Jarvis, Hazel Burke, Mabel Reed, and Megan Parrott. Kate Fleming, Lizzie Martinez, and Rob Edmiston were unavailable.

Staff members present were: Annie Lewis, deputy director; Katie Shifley, finance & facilities director; Jen Studebaker, community services manager; Jon Worona, director of innovation & technology; Maddelyn High, management analyst; and Sonja Ervin, equity & inclusion manager.

WELCOME & CHECK-IN

Meeting attendees joined the virtual meeting either via video or phone and participated in a warm-up exercise. Meeting minutes for the May 9, 2023 meeting were approved.

UPDATES FROM LIBRARY LEADERSHIP

Library Director Vailey Oehlke shared systemwide updates and highlights from the Director's Report:

- MCL will offer Drag Queen Storytime programming this summer, as we have in the past. Storytimes are meant for youth who bring a caring adult, and LAB members are encouraged to attend to show support.
- The North Portland Library groundbreaking event was wonderful, MC-ed by Kirby McCurtis with former branch managers in attendance who traveled to participate. This event meant a lot to folks, and Oehlke encouraged LAB members to continue to attend library bond groundbreaking events as they are able.
- The county (and the library's) Fiscal Year 2024 budget is approved and the library is moving forward with finalizing a new Partnership Manager position. Oehlke noted that this is a new position and an important recruitment for the library, as the person in this role will set a vision for library partnerships and will support partnership development with organizations that can help activate new library spaces. Oehlke expressed thanks to Clare Wilkinson, David Jarvis, and Megan Parrott for participating in the library's budget presentation on May 25 to speak to LAB's involvement and experience with the budget process, as well as for the time spent ahead of the presentation on CBAC work.

CULTURE, BIAS, & DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

Equity & Inclusion Manager Sonja Ervin shared information about diversifying boards, the conflict that can arise as a result, and recognizing and managing bias and diverse perspectives. Ervin led board members and staff in several related exercises, including one around personal and cultural

norms, and participants discussed how bias shows up in different ways. LAB members agreed that it could be beneficial to do some of these exercises again with new board members.

LAB then discussed ideas for how to make new members feel welcome and included. Some ideas shared included:

- Ask how folks communicate and what they're learning style
- Give folks an opportunity to share what is important for others to know about them
- Be curious (there is value in feeling like someone is interested in learning about you)
- Don't expect folks to educate you, and let folks take the lead and share what they feel comfortable with
- Build intentional points of reconnection and learning throughout the year/throughout board member terms
- Explore board buddies

COMMITTEE BUSINESS/WORKGROUP UPDATES

Although he wasn't able to attend the meeting, LAB and library staff acknowledged Rob Edimistion, a long-time LAB member whose term ended June 30. Maddelyn High encouraged LAB members to send their own goodbye messages.

Martinez noted that she is an outgoing co-chair, and plans for new leadership (a new co-chair to serve with Wilkinson) is in the works.

ACTION ITEMS + CLOSING

High reminded that there is no LAB meeting in July or August, but instead, a new member welcome social on July 12 and a new member virtual orientation in August. The next full LAB meeting is September 11.

The meeting adjourned at 6:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Maddelyn High, director's assistant
Multnomah County Library, Oregon