

Library Advisory Board Minutes: May 13, 2025For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met virtually on Tuesday, May 13, 2025. The meeting began at 5:00 pm.

Board members present were: David Jarvis, Domiè Newton, Ingrid Jacobson, Jade Chan, Joe Marquez, Kate Fleming, Kelsey Fong, Kristi Ketchum, London Sorcinelli, Madison Riethman, Megan Parrott, Nikia Kae Solbjor, Taryn Sauer, and Tia-Theo Thompson.

Clare Wilkinson and Naomi Margolis were unavailable.

Staff members present were: Annie Lewis, library director; Dave Ratliff, interim deputy director; Jen Studebaker, community services director; Johnette Easter, HR director; Jon Worona, director of innovation & technology; Katie Shifley, finance & facilities director; Kim Sutton, MarCom director; Kirby McCurtis, location services director; and Sonja Ervin, equity & inclusion manager.

Jackie Starr, Friends of the Library; and one member of the public were also in attendance.

WELCOME & CHECK-IN

LAB Co-Chair Megan Parrott welcomed attendees and the group participated in an icebreaker.

UPDATES FROM LIBRARY LEADERSHIP

Annie Lewis shared recent systemwide updates and highlights from the Director's Report, including:

- Friends of the Library recognition: Lewis gave kudos to Friends of the Library, specifically the [Rose City Reads](#) bookstore, for making it into the [top five bookstores](#) for OregonLive's reader's choice. Lewis encouraged everyone to visit the bookstore, located next to the Library Operations Center.
- IMMS implementation: Lewis also shared a thank you to library staff, particularly Dave Ratliff and the team involved in implementation of the Intelligent Materials Movement System (IMMS), noting that implementation is a major milestone that will create efficiencies and improve patron experience by keeping relevant books on shelves.
- Opening of the [St. John's Holds pickup location](#) on May 17, and a notice that the [Rockwood Makerspace](#) has been relocated to Midland Library during Rockwood Library's construction closure
- Updates on the library's budget cycle and Deputy Director recruitment

- News that Dr. Carla Hayden, the Librarian of Congress, was released from her position without cause, and the strategies MCL is considering to advocate for the importance of this role; and an update that the State Library of Oregon will receive the full amount of Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA) funding from IMLS, ensuring funding of positions and services for the coming fiscal year.

BOARD BUSINESS

Meeting minutes for the April 8, 2025 meeting were approved with no changes.

Parrott explained the process for electing LAB leadership for the 2025-2026 year, noting that this is the first time using this process (outlined in LAB's revised bylaws). Parrott previewed the ballot form, explaining a ranked-choice voting system for current LAB members to rank preferences for three candidates interested in two leadership positions. Membership Committee member Joe Marquez provided an overview of how ranked-choice voting works, with first choices receiving more points than second and third choices. Kelsey Fong volunteered to tally votes in real-time.

Parrott introduced LAB leadership candidates — Jade Chan, Kate Fleming, and Madison Riethman — and each candidate shared a bit about their background and interest in the role of LAB co-chair. Folks then voted using the ranked-choice voting form.

At the end of the meeting, after votes for LAB leadership positions were tallied, Parrott announced Jade Chan and Kate Fleming were the top two candidates. A motion was made by Madison Riethman and seconded by Kelsey Fong to have both candidates serve as co-chairs for Fiscal Year 2026. Following a hand-raise vote, Parrot announced that the motion had passed and congratulated the new co-chairs. Lewis thanked all the candidates for their commitment and dedication, and also thanked Parrott for facilitating the meeting.

PATRON SURVEY RESULTS

Elizabeth O'Neill and Carly Hollabaugh from the library's Office of Project Management & Evaluation (OPME) presented a summary of the 2024 MCL patron survey results. O'Neill noted that this year's survey was redesigned with input from the Library Advisory Board, the Coalition of Communities of Color, and a staff workgroup; and conducted during bond construction and a national election, which may have affected results.

Over 14,000 adult active cardholders responded to the survey, which was available in all service languages. O'Neill and Hollabaugh summarized key highlights from survey results:

- Nearly three-quarters of respondents reported being very satisfied with the library, with 91% being satisfied overall, a slight decrease from 2022 but still high considering service disruptions.

- 86% of respondents agreed they usually find what they need at the library, also a slight decrease from 2022.
- When asked what was most important about the library, ebooks, digital books, physical materials, being open 7 days a week, the website, and spending time in the building were top responses, with books and content being the number one.
- When asked about times when the library most supported patron needs, some themes emerged, including (but not limited to): patrons are supported by staff; library buildings offer community services and connection; and the library is a valued place.
- This year's survey included new questions on culture and language representation, with 71% agreeing their culture/identity is represented and 89% agreeing help is available in their language.
- Qualitative data included many positive comments about staff, services, and resources.

Lewis shared initial thoughts on how the library will use this feedback, noting that library leadership reviewed the results and will develop a more detailed follow-up strategy; and that the library will begin conducting a biennial qualitative survey starting in 2026 (to supplement the more quantitatively-focused survey).

After some discussion of results and patron concerns, O'Neill thanked LAB for their work on the survey redesign, noting its actionability; and expressed gratitude to the OPME team for their work on the patron survey. Lewis echoed this appreciation, highlighting this team's expertise.

CLOSING

The meeting adjourned at 6:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
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