

Library Advisory Board Minutes: July 8, 2025For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met virtually on Tuesday, July 8, 2025. The meeting began at 5:05 pm.

Board members present were: ALife Allah, David Jarvis, Domiè Newton, Ingrid Jacobson, Jade Chan, Joe Marquez, Jose Ramirez Reyes, Kate Fleming, Kelsey Fong, Kristi Ketchum, Madison Riethman, Megan Parrott, Nikia Kae Solbjor, and Taryn Sauer.

London Sorcinelli, Naomi Margolis, and Tia-Theo Thompson were unavailable.

Staff members present were: Annie Lewis, library director; Dave Ratliff, interim deputy director; Jen Studebaker, community services director; Katie Shifley, finance & facilities director; Kim Sutton, MarCom director; Kirby McCurtis, location services director; Maddelyn High, management analyst; and Sonja Ervin, equity manager.

Jackie Starr, Friends of the Library; Love Centerwall, The Library Foundation; and Commissioner Vince-Jones Dixon, District 4, Multnomah County; and one member of the public were also in attendance.

WELCOME & CHECK-IN

LAB Co-Chair Jade Chan welcomed attendees, who shared introductions and participated in a group check-in. Chan expressed gratitude to outgoing LAB Co-Chairs, Clare Wilkinson and Megan Parrott, reminding that as of this meeting, she and Kate Fleming are the group's new leaders.

UPDATES FROM LIBRARY LEADERSHIP & DISCUSSION

Library Director Annie Lewis welcomed new members, ALife Allah and Jose Ramirez Reyes, to their first LAB meeting. Lewis then shared recent systemwide updates and highlights from the Director's Report:

- The [new Albina Library](#) opens to the public on July 19th, with a soft opening on July 17th. There will be lots of events during opening weekend, and Lewis encouraged folks to attend.
- Staffing changes are going into effect this month (in accordance with MCL's [ongoing staffing plans](#)), and this is a time of transition for many library staff members and teams.
- Last week, a fatal shooting occurred near the Smart Park on 10th Avenue across from Central Library, and there has been a lot of media coverage of this tragic incident. Lewis shared that the victim and the suspect were in the library prior to the shooting, and did not break any library rules or cause any disruptions. During the incident, Central Library went

into lockdown. MCL is cooperating with Portland Police's investigation; as is the county's Workplace Security Team. Lewis shared several other details:

- Central Library closed for two days after the incident, and Trauma Intervention Program support was available onsite for staff.
- Central Library staff work very diligently to develop relationships with library patrons and to enforce library rules. Library leadership knows of and hears from many other urban library systems experiencing the impacts of these same community issues.
- MCL is receiving feedback from many community partners, and is and has been working to collaborate on enhanced safety solutions, including evaluating options for increased security measures; as well as opportunities for positive activations in and around Central Library.

Folks engaged in robust discussion. Lewis shared appreciation for LAB members willing to share their perspectives, and encouraged folks to reach out to her directly or to LAB Liaison Maddelyn High as other thoughts or questions arise.

Commissioner Jones-Dixon shared appreciation for this conversation, and for being able to listen, learn, and continue to work with library leadership, staff, and partners moving forward.

Nikia Solbjor shared comments about patron experience with library closing procedures. A suggestion was also made to consider partnerships with agencies that support social services (food, healthcare, and other benefits) to share benefits information in the face of looming federal cuts.

BOARD BUSINESS

Meeting minutes for the June 10, 2025 meeting were approved with one edit.

LAB Co-Chair Kate Fleming shared a summary of results of a LAB member survey on meetings times and topics of interest for learning and engagement. Twelve LAB members responded to the survey, and Fleming highlighted key themes, including:

- A desire for more active engagement and time for discussion and input
- Desire for more social engagement
- Interest in creating a LAB outreach or community affairs committee
- Interest in learning more about library collections and intellectual freedom
- A preference for hybrid meetings, but no consensus yet on preferred meeting time

At the group's request, High will send out another short survey to determine a 5:00pm or 5:30pm meeting start time. High will also include a link to the current LAB member roster, with a request for folks to fill in any community connections or expertise they would like to highlight in terms of their advisory role to library leadership and staff who may be seeking specific input.

The group made plans to review committee descriptions and interest at the next meeting in September.

CLOSING

The meeting adjourned at 6:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Maddelyn High, director's assistant

Multnomah County Library, Oregon