

Library Advisory Board Minutes: December 9, 2025For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met at North Portland Library on Tuesday, December 9, 2025. The meeting began at 5:34 pm.

Board members present were:

ALife Allah, David Jarvis, Ingrid Jacobson, Jade Chan, Joe Marquez, Jose Ramirez Reyes, Kate Fleming, Kelsey Fong, Kristi Ketchum, London Sorcinelli, Madison Riethman, Megan Parrott, Naomi Margolis, Nikia Kae Solbjor, and Tia-Theo Thompson

Domiè Newton and Taryn Sauer were unavailable.

Staff members present were: Annie Lewis, library director; Jen Studebaker, community services director; Jon Worona, director of innovation & technology; Katie Shifley, finance & facilities director; Kim Sutton, MarCom director; Kirby McCurtis, location services director; Maddelyn High, management analyst; Sonja Ervin, equity manager; and Stephen Houser, library deputy director. Eddie Arizaga, Kate Schwab, and Stephanie White (MCL staff); Ashley Graff, District 4, Multnomah County; and Jackie Starr, Friends of the Library, were also in attendance.

WELCOME & CHECK-IN

LAB Co-Chair Kate Fleming welcomed attendees, who shared introductions and participated in a group icebreaker.

MCL HOUSELESS SERVICES

Library staff members Kate Schwab, Stephanie White, and Eddie Arizaga presented information about the array of services MCL provides to patrons experiencing homelessness – including history, research, staffing, training, and more. A range of services based out of library buildings, and engagement and outreach outside of library spaces (like book donations and event participation) are offered. Services range from things like an onsite social worker from Cascadia Health and peer support specialists; resource fairs and referrals; access to free technology (dependent on grant funding); ID assistance; community connections (“Coffee and Conversation”); a weekly shower truck at Midland Library through a partnership with Cultivate Initiatives; housing application support; and more. Staff reminded that folks experiencing homelessness benefit not only from library offerings geared toward basic needs but also share interest in the same library services and resources that non-houseless patrons access.

In response to a question, library staff shared that MCL does have a partnership with the [Homeless Services Department](#) as well as connections to other community/social service providers like Volunteers of America, Street Roots, and many others that offer services the library

isn't able to or best suited to provide. Partnerships and relationships also allow MCL staff to get the word out about what library services are offered. Typical MCL promotion methods like the website and fliers may not always reach target demographics, and for houseless folks in particular, word of mouth can be an important way to share information.

Responding to another question, staff shared that while the library partners pretty closely with DHS, MCL hasn't yet partnered with the VA. A LAB member suggested that the library might provide a resource list of library services specifically for social workers like herself.

As with all library services, services to patrons experiencing homelessness evolve over time based on needs and available resources.

LAB members thanked library staff for joining to share this information, and for providing these types of services.

UPDATES FROM LIBRARY LEADERSHIP & DISCUSSION

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

- Close-out of MCL's 2023-2025 strategic plan, and the upcoming planning launch for the next forward-facing strategic plan — LAB will be involved.
- Kick off of Fiscal Year 2027 budget development — with thanks to LAB Finance Committee members for their work with Katie Shifley, who is leading base budget development with staff.
- Announcement of opening of the new Northwest Library on January 10
- Closure of a large book distributor, Baker and Taylor, that is shifting orders from libraries across the country to Ingram (another major vendor) and causing a backlog for receipt of new library materials
- The recent adoption of a new firearms ordinance by the Board of County Commissioners, which applies to most library buildings

BOARD BUSINESS

Meeting minutes for the September 9, 2025; October 14, 2025; and November 11, 2025, meetings were approved with no changes.

CLOSING

LAB Co-Chair Jade Chan invited LAB members to an informal year-end social gathering on 12/29 from 5:00-7:00 pm – more info to come.

In response to a question about next steps for the library's Patron Voices project (for which some LAB members are serving as interviewers), LAB liaison Maddelyn High committed to following up with staff leads.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Maddelyn High, director's assistant
Multnomah County Library, Oregon