

Library Advisory Board Minutes: February 10, 2026For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met for a hybrid meeting at Gresham Library on Tuesday, February 10, 2026. The meeting began at 5:30 pm.

Board members present were: David Jarvis, Ingrid Jacobson, Jade Chan, Joe Marquez, Kate Fleming, Kelsey Fong, Kristi Ketchum, Madison Riethman, Naomi Margolis, and Nikia Kae Solbjor

ALife Allah, Domiè Newton, Jose Ramirez Reyes, London Sorcinelli, Megan Parrott, and Tia-Theo Thompson were absent/unavailable.

Staff members present were: Annie Lewis, library director; Dave Ratliff, integrated services director; Johnette Easter, HR director; Jon Worona, director of innovation & technology; Katie Shifley, finance & facilities director; Kirby McCurtis, location services director; Sonja Ervin, equity manager; Stephen Houser, library deputy director; and Ellie Avis, collection manager. Commissioner Jones-Dixon, District 4, Multnomah County was also in attendance.

WELCOME & CHECK-IN

LAB Co-Chairs Kate Fleming and Jade Chan welcomed attendees, who shared introductions. Folks participated in a group icebreaker.

UPDATES FROM LIBRARY LEADERSHIP & DISCUSSION

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

- The County Chair's decision to not direct the library to move forward with metal detectors at this time, based on the impact to operating costs and on community survey results. The library is continuing to invest in security at Central Library, using contingency funds from the capital bond program to hire a third-party consultant for another infrastructure assessment.
- Several upcoming events, including ongoing Black History Month programming, Lunar New Year celebrations, and the public reopening of [Hollywood Library](#) on February 13 after bond improvements
- An update on MCL's Patron Services project timeline, for which several LAB members are conducting surveys

LAB member Kristi Ketchum shared a positive experience volunteering as a greeter at Albina Library, noting the high volume of activity on a Saturday. Location Services Director Kirby McCurtis noted that the greeter role is a new pilot program at Albina and is planned for the new East

County Library as well. Nikia Solbjor expressed excitement about the role and suggested Midland Library as another possible location.

COLLECTIONS OVERVIEW

Collection Manager Ellie Avis provided an overview of the library's collection, which includes physical books, disc media, non-circulating materials, and approximately 900,000 digital titles (ebooks, audiobooks, streaming video, and over 100 online database resources). The majority of the collection is in English (almost 90%), with materials in 11 other languages. Guiding principles for collection management include intellectual freedom, equity and inclusion, accessibility, and aligning with strategic priorities and community needs.

The library maintains special collections primarily at Central Library, such as the [John Wilson special collection](#) of rare materials, the Oregon collection of local history materials, and a sheet music collection. Unique cultural collections include the [Black Pacific Northwest collection](#) and the Fisk collection, both at North Portland; and the [Black Resources](#) and [Indigenous collections](#), which are integrated across all locations and continue to grow.

The library's collection development policy is the foundational document guiding selection and de-selection, and a project is underway to update it. Collection decisions are informed by usage data, patron suggestions (about 1,100 per month, half of which are purchased), staff input, and market trends. The selections team comprises 11 staff members with special focus areas, including selectors for cultural and language collections. The implementation of collection software helps automate collection management, including determining item placement and coordinating systemwide displays.

The total book budget for the current fiscal year is about \$8.5 million, with digital collections usage being high, making the cost per use for digital items slightly lower despite increased spending since the pandemic.

Discarded materials are handled by the Friends of the Library, who sell them at their store and online, and have a contract with Thrift Books.

Regarding controversial or offensive items, Avis explained that the library adheres to its intellectual freedom policy and the American Library Association's [freedom to read ethics](#), avoiding censorship. Items are assessed based on selection criteria, not on personal opinion of the content, considering suitability for circulation, printing quality, and accurate information. Formal challenges to remove materials are infrequent and involve an official review process, which is managed by the Director's Office.

Information was also shared about the library's new Intelligent Materials Management System (IMMS), which MCL now uses for collection logistics to govern its large floating collection.

BOARD BUSINESS - COMMITTEE UPDATES

Madison Riethman updated the group on the CBAC committee, stating their final official meeting is soon, and they are preparing a memo on the budget to bring for a vote at the March meeting.

Nikia Solbjor announced that Joe Marquez accepted the nomination to be the chair of the Membership Committee. The committee will meet in person on February 24 and is working on ideas for another in-person "mingle." Recruitment this year will focus on filling vacated youth positions (due to term-outs) and to fill a regular membership position created by a resignation.

CLOSING

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

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