

Library Advisory Board Minutes January 10, 2012
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB)

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, January 10, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Meeting Room. Chair Katie Lane called the meeting to order at 7:45 a.m.

Board members present were: David Blount, Marian Creamer, Allie Donahue, George Feldman, Katie Lane, John Potter, Henise Telles-Ferreira, and Sola Whitehead. Board members excused were: Heidi Beebe, Kerline Brownell, Mark Jackson, Mardy Stevens, and Carlene Weldon. Board members Lori Irish Bauman, Mark Garber and Danika Stochosky were absent.

Staff members present were: Vailey Oehlke, Director of Libraries; Becky Cobb, Deputy Director; Sue Banks, Central Library Director; Cindy Gibbon, Access and IT Services Manager; Ellen Fader, Youth Services Director; Jeremy Graybill, Marketing & Communications Director; Shelly Kent, Human Resources Manager; Mike Harrington, Facilities Manager; Pat French, Collections Services Manager; Don Allgeier, Neighborhood Libraries Assistant Director; Shawn Cunningham, Policy Advisor; Stephanie Chase, Reference, Adult Services & Programming Coordinator; Terrilyn Chun, Programming Supervisor; David Miles, Kenton Administrator; Jay Hadley, Operations Supervisor, Central Library; and Jamie Owens, Administrative Specialist, Director's Office.

Also in attendance were: Diane McKeel, Multnomah County Commissioner, District 4; Corie Wiren, Chief of Staff, Commissioner Diane McKeel's Office; Ali Harvey, Friends of the Library; Kari Trumbo, The Library Foundation; Nathan Brunette, Friends of the Library; Mathew Lashua, Chief of Staff, Commissioner Judy Shprack's office; Jacquie Weber, Deputy County Attorney and Carly Dennis.

The December minutes were approved with changes.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Vailey began by noting that library staff is working hard to figure out how the library will reduce expenditures next year by 10%, or about \$6.5 million. Library leadership will engage the LAB through the Finance Committee and there will be other opportunities as well for discussion.

John Potter added that the Finance Committee is meeting weekly starting on January 19, and requested that the LAB members share with him any feedback or ideas for the committee to consider. There will be approximately one month after the next LAB meeting to put together an assessment of the budget with recommendations for the Board of County Commissioners. He said that he plans to update the LAB in February and bring a recommended report for LAB approval in March.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Katie shared a reminder that the Futures Committee meeting is Thursday, January 12, It will cover "Cradle to Career" including a discussion of what the library is already doing in the community regarding that program.

Katie announced that Virginia Koontz resigned from the board. Having served on the board since 2006, Virginia served as the Chair twice and Vice Chair once, and was a member of the Finance Committee the entire time she was a member of the LAB. Virginia will be missed. Marian Creamer praised Virginia her for her financial acuity, steady hand, and thoughtfulness and reiterated that she will be missed. Vailey Oehlke concurred.

Katie shared that she, along with David Blount, George Feldman and Marian Creamer, attended a meeting the week prior with Chair Cogen to discuss how the LAB communicates with the Chair's office. The LAB wants to have better communication with the Board of County Commissioners and Katie expressed concern for a process in which she served as the primary conduit. Katie recommended the LAB have more direct conversation with all of the commissioners, and find a way of keeping open communication with all of them.

David, George, and Marian also commented on the positive tone of the meeting.

Henise Telles-Ferreira acknowledged the work that Commissioner McKeel has done and thanked The Library Foundation and the Friends, suggesting that an LAB member attend their meetings so that the groups can continue to work together.

Vailey added that she is thankful for the support from the LAB, The Library Foundation and the Friends. The efforts of these groups and the stakeholders demonstrated strong support for the library and a library district.

Sue Banks reported that she shared the board testimony with the Central staff, which helped assuage concerns and kept them focused on the larger issues facing this library. She thanked the LAB.

Jacquie Webber

Katie introduced Jacquie Weber, Deputy County Attorney, who was asked to join the meeting due to the recent referral and another item that is promised to be on the ballot later this year. This is an important time to discuss the Board's responsibilities when speaking publicly.

Jacquie Weber stated that when the levy was referred to the ballot, the LAB became restricted as "public officials" because members are appointed by the BCC. Members in a personal capacity can make statements of support or opposition to a measure, but not in one's role as an LAB member. The library district is not on the ballot right now, it is simply a resolution, and when that changes it becomes restricted. Members should keep statements simple; Jacquie advised against mentioning that one is a member of the LAB but speaking as a private citizen. She provided a pamphlet about the restrictions.

Commissioner McKeel stated that her office is getting calls from citizens about the levy and the library district and needs clarification about what her staff can say. Jacquie answered that elected officials get to say whatever they want. Their staff is more restricted and will need to be less involved. As an example, Jacquie explained that Corie Wiren, Commissioner McKeel's chief of staff can campaign for issues, but only as a private citizen.

Jacquie reviewed the public records law and reminded the LAB that written communication, electronic or otherwise to board staff, the County Commissioners, any member of library staff or the library director, are all part of the public record. It will be accessible to anyone who requests it, so there is a responsibility to maintain it in accordance with Oregon statutes for two years. She addressed a question from George Feldman, noting that emails should be retained in one's own email account, but that correspondence received as a cc may be treated differently. Jacquie reiterated that even messages sent using a personal computer are public record. Any emails relating to LAB business are subject to public records law. Cindy Gibbon explained that any emails to county employees are kept in perpetuity.

Commissioner McKeel

Katie introduced Commissioner McKeel and thanked her for serving in the role as liaison to the rest of the Board of County Commissioners. Commissioner McKeel offered an opportunity to ask any remaining questions about the process and the plan for library funding.

Sola Whitehead asked how the concerns and questions of the LAB get represented to the Board of County Commissioners. Commissioner McKeel answered that she is the liaison to the board of County Commissioners and she does keep them informed. Recent issues brought up a need for different communication and she invited the LAB

and others to approach any commissioner directly at any time about any issues with the library.

George Feldman suggested communication as a topic of discussion at the upcoming LAB retreat, Commissioner McKeel agreed that coming up with strategies for communication and meeting with the board on a regular basis is a good idea.

Marian Creamer asked if Commissioner McKeel thought that letters are a good way to communicate with the board. Commissioner McKeel answered that mail and emails are a way to get one's message across, but that commissioners can get flooded with mail.

Marian asked if the library district measure vote in November hinges upon the levy passing in May. Vailey answered that it does, and stated her belief that the community will support the library in May. Financial and other information can be found on the library's website.

John Potter asked if there was any help, support or feedback that the LAB could be providing to the commissioners regarding the funding of the library. Commissioner McKeel answered that LAB actions did make a difference recently. She continued that the rest of the commissioners need to take a lead role in the promotion of the library district by crafting a clear message for the public because having a stable funding source is so important for the library.

Ali Harvey asked what would happen if the levy does not pass in May. Is there a formal plan of what would happen? Commissioner McKeel answered the referral language says that if the levy passes, the library district would be on the November ballot. If the levy does not pass in May there would need to be more discussion about how to proceed from there.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION

Kari Trumbo reported that the Foundation is relieved and happy about the referral. Merris Sumrall spent a lot of time working on the library district. Currently TLF is gearing up for the 2012 Summer Reading program; it will be 100 this year.

TLF learned from Stephanie Chase about additional grant money for the Financial Literacy program, FINRA.

Henise Telles-Ferreira announced that she had a card that was signed by Roosevelt High School students thanking TLF for the work behind bringing the Teen Author Lecture series to town and specifically to Roosevelt. There is also a card for the LAB.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Ali Harvey reported that the date for the spring book sale is April 27-29. Paula Poundstone is the national spokesperson for the Friends of the Library and will be performing January 28, at the Aladdin Theater. The Friends will have a table of items for sale at the performance.

The Friends "Evening of Support" is March 13, 2012. Attending authors are: Ursula K. Le Guin, Philip Margolin, Molly Gloss, and Kim Stafford. She added that possibly Jean M. Auel and Karen Karbo would attend. Friends of the Library now has 1400 members.

GOOD & WELFARE

Terrilyn Chun announced the Everybody Reads programming starts in February, and the author will be coming March 6, 2012. By the end of this week all of the books will be distributed to all the libraries.

Sola Whitehead inquired what time the Finance Committee meets. John Potter answered that it is at 4:30 p.m. Thursdays or Tuesdays at the Library Administration building.

Marian Creamer commended MCL's "Ask a Librarian" services. Less than 12 hours after posting her query she received a detailed and timely answer: Approximately 72% of Multnomah County Library patrons reside within Portland city limits

The next LAB meeting is February 14, 2012.
Katie Lane, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 8:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Jamie Owens
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Multnomah County Library, Oregon