

**Library Advisory Board Minutes February 14, 2012**  
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB)

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The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, February 14, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Meeting Room. Vice Chair John Potter called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m.

Board members present were: Lori Irish Bauman, David Blount, Kerline Brownell, Marian Creamer, Allie Donahue, George Feldman, Mark Jackson, John Potter, Mardy Stevens, Henise Telles-Ferreira, Carlene Weldon, and Sola Whitehead. Board members excused were: Heidi Beebe and Katie Lane. Board members 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; Rita Jimenez, Neighborhood Libraries Director; Shelly Kent, Human Resources Manager; Mike Harrington, Facilities Manager; Pat French, Collections Services Manager; Shawn Cunningham, Policy Advisor; Stephanie Chase, Interim Reference, Adult Services & Programming Coordinator; Terrilyn Chun, Programming Supervisor, Javier Gutierrez, Midland Administrator; 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; Karie Trumbo, The Library Foundation; Elizabeth Beekley, The Library Foundation; Cathi Woodruff, Friends of the Library; Judy Lindley, Friends of the Library; Timothy Jackson and Carly Dennis.

The January minutes were approved with changes.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Vailey thanked Becky Cobb for all of her hard work during this budget season. Becky is our Deputy Director and has retained her former role as the Budget and Finance Director. Vailey continued that the entire finance staff has been working many hours to get the budget request ready. Vailey thanked Shelly Kent, HR Manager, who has worked through the significant personnel changes brought about by the budget reductions. Vailey added a thank you to the rest of the managers who made decisions

and recommendations in response to the budget reductions, noting the difficulty of this process. The library's budget proposal is due to be submitted this Friday, February 17; this proposal will be considered as Chair Cogen prepares his Executive Budget, to be released May 3. That budget will be deliberated with county commissioners and then finalized on May 31, 2012.

Vailey discussed the idea of a furlough as one option to save money, as Seattle Public Library does annually. A week-long furlough closure of all library services would save approximately \$500,000, but a legal consideration from the county attorney's office raised concerns that such an action could violate the terms of our levy language before voters in May.

In addition to staff reductions due to expected revenues for next year, the library is taking steps to meet the county's "span of control" mandate, which calls for a minimum 1:8 ratio of management to represented staff. Across the library, ratios were close to that goal; additional changes will be implemented and communicated to staff. Those changes will be communicated along with the library's budget proposal detail.

Vailey stressed the library's value to the community and noted one recent example of meeting community needs. In this case, the library is providing resources for families of children with the autism spectrum at Belmont Library, including specialized sensory storytimes and a weekly speech clinic.

Ellen Fader explained that this program began with a request from a staff member who learned that families with the autism spectrum were not comfortable bringing their children to the regular storytime. After discussion with a community therapist, the library sought to mirror the same services that parents were learning with monthly storytimes at the Woodstock and Gresham branches, and then additional weekly storytimes at Belmont. Word has spread about the storytimes and more families have come to participate.

Vailey announced that another member of the library's management team, Mike Harrington, will retire June 30 and it will be an enormous loss for Multnomah County. Mike started in 1976 as a maintenance worker at the North Portland Library. He has done so much work throughout the system; his latest major projects were the Kenton and Troutdale libraries. Mike has an amazing customer service attitude, and Vailey expressed gratitude for all his years of service. John Potter agreed and added a thank you on behalf of the patrons and the LAB for the library's excellent facilities and all the hard work that goes on behind the scenes.

## **CHAIR'S REPORT**

John Potter reported that Katie Lane solicited input about the best retreat date. No date has been set. She will contact everyone again about potential April dates.

A book group discussion is being organized for February 26 and Katie is looking to identify a host or find another space.

### **FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT**

John reported that the Finance Committee has been meeting during January and February. The group reviewed information provided by Vailey and Becky: looking at this year's program offers, proposed budget structure of the library, internal services costs, and revenue projections. A \$6.5 million loss will mean a decrease in hours and a reduction in the library's collection budget. The committee's forthcoming letter will have the group's recommendations and what the reductions will mean to patrons. After the February 28 Finance meeting, it will be sent for broader consideration and feedback to the rest of the LAB. During the March LAB meeting, the letter will be discussed for approval and submission to the Office of Citizen Involvement. George Feldman stated that if the letter is sent after MCL submits the budget to the Chair, it is anticipated that there will be some tweaks. John Potter affirmed that there are always adjustments made during this process.

### **EVERYBODY READS**

Terrilyn Chun reported the Everybody Reads program is now in full swing, and all the books are out. There are 15 more book groups going plus the City Club's "citizens read" program. This Friday, Think Out Loud will be broadcasting a Literary Arts interview with Heidi Durrow. Heidi will also visit Jefferson High School and Reynolds Learning Academy. Both schools are thrilled that she will be coming as they are reading her book and are engaged. MCL had its first Everybody Reads event at Portland State on February 6, "A Literary Round Table"; February 14, is the Academic Excellence Civic Engagement Breakfast: "Catching The Girl Who Fell From the Sky"; February 16, "Growing Up Biracial"; February 21, "Child-Rearing and Identity"; and lastly February 29, "Portland's Albina District: Retrospect and Prospect". The final event, "An Evening with Heidi W. Durrow" will be Tuesday, March 6, at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. Jamie will email members about attending; one ticket per LAB member is available. Marian Creamer asked if any of the programs are recorded. Terrilyn responded that due to the nature of the programs with audience participation, they wouldn't record well, but added that video would work and she would look into that for the future.

George Feldman asked if there is a way to do fundraising for the library during the March 6 event. Vailey responded that the library's goal is to promote the connection between this program, the public library and partnerships with The Library Foundation and Literary Arts that makes all of this happen. Marian Creamer added that by recording events, because the programs do speak for themselves, they would reach people unable to attend. Many home-bound people who are voters would be able to experience them first hand and would understand the richness of the library's programming.

## **THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION**

Karie Trumbo reported that the last time she was here she announced that TLF had an opportunity to apply for a big grant; the deadline for this application is Friday. The Library Foundation worked with Terrilyn and Stephanie Chase for this \$100,000 grant that will provide mobile labs and workshops that will help us reach the African American population.

Karie introduced the Foundation's new communications manager, Elizabeth Beekley. Elizabeth has launched the Foundation's Facebook page and has been busy with other projects.

## **FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

Kathy Woodruff reported that the date for the spring book sale is April 27-29, and it will be held in Gresham; the exact location will be announced soon.

The Friends "Evening of Support" is March 13, 2012, at the Old Church, 6-8 pm. Attending authors are: Ursula K. Le Guin, Philip Margolin, Jean Auel, and Kim Stafford.

## **GOOD & WELFARE**

Sola Whitehead reminded everyone that they can contribute a post to the Embarrassment of Riches blog and that interested parties should let her know.

Mardy Stevens shared that a wonderful exhibit that is located right upstairs in Central Library about Women's Suffrage will show until March 6. Mardy reported that The Gresham Outlook always has good library coverage, and a current edition included a major editorial supporting the library. There are two editions per week and there are always library related items in the paper; there was a recent article introducing the new Gresham Library Administrator.

Lori Irish Bauman added a thank you to Vailey for all the work that has been done during this difficult time.

The next LAB meeting is March 13, 2012.

John Potter, Vice Chair, adjourned the meeting at 8:13 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jamie Owens

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Multnomah County Library, Oregon