

Library Advisory Board Minutes September 11, 2012
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB)

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, September 11, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Meeting Room. Chair Katie Lane called the meeting to order at 7:39 a.m.

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

Staff members present were: Vailey Oehlke, Director of Libraries; Becky Cobb, Deputy Director; Rita Jimenez, Neighborhood Libraries Director; Sue Banks, Central Library Director; Cindy Gibbon, Access & IT Services Manager; Jeremy Graybill, Marketing & Communications Director; Shelly Kent, Human Resources Manager; Javier Gutierrez, Collections Services Manager; Terrilyn Chun, Public Programming & Community Outreach Manager; Don Allgeier, Neighborhood Libraries Assistant Director; Ana Schmitt, Library Outreach Specialist; Delia Palomeque Morales, Library Outreach Specialist; Bruce Jenks, Central Library Page, and Jamie Owens, Administrative Specialist, Director's Office.

Also in attendance were Diane McKeel, County Commissioner, District 4; Corie Wiren, Chief of Staff, Commissioner McKeel's Office; Earl Dizon, Ali Harvey and Percy Wise, Friends of the Library; Althea Gregory, Multnomah County Budget Office; Merris Sumrall and Wes Breazeale, The Library Foundation.

The July 10, 2012 minutes were approved with one change.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Vailey stated that as she reviewed her report for this meeting, she was struck by how many of the entries involve Multnomah County Library's work with students and student success. It has been reported in various media accounts that MCL doesn't do that much for children and young families. MCL taught the value of early literacy in four different school districts this summer; there are storytimes in Spanish; Books 2U and School Corps are library programs that target school success; and library staff are in eight different school districts continuing this work.

Vailey attended a program called the “Gift of Literacy” that was part of the International Literacy Day celebration MCL hosted this year, which helps people to get their GED. There is a great marketing campaign right now called “My life, my library”. It highlights the difference MCL has made in patrons’ lives. It is another reminder of the depth of this library in the community over the years with so many different kinds of people.

Vailey reported on her continued involvement with ebooks and public libraries. A recent report notes the difference between what a patron pays for an ebook from Amazon and what the library pays for the same book through the intermediaries. A recent blog post by Ursula Le Guin discusses publishers’ reticence to sell ebooks to public libraries. Libraries need to change the way they get access to digital content in order to make it available to the community.

CHAIR’S REPORT

Katie Lane announced that the members who participate with the Nominating Committee will have a short meeting directly after this meeting.

While the LAB was on summer break, the library district was referred. Katie reminded everyone that LAB members cannot influence voters in their role as board members, however members may speak as private citizens.

Heidi Beebe has resigned from the LAB. She will reapply when she returns to the area permanently. Mark Garber has served two terms; Katie thanked Mark for his service.

SPANISH STORYTIME REPORT

Vailey introduced the two staff members who created a new federally-funded pilot MCL Spanish Storytime program: Ana Schmitt and Delia Morales. This program serves the non-English, Spanish-speaking community.

Ana introduced herself as manager of the grant and Delia as the coordinator. They distributed a pamphlet about the program. This grant came about because English storytimes are packed, but the Spanish storytimes were not well attended. At the same time, a Portland Public Schools report showed the largest gap of kindergarten readiness was between Latinos and white students. The library’s storytime programs get children ready for school, but the perception of some parents was that storytime was play, and that needed to change. With the help of MCL staff Rita Jimenez, Renea Arnold and Deborah Gitlitz, MCL successfully applied for the grant, receiving \$45,420 to create this program for one year. It is a rebranding of the Spanish Storytime and is now called “Getting Ready to Learn.” The pilot includes three different models. One is based at Midland library; parents come with their children for one and one-half hours, for 16 weeks with no registration needed. The second, based at Troutdale library, started in August; parents must register for the 16 week program and one book is provided every

visit. The third model is based at the North Portland library; parents register, classes are on the weekend and a book give-away is at the end of the 16 week program.

The grant is very specific on who is targeted for the skill development. The program is modeled using national standards and best practices. Mardy Stevens asked if the program helps parents learn to interact with the schools. Delia responded that the storytime program educates parents about organizations and other opportunities that are in the community. Katie Lane asked about future plans. Ana responded that outlines are already in place if more grant funding is available. George Feldman inquired if outcome data, based on what teachers observe with these cohorts of kids, will be available. Will "Getting Ready to Learn" children be ready for kindergarten? Ana answered that there are already observable changes in the group. Henise Telles-Ferreira asked if the parents are checking out more books. Delia answered that the parents are checking out books with their new library cards and they report reading more books with their children every week. The children and their parents are becoming familiar with the library, and they are spending more time there before and after the program. At the end of the program parents will have all the tools they need to continue with their children.

GOALS FOR THE NEW YEAR

Katie shared that she wants the LAB to have a conversation about goals for the coming year. She explained that the LAB spent a lot of time last year talking about funding, and she would like to broaden their discussions this year. She asked them to think about where they want to focus, learn, and participate.

Sola Whitehead asked Vailey what she saw as the big challenges the library is facing. Vailey responded that one challenge would be the demographic changes in our area, and our ability as an organization to be responsive to those changes. For example, is there another community in Multnomah County to target for providing services, materials and staffing? The work that goes into analyzing those changes and then identifying where the library can have the greatest impact is very important. Digital content will continue to have a huge impact on this organization. Vailey promised to keep the LAB informed on this issue, because it moves quickly and will have such an impact on how we deliver services. The library's support for education is also a key issue ~ how best to frame and articulate MCL's support for schools? MCL needs the LAB's perspectives and to act as allies in this effort. MCL's priorities are already stated for the next three years; education, serving new immigrants, and digital inclusion could all be part of goal setting for this group. What will the library look like should the library district be successful, and where does the community want resources focused?

George Feldman stated that the LAB should commit to attend neighborhood meetings as an outreach listening post. Vailey added that it is a role of the LAB to be ambassadors. Sola said when asking the community what it wants, it bumps up against what the library already offers. Information about library offerings needs to be easy for

people to find. Vailey announced that the MCL website is being redesigned. Danika Stochosky added that the LAB needs to be more informed in order to share that information with the public. She asked how the library publicizes its programs other than the website and flyers in the library. Jeremy Graybill explained that, with the programming and community outreach staff, thousands of event flyers are distributed. Information is located in daily and weekly publications, on Facebook and on Twitter. The library's efforts include looking for new places to share the library's message. Most recently, this includes an OMSI event, the small business fair, and a resource fair the library will host this fall. Ana added that outreach continues at "back to school" nights for parents and "school literacy" nights. Staff show parents and students how to use the "Homework Help" line, give out information about the library and make connections. Danika states that as a frequent user, but non-targeted member of the community, she is not familiar with the myriad of resources available. How can the LAB promote that?

Lori Irish Bauman suggested that the LAB assess its internal organization, including the committee structures. She said for example the Access Committee has rewritten its mission statement. David Blount stated that after the election the LAB needs to set goals to support the mission of the library, reiterating the for need strategic goals about time and resources. Katie concluded by asking the LAB to start thinking about what is important; and added that she wants this to be a board where your service is meaningful for you; after November we will need to know where to invest our energies. George Feldman stated that this discussion could take place at a retreat in January.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION

Merris Sumrall reported that TLF is working hard for the passage of the library district measure. The Foundation is celebrating the success of this year's Summer Reading Program, as there were 110,000 participating children. Merris introduced a new member of the TLF staff, Wes Breazeale, the new Director of Development.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Ali Harvey reported there are four Friends events coming up. The first is "Library Lovers Unite", September 19, at the Old Church with Willy Vlautin, Ursula LeGuin and Carl Wolfson. The Friends largest event of the year, the fall book sale starts October 12 with the pre-sale for members only at the Lloyd Center DoubleTree Hotel, and continues through Monday, the 15th. That same weekend the Friends will have a booth for a mini-book sale at Wordstock. The Friends' 40th birthday will be celebrated October 17 with authors Monica Drake, Pauls Toutonghi, Karen Karbo, and Matthew Dickman. A \$10 donation will be requested for this event.

GOOD & WELFARE

Vailey announced Sue Banks accepted a position as the Deputy Director of the Pittsburgh Public Library; this is her last LAB meeting. Vailey thanked Sue for her service to MCL.

Vailey acknowledged the hard work done by the LAB, the Friends, and The Library Foundation for the library; it is a huge contribution that cannot be overstated.

Vailey reported reading about the celebration of Chicago Public Library's summer reading program, called "Rahm's Readers", because of the participation of 63,000 children, and she noted the difference in population between Chicago and Multnomah County. Mardy Stevens motioned to commend The Library Foundation for their work for the success of the Summer Reading Program by signing up 110,000 children. The motion was carried. Merris mentioned the work of MCL in reaching all the children and thanked the LAB.

Sola Whitehead thanked whoever made the "opt out" option available in order to skip getting a paper receipt when checking out books and added kudos to Vailey for being a speaker on a recent Diane Rehm show.

Commissioner McKeel shared that she is happy about the library district referral and that all of the commissioners are working very hard for its passage.

Mardy thanked Vailey for the Director's report, describing it as being filled with much information about children, education and data tracking; she shares this information with others. Mardy gave information about a PSU Women's Leadership luncheon on October 4, check their website for more information. Barbara Roberts will be honored during the luncheon.

The next LAB meeting is Tuesday, October 9, 2012.

Katie Lane, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 8:39 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
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