

**Library Advisory Board Minutes March 11, 2014**  
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB)

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The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Room. Chair Sola Whitehead called the meeting to order at 7:32 am.

Board members present were: Erin Cooper, George Feldman, Bernadette Janét, Katie Lane, Jose Padin, John Potter, Adam Starr, Mardy Stevens, Danika Stochosky, Henise Telles-Ferreira, Maegan Vidal, Carlene Weldon and Sola Whitehead. Board members Etsegenet Ayele and Megan Irwin were absent.

Staff members present were: Vailey Oehlke, Director of Libraries; Becky Cobb, Deputy Director; Terrilyn Chun, Programming & Community Outreach Manager; Shawn Cunningham, Director of Communications and Strategic Initiatives; Jeremy Graybill, Marketing & Online Engagement Director; Cindy Gibbon, Access & IT Services Manager; Javier Gutierrez, Director of Collections & Technical Services; Shelly Kent, Human Resources Manager; Rita Jimenez, Neighborhood Libraries Director; Katie O'Dell, Youth Services Director; Rosalind Wang, Regional Librarian (Midland); Delia Palomeque Morales, Library Outreach Specialist, Neighborhood Libraries; Ksenia Roeder, Youth Librarian, Rockwood; Jenny Whittier, Library Assistant, Central Library; and Jamie Owens, Administrative Specialist, Director's Office.

Also in attendance were: Althea Gregory, Budget Analyst, Department of County Management; Commissioner Diane McKeel, District 4, Multnomah County; Eric Zimmerman, Chief of Staff, District 4, Multnomah County; Jane Gigler, Friends of the Library (FOL) and Greg Tudor, The Library Foundation (TLF).

The January 14, 2014 minutes and the February 11, 2014 minutes were approved.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Vailey thanked The Library Foundation for supporting Everybody Reads by making the book available for students. Fir Ridge, an alternative high school, was chosen for the youth program. Vailey shared some of the student submissions and questions. Vailey thanked Literary Arts who made 934 free student tickets available for the author event with Justice Sonia Sotomayor.

## **LIBRARY CBAC REPORT**

John Potter provided the Finance Committee's Citizen Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) letter for the LAB to review. Sola explained that the letter in support of the library budget goes to the Board of County Commissioners and will need to be approved. John shared the five sections of the letter: an introduction, a description of the process, a statement of the changes, an explanation of emerging issues, and recommendations. Major changes are to long term reserve funding. Due to the new library district, the budget for FY 2015 has a \$3 million surplus of excess revenue over what the current library services cost. The budget lays the groundwork for the future, so that stability continues for as long as possible. A little more than 50% of the surplus is saved for the long term reserve. This leaves \$1.4 million to enhance library services with emphases on the collections budget, overhauling information services, more staff training, and an investment in the administrative building.

Continuing issues are the physical assets transfer, changing demographics in Multnomah County, safety issues and the maintenance and renovation of the buildings. The Finance Committee proposes the current budget be approved, and that in future budgets, the library will consider adding to the reserve fund in order to continue the \$1.18 rate as long as possible.

For future budgets, the Finance Committee recommends that the district:

- develop a long term capital plan, which will help with future budgeting;
- develop the future of information services;
- support programs that help underserved communities;
- improve programs that support entrepreneurs and the economy; and
- achieve and maintain a 10% reserve.

A reduction in the FY 2015 budget reflects the transfer of a state funded program called Answerland to another Oregon library that will act as the fiscal agent. Answerland is a grant-funded program funded through the State Library with federal money from the Library Services Technology Act (LSTA). MCL has been the fiscal agent and manager of this statewide 24/7 virtual service since 2003. Danika asked if a future presentation for the LAB could be information on how these services are provided.

Jose Padin asked for more information about the capital plan. Becky Cobb shared the plan is part of the funding that the library pays to Facilities & Property Management every year as part of a five year rolling plan; this funding pays for items like roofs and the HVAC systems. A long-term capital plan is needed and the Facilities Management Team was formed to outline what the long-term needs will be over the next 10 to 20 years. Most library buildings were built or renovated during the same time period, in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Current capital budget funding is \$800,000 - \$900,000 per year. Henise Telles-Ferreira inquired who decides where the reserve funds are invested, and if the library gets the returns. Becky answered that the county's Treasury

section invests the money and the library receives a proportional share of interest earnings.

Jose asked about the safety concerns mentioned in the letter, because he has always felt safe in the library. Vailey answered that the library is a very public building and there are safety and security issues that are common for all urban libraries. This library needs to be proactive and not reactive. A security report completed three years ago made suggestions of what could be done. Librarians do not have security expertise to consider what the gaps are, what the needs are, and how to best deploy resources. Bernadette added that it is good to know that if anything does happen here, MCLD has measures in place. Maegan asked if staff is trained for emergencies. Vailey answered that staff has received active-shooter training and we also conduct regular earthquake drills. MCLD is also part of Multnomah County's ongoing Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Emergency Management coordination efforts.

The letter was approved as amended. Sola, Erin, George and Danika thanked Vailey and Becky for their leadership. John thanked everyone on the Finance Committee. Vailey thanked the members for their commitment to the process.

## **WE SPEAK YOUR LANGUAGE**

Rita gave an overview and an update about We Speak Your Language (WSYL) and provided handouts. The program started in 1999, with one bilingual Spanish-speaking staff; now there are 72 bilingual positions throughout 14 locations. Staff are placed strategically using demographic information about community needs. The library's non-English services provide a model for other Multnomah County services, for libraries elsewhere and for other organizations. WSYL spans generations, including early learning, school age and elders.

Members of our bilingual staff have continued their education in order to promote into library positions. The Multnomah County Leadership Academy also provides leadership resources and opportunities for WSYL staff, and several have participated in this program. As services expanded, leadership opportunities were created for the next wave of leaders of the organization. It is vital for our system and programs to have continued staff and leadership development as a goal.

Jeremy Graybill presented a slide show about digitally connecting the community with library services in languages other than English. In addition to traditional desktop access, there are now mobile connections available through the library's web site and mobile apps in Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, and Russian. The new translated website was designed to be as friendly and welcoming as our library staff. The site offers translated content demonstrating how to use the library for newcomers, contact information, catalog records, events and more in all five languages.

Rosalind Wang explained that she is the Chinese Regional Librarian and her responsibility is to support the bilingual staff members who reach the Chinese

community. She shared a story of the connection that was made with an elderly Chinese patron by being able to communicate with her in her language.

Delia Palomeque Morales reported that culturally appropriate Listos para el kinder is a program that engages parents with their children. It started last year as a pilot at Midland, Fairview and Rockwood promoting early literacy and emotional skills as well as getting children ready for school. All 27 families completed the classes, with 82% of parents saying they increased reading time with their children at home. This year the program expanded to Holgate, Kenton, and Gresham, with plans to include Troutdale in April. Partnering with Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Portland Public Schools, Morrison Child and Family Services, and Hacienda CDC, there is now a waiting list of 45 families. The success of this program is seen in the parents and children. Delia shared photos of the children's progress.

Ksenia Roeder shared that as the Rockwood bilingual Spanish Youth Librarian, she serves a very diverse population of immigrants from eastern Africa, Russia, Mexico and Cuba. She conducts two Spanish and one Russian Storytimes every week, and the family craft hour was so successful that it was expanded to twice a week. Ksenia also helped create a library video that introduced immigrants to the United States.

### **THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION**

Greg Tudor reported that TLF is working on the funding request process for the next fiscal year which starts July 1. TLF is meeting with library staff to finalize the agreements to fund 15 library programs. There will be over a dozen trustees and former trustees in attendance tonight at the Everybody Reads program with Justice Sotomayor.

### **FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

Judy Lindley reported that FOL members are researching information about the city councils located inside Multnomah County in order to schedule MCL150<sup>th</sup> anniversary proclamations. The spring book sale is April 11-13 at the Gresham Station Shopping Center. A "collector's corner" is available on Friday night for FOL members only, and Sunday there is a 50% discount for everyone. The second annual Burgerville partnership is next Thursday night, with 10% of the proceeds of food sales from 5-8 pm going to support FOL. A fund-raising walk with author Laura Foster is planned for Mother's Day. The very popular author has penned *Portland City Walks*, and *The Portland Stairs Book*.

### **GOOD AND WELFARE**

Terrilyn Chun invited the LAB to be a part of the 150<sup>th</sup> digitization scanning and archiving that is taking place during April.

The next LAB meeting is on Tuesday, April 8, 2014.

Sola Whitehead, Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:53 am.

Respectfully submitted by:

Jamie Owens

Administrative Specialist, Library Director's Office

Multnomah County Library, Oregon