

Library Advisory Board Minutes: October 14, 2014
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, October 14, 2014, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Room. Chair Sola Whitehead called the meeting to order at 7:35 am.

Board members present were: Erin Cooper, George Feldman, Bernadette Janét, Katie Lane, Ya-Li Lizik, John Potter, Mardy Stevens, Maegan Vidal, Carlene Weldon and Sola Whitehead.

Board members excused were: Danika Stochosky.

Board members absent were: Emma Caplan, Megan Irwin and José Padin.

Staff members present were: Vailey Oehlke, Director of Libraries; Becky Cobb, Deputy Director; Don Allgeier, Neighborhood Libraries Assistant Director; Jim Carmin, John Wilson Special Collections Librarian; Terrilyn Chun, Public Programming and Community Outreach Manager; Shawn Cunningham, Director of Communications and Strategic Initiatives; Cindy Gibbon, Access & IT Services Manager; Jeremy Graybill, Marketing + Online Engagement Director; Javier Gutierrez, Director of Collections & Technical Services; Shelly Kent, Human Resources Manager; Dave Ratliff, Central Library Director; and Paige Hatcher, Administrative Analyst, Director's Office.

Also in attendance were: Commissioner Diane McKeel, District 4, Multnomah County; Aaron Ridings, Policy Advisor and Community Liaison, Multnomah County Chair's Office; Matthew Timberlake, IT Project Manager, Department of County Assets; Eric Zimmerman, Chief of Staff, District 4, Multnomah County; Wes Breazeale, The Library Foundation; and Earl Dizon, Friends of the Library.

The Board approved minutes for the September 9, 2014 meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Whitehead polled board members to determine whether the November meeting would take place on the regularly scheduled date, which happens to fall on Veterans' Day. Board members agreed that the meeting would occur as scheduled. George Feldman will not be in attendance.

At Chair Whitehead's invitation, Mardy Stevens shared that she had visited the Denver and Colorado Springs public libraries. Ms. Stevens passed around materials from the libraries.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Though the agenda indicated that Becky Cobb would deliver the director's report, Ms. Oehlke was in attendance at the meeting and provided the report instead. Ms. Oehlke shared that the 150th Anniversary Celebration was a great success and attended by many. Ms. Oehlke thanked library staff for their hard work coordinating the celebration. Additionally, Ms. Oehlke thanked The Library Foundation for its support of and contributions to the event.

Ms. Oehlke shared that MCL was mentioned in a New York Times article on October 9, 2014. Ms. Oehlke thanked Shawn Cunningham, Director of Communications & Strategic Initiatives, and The Library Foundation for working with a public relations firm to promote awareness of the My Librarian service. The program has gained recognition from colleagues across the country.

FY14 BUDGET SUMMARY

Ms. Cobb shared two documents: the Fiscal Year 2013-14 Year-End Report and the 2013-14 Expenditures/Budget Comparison.

The year-end report offers a synopsis of budgeted and actual revenues and expenditures, and the year-end balance. Ms. Cobb noted that the 2013-14 fiscal year was the first year of implementation of the Multnomah County Library District fund. The year-end report presents information for both the library district fund and the library operations fund, which is where the expenditure budget resides.

Ms. Cobb clarified a variance that occurred due to the early reception of an annual distribution from the Oregon Community Foundation. The distribution was received in May 2013, as opposed to July, and was subsequently posted to the 2012-13 fiscal year. This means it became part of the beginning balance for FY 2014-15.

The expenditures/budget comparison provides a line-item overview of budgeted versus actual expenditures. During the 2013-14 fiscal year, the library's actual expenditures were 5% less than budgeted.

The beginning balance for the 2014-15 fiscal year is \$9,410,862, which exceeds the goal of a 10% reserve. Ms. Oehlke noted that the value of the permanent tax rate will become less over time and it is the library's goal to be prudent with any year-end balances. Additionally, the library has capital funding needs that are not included in the budget.

John Potter suggested that preserving a balance would help maintain staffing during a future economic downturn.

Ms. Cobb provided clarification on spending for the following line items:

- Interest – The library district fund receives the bulk of its tax revenue in November. For the 2013-14 fiscal year, this cash flow timeline obligated the district fund to borrow from another county fund, with a \$25,000 interest charge. In the budget process for the 2014-15 fiscal year, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) adopted its annual set of financial policies, including a change that allows a fund to operate at a deficit for four months. This change in policy will dispel the need for the library district fund to borrow from other county funds in the future and eliminate future interest charges.
- Other internal services – The library had budgeted for a certain number of shifts for Facilities Security Officer (FSO) coverage, which is provided by staff from the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office (MCSO). Limited resources at the MCSO prevented coverage for all budgeted shifts, which resulted in the spending variance. Alternative options for security coverage are being explored due to the necessity to fill all budgeted FSO shifts.
- Software licenses/maintenance – Expenditures were 71% of the budget. Several projects were included in the budget but not implemented during the fiscal year, including the integrated library system migration, which will occur this fall, and a proposed customer relationship management resource.

FY14 ART REPORT

Jim Carmin presented the annual art report [of the John Wilson Special Collections (JWSC)]. The report describes new acquisitions and gifts, exhibition and educational use of the collections throughout the year, conservation and restoration efforts, and complete lists of acquisitions and gifts for the fiscal year.

Highlights of this year's acquisitions include:

- *Trout*, by Ray Bergman, funding provided by the Flyfisher Foundation of Oregon
- a typed, signed letter by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt
- many more boxes of paper related to longtime Portland poet, Carlos Reyes

The JWSC was awarded acquisition funds from The Library Foundation with which it acquired:

- a small collection of original drawings and sketchbooks by Oregon author/artist Eloise McGraw (1915-2000)
- a number of artists' books, fine press titles, broadsides, a miniature (with an original leaf of the Newbery Bible from 1780)
- Oregon-related literature (including by Beverly Cleary and Paulann Petersen)

During the presentation, Mr. Carmin displayed several of the materials from the report and shared information about their acquisitions. Other items from the collection shared with the group included a 5000 year-old cuneiform tablet, a "silk" book, and "A Happy Pair," Beatrix Potter's first illustrated book.

Mr. Carmin shared that there are 12,000 volumes in the JWSC with many more archival papers.

Throughout the year, Mr. Carmin offers many formal education activities, including presentations and talks to classes and groups from the community and local and regional schools.

LIBRARY DISTRICT COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING UPDATE

Katie Lane provided a report from the October 3, 2014 meeting of the Library District Community Committee (LDCC). The group has been convening for the last 18 months to determine what assets could and/or would be transferred from Multnomah County to the Multnomah County Library District (MCLD).

Early on, the group had determined that employees and information technology would not be considered in the scope of potential assets for transfer, rather the committee focused on the possibility of transferring ownership of the collections, buildings and art. At the October meeting, Chair Deborah Kafoury announced that she supports moving forward with the transfer of these assets from the county to the library district.

Ms. Lane encouraged members to thank the Multnomah County Chair and Multnomah County Commissioners for their involvement throughout the process. Ms. Lane thanked The Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library for their advocacy and support as well.

With respect to next steps, Ms. Oehlke related that Chair Kafoury will hold discussions with the county commissioners, who are also the board members of the MCLD to determine whether the transfer will take place. In order for the transfer to take place, it will need to be approved by the MCLD Board.

Ms. Oehlke thanked Chair Kafoury for her leadership throughout the process and expressed gratitude for Commissioner Diane McKeel's advocacy, insight and steady support of the library.

Ms. Oehlke thanked library and county staff for their work on the final report that was presented to the LDCC at the October meeting. The intention of the report was to analyze and determine whether a transfer of these assets would raise any red flags for either the county or library district. The report found that there are no expected negative impacts for either the county or library district should the assets transfer proceed.

In response to an inquiry from Bernadette Janét regarding the roles of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and the MCLD Board, Ms. Oehlke clarified that, if the BCC determines that it will move forward with the assets transfer, it will have to vote at a board meeting to initiate the assets transfer. The BCC would then adjourn as the BCC and reconvene as the MCLD Board, which would then need to vote to accept the transfer agreement.

The LDCC will meet once more for a final update.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION (TLF)

Wes Breazeale shared a story about Beverly Cleary, who continues to donate to the library. Ms. Cleary had shared with Mr. Breazeale that she used to patronize the now-closed Rose City library branch. Mr. Breazeale was able to search the recently created 150 Years of Library Memories digital archive to locate an image of the former branch and share the picture with Ms. Cleary.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY (FOL)

Earl Dizon reported on the FOL's preparations for the Fall Used Book Sale, which will take place October 24-27, 2014.

Mr. Dizon reported that every Tuesday in October local pizzeria, Dove Vivi, will donate 10% of sales to the FOL in support of MCL.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Ms. Oehlke and Ms. Cobb shared that there will be an open house at the Library Administration at Lloyd offices on November 21, 2014.

Ms. Oehlke shared that the formerly named Library Administration Building has been rechristened the Mary Frances Isom Building, the result of a naming contest held and voted on by library staff.

Ms. Lane thanked Jen May, Community Outreach Librarian, and her team for their assistance at the Creative Clubhouse event on October 11, 2014. Ms. Lane and several other local organizations coordinated the event as part of Design Week Portland. At the event, Ms. May and staff shared information about research tools, small business help, and other library resources with attendees.

Ms. Oehlke shared that the library, in collaboration with several other local organizations, will hold a Digital Inclusion Summit on November 18, 2014 at Central Library in the US Bank Room. The purpose of the forum is to discuss digital inclusion efforts in the community, including best practices and trends in digital and online information literacy, broadband adoption, and public access to information technology.

The next LAB meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 11, 2014.

Sola Whitehead, Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:38 am.

Respectfully submitted by:

Paige Hatcher

Administrative Analyst, Library Director's Office
Multnomah County Library, Oregon