

Library Advisory Board Minutes: February 10, 2015
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, February 10, 2015, 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: Marc Alifanz, Emma Caplan, Erin Cooper, George Feldman, Katie Lane, Ya-Li Lizik, Jack MacNichol, José Padin, John Potter, Mardy Stevens, Maegan Vidal, Carlene Weldon, Sola Whitehead and Brian Wilson.

Board members excused were: Elizabeth Hawthorne and Danika Stochosky.

Staff members present were: Vailey Oehlke, Director of Libraries; Becky Cobb, Deputy Director; Terrilyn Chun, Public Programming and Community Outreach Manager; Shawn Cunningham, Director of Communications & Strategic Initiatives; Cindy Gibbon, Access & IT Services Director; Jeremy Graybill, Marketing + Online Engagement Director; Javier Gutierrez, Director of Collections & Technical Services; Rita Jiménez, Neighborhood Libraries Director; Shelly Kent, Human Resources Manager; Katie O'Dell, Youth Services Director; Dave Ratliff, Central Library Director; Carol Silva, Books 2 U Library Outreach Specialist; Mandy Tuthill, School Age Services Supervisor; 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; Jamie June, The Library Foundation; Lisa DeGrace, The Library Foundation; and Beth Levy, Friends of the Library.

The Board approved minutes for the January 13, 2015 meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Sola Whitehead reported that she serves on the finance committee, which is meeting regularly. The finance committee will be writing a letter with budget recommendations for presentation at the March LAB meeting. Upon approval from the LAB, the letter will be submitted to the Multnomah County Library District Board (MCLD Board); therefore, it is vital that a quorum of LAB members attends the next meeting, scheduled for March 10, 2015.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Vailey Oehlke reported that she is hearing of rich and important conversations around the community as people participate in discussions about the Everybody Reads book, *The Residue*

Years. Ms. Oehlke thanked The Library Foundation for its critical role in the success of Everybody Reads. Ms. Oehlke reminded attendees that the 2015 Everybody Reads author lecture with Mitchell S. Jackson, presented in partnership by Multnomah County Library and Literary Arts, will take place March 10, 2015 at Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. All LAB members receive a complimentary ticket to the event.

Ms. Oehlke encouraged attendees to take a moment to watch the video of Multnomah County Library's 150th Anniversary Celebration. The video is available on MCL's YouTube channel.

Ms. Oehlke shared that she recently attended the ALA 2015 Midwinter conference in Chicago, IL.

Ms. Oehlke reported that it was recently announced that the Global Libraries Initiative, which was developed by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, will begin winding down funding for the program. The program has selected three legacy partners that will receive grant funding to continue the work of supporting libraries and their future. The three partners are the University of Washington Information School's Technology & Social Change Group (TASCHA), the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and the Public Library Association (PLA). As incoming president of PLA, Ms. Oehlke will be participating in this work and will provide the LAB with updates.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mardy Stevens welcomed Marc Alifanz, Katie Lane and Ya-Li Lizik as new members of the nominating committee. Ms. Stevens shared that the committee is focusing on recruitment needs. Ms. Stevens shared that there are four positions for which recruitment is needed prior to the end of June. The nominating committee will seek IT support to help broaden recruitment.

Ms. Stevens invited members to inform the nominating committee as soon as possible if they are planning to change their service on the LAB.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOOKS 2 U

Katie O'Dell shared information about the Books 2 U program. For 20 years, Books 2 U staff have been visiting schools, many with with a high percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch and/or where students are not meeting reading benchmarks. Ms. O'Dell thanked The Library Foundation for being instrumental in the expansion of Books 2 U.

Ms. O'Dell introduced Carol Silva, Books 2 U Library Outreach Coordinator, to present on the Books 2 U service. Ms. Silva shared a book that she is currently presenting to students: *El Deafo* by Cece Bell. Ms. Silva provided a plot synopsis of the book and demonstrated how she engages students when she visits classrooms. Ms. Silva shared several other titles currently included in Books 2 U resources.

Ms. Silva related that the Books 2 U reading motivation outreach program has delivered over 630,000 books to classrooms from St. Johns to Gresham. The program brings a rotating

collection of fiction and nonfiction books to students. It is estimated that Books 2 U has made around 39,000 visits to thousands of students, hundreds of classrooms and dozens of schools.

Books 2 U started with one staff member, three volunteers and 500 books. The program currently has five staff members, 15 volunteers and 20,000 paperbacks, enough books to fill Belmont Library. In addition to motivating students to read, Books 2 U makes community connections and encourages kids to volunteer at libraries

Chair Whitehead inquired how Books 2 U decides which schools to visit. Ms. Silva shared that they target schools where students are not meeting reading benchmarks and/or where 90% of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. As demographics in Multnomah County have changed, so too have the schools that the Books 2 U program visits.

In response to an inquiry from Ms. Stevens, Ms. Silva shared that the program does not tend to include classics since students receive instruction on classics in the classroom. Materials often focus on works that will excite students and may include books students have seen in Scholastic or books that have movie tie-ins.

In response to an inquiry from Maegan Vidal, Ms. Silva shared how the subject matter of *El Deafo* resonated with students' sensitivities to people with disabilities.

Commissioner McKeel related that during her experience acting as principal for a day at Alice Ott Middle School many staff shared how important the library is to the school and students.

In response to an inquiry from John Potter about the participation of bilingual librarians in Books 2 U classroom presentations, Ms. Silva shared that often the classes she visits have students who speak a wide variety of languages. She related that when the Deaf & Hard of Hearing program was at Sunnyside, Books 2 U worked with a sign language interpreter for presentations there.

In response to an inquiry from Marc Alifanz, Ms. Silva shared that the program only goes to classrooms of students through 6th grade.

TEEN READ MONTH REPORT

Ms. O'Dell reported that *El Deafo* by CeCe Bell and *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson were recently chosen by the Newbery committee as Newbery Honor books. *The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander was awarded the Newbery Medal.

Ms. O'Dell shared information about the Teen Read Month, which took place in October 2014 as part of a nationwide celebration of libraries and teens. It started off as Teen Read Week, but the library expanded it to a month. MCL has been celebrating it on and off for over 10 years.

Teen Read Month includes a variety of programs that take place in all library branches, such as teen councils, series programs, and other ways for teens to be involved. During the month,

teens can also complete a survey and by doing so, they can have a certain amount of fines waived, if they have any. The survey carries the simultaneous benefit of providing the library with information about teen library use that can help inform future programming and materials collection.

During the last Teen Read Month, more than 2,000 teens completed the survey, 867 of whom received fine waivers. Over half of the survey respondents were willing to take the survey without financial reward. The total amount of fines waived was approximately \$9,000. The median fine waived was \$13.80.

Ms. O'Dell related that the library uses the time when teens come into the library to have their fines waived to welcome them and provide assistance with databases and other relevant resources. Survey results indicate that teens are interested in seeing a teen space and teen-only programming. Recommendations included a pay-it-forward option so teens could pay their friends' fines and a prize drawing for incentives.

Ms. O'Dell shared the library has a Teen Action Team, which is made up of staff from around the district, which will work on recommendations and planning for the program next year.

Ya-Li Lizik commented that she was able to take the survey. Ms. Lizik appreciated how well-developed the survey was and that it engaged teens to feel their voices were heard.

In response to an inquiry from Chair Whitehead, Ms. O'Dell shared that there was some confusion over wording in the survey, which concerned programs that are designed to teach a language versus programs that are conducted in languages other than English.

In response to an inquiry from Mr. Potter, Ms. O'Dell shared that library staff helped teens understand how to manage their accounts by letting them know that they are welcome to the library and providing tips for how to remember to return books, including using school planners or "shout bombs" for text messages, and sharing information about options for renewing materials.

At Ms. Oehlke's invitation, Cindy Gibbon and Terrilyn Chun provided an update on the planned makerspace at Rockwood Library. Ms. Chun shared that on January 20, 2015, the design team held a teen listening session. Twenty teens participated at the meeting, which included architects, IT staff and the construction project manager. Coi Vu and Sara Ryan led the meeting, during which teens shared their ideas for what they would like to see in the space in terms of programming and design. Rockwood Library has a cadre of 50 teen volunteers, which increases to 70-75 during the summer, who speak about 27 languages.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION

Jamie June reported that The Library Foundation is currently working on raising funds for two projects: The first is the Rockwood makerspace, TLF is working on meeting a matching grant from the Mt. Hood Cable Regulatory Commission. The second project is the Summer Reading

Program for 2015. The Library Foundation is reaching out to community partners to solicit prizes.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Beth Levy reported that the Friends of the Library are preparing for the Spring Book Sale and potential retail events during the summer. FOL is beginning the nominating process for 2015-16. Ms. Levy reported that FOL is looking forward to hearing a proposal from MCL to fund an expanded Pageturners program. Friends of the Library anticipates that their funding this year will near \$100,000.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Ms. Stevens reported that a friend of hers found excellent support from library staff who provided assistance with her Kindle.

Rita Jiménez shared that Carlos Galeana works in a pilot position, Regional Technology Coordinator. He has 1:1 meetings with library patrons and provides staff trainings. Mr. Galeana is intended to present to the LAB later this year.

Ms. Oehlke expressed gratitude to Bernadette Janét for her service to the LAB.

Chair Whitehead adjourned the meeting at 8:14 am.

Respectfully submitted by:

Paige Hatcher

Administrative Analyst, Library Director's Office

Multnomah County Library, Oregon