

**Library Advisory Board Minutes: March 10, 2015**

For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

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The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, March 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: Erin Cooper, George Feldman, Elizabeth Hawthorne, Jack MacNichol, John Potter, Mardy Stevens, Danika Stochosky, Maegan Vidal, Carlene Weldon, Sola Whitehead and Brian Wilson.

Board members excused were: Marc Alifanz and Ya-Li Lizik.

Board members absent were: Emma Caplan, José Padin and Katie Lane.

Staff members present were: Vailey Oehlke, Director of Libraries; Becky Cobb, Deputy Director; Don Allgeier, Neighborhood Libraries Assistant 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; Shelly Kent, Human Resources Manager; Dave Ratliff, Central Library Director; Laura Bradshaw, Library Assistant - Bilingual Spanish, Fairview-Columbia Library; David Lee, Administrator, Fairview-Columbia Library; Jenkins Lumpkin, Senior Office Assistant, Human Resources and Finance; and Paige Hatcher, Administrative Analyst, Director's Office.

Also in attendance were: Matthew Timberlake, IT Project Manager, Department of County Assets; Peg Holliday, Friends of the Library; and Mary Stewart, Friends of the Library.

The Board approved minutes for the February 10, 2015 with a correction to remove Danika Stochosky's name from the list of board members present.

**CHAIR'S REPORT**

Given the fullness of the meeting's schedule, Chair Sola Whitehead ceded this time to the remaining agenda items.

**LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Vailey Oehlke shared details about the Everybody Reads author lecture with Mitchell S. Jackson, scheduled for that evening, March 10, 2015. Ms. Oehlke thanked Terrilyn Chun for her coordination of the Everybody Reads program. At Ms. Oehlke's invitation, Ms. Chun reported on several Everybody Reads-related programs that took place throughout the community. Ms. Oehlke thanked The Library Foundation for its generous support of the Everybody Reads program. Ms. Oehlke reported that every

year, Literary Arts coordinates the appearance of the Everybody Reads author in Portland and donates a significant portion of tickets to the author lecture to members of the community.

With respect to the Everybody Reads selection process, Ms. Oehlke shared that a variety of factors influence which book is chosen. She is convening a group to discuss possible titles for the 2016 selection. John Potter suggested the possibility of including a complementary title to provide contrast, enhance book club discussions and potentially facilitate more exposure to local authors. Ms. Oehlke invited suggestions for the 2016 Everybody Reads selection from board members. She is looking for a title that addresses mental illness, homelessness or returning veterans.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

In advance of the meeting, board members were provided the Finance Committee's Citizen Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) letter to review.

Erin Cooper reported that the finance committee met with Ms. Oehlke and Becky Cobb several times over the last couple months. The committee met with Mike Jaspin, Multnomah County's economist, to review the forecast for the Multnomah County Library District (MCLD). Representatives from Facilities and IT also spoke with the group and shared pertinent information,

Ms. Cooper reported that the recommended budget for FY 2016 incorporates funding for expanded library functions. The most significant additions to the FY 2016 budget would provide the library with the resources to:

- hire an IT executive as well as two developers. These positions would be dedicated to working on the library's IT needs and would help accelerate the development of new platforms and services for the library.
- provide funding for increased staff training as the library continues the reclassification process for Library Pages to the Access Services Assistant position.
- develop and implement a security plan for the library system.

Ms. Cooper related that the library has consistently underspent in the past several years and that cost growth has been low when compared to projected value. The recommended FY 2016 budget reflects appropriate spending levels. Ms. Cooper stated that the changes to the budget have been well thought out and address topics that have been discussed in prior LAB meetings regarding the direction of the library.

Ms. Oehlke highlighted that the recommended budget includes the addition of a pilot program with a contracted crisis worker position stationed at Central Library. This position will help with patrons who present with mental health and addiction issues, not only at Central Library, but throughout the library district.

Mr. Potter noted that, despite the additions to the budget, there is still a healthy reserve. Revenue is strong and the library has succeeded in containing costs. This positions it well for a large one-time increase.

Ms. Stochosky inquired about whether there were any plans to expand independence from the county in terms of contracted services. Ms. Cooper related that, with respect to facilities, the library maintains a

separate account from other county departments. Chair Whitehead shared that the finance committee has evaluated this over the years and determined that it is more cost-effective to procure certain services from the county.

Chair Whitehead thanked the finance committee members for their work. Ms. Cooper thanked Ms. Cobb for her leadership. Mr. Potter thanked the new board members for their participation on the committee.

Ms. Cooper solicited feedback on the CBAC letter from board members.

Mr. Potter made a motion to approve the CBAC letter. The motion was seconded and approved with unanimity.

### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mardy Stevens reported that Jeremy Graybill attended the last meeting of the nominating committee and shared how the LAB might gain visibility on the Multnomah County Library (MCL) website.

Ms. Stevens reported that there are currently no new applications for board member positions. There will be four positions, including one youth position, for which candidates will need to be identified for recommendation to the MCLD Board between now and the June 9, 2015 meeting.

Ms. Hawthorne asked if there is a deadline to receive applications. Ms. Stevens and Mr. Potter shared that there is no firm deadline; however, there is a point at which it will be difficult for the committee to interview applicants in time for the next stage in the process. With this in mind, the nominating committee will continue to receive applications and make sure applicants are aware that they may be interviewed during the next appointment period.

Ms. Hawthorne inquired if there is direct outreach conducted to high school principals in Multnomah County soliciting recommendations for youth board members. It was discussed that while this type of outreach is not under the purview of the nominating committee, individual board members are welcome to reach out to peers to solicit recommendations and encourage applicants.

Mr. Potter related that during the nominating committee's conversation with Mr. Graybill, they discussed enhancing the LAB's presence on the website. Once this has occurred, a link to the information may be shared in library newsletters and/or other forms of communication.

Ms. Stevens shared printed copies of the newly developed online interest form, which serves as the application to the LAB. The new form has been modified slightly from the previous version and includes a question which asks applicants to share why they are applying to the LAB. Ms. Stevens invited board members to share input with her over the next couple days. Chair Whitehead suggested that the optional question could be mandatory. Ms. Weldon concurred.

In response to an inquiry from Mr. MacNichol, the nominating committee confirmed that the form would be able to be completed and submitted online. Prior to making the form available online, the committee and Mr. Graybill will determine that there are no accompanying legal restrictions.

Ms. Stevens shared that per the LAB's election procedure, adopted in June 2011, the nominating committee will receive nominations for candidates for the positions of LAB chair and vice-chair between April 1-30. If members are interested, contact a member of the nominating committee. Candidates will be presented and elected at the June 9, 2015 meeting. Chair Whitehead and Vice-Chair Stochosky are not eligible for reappointment, having served two consecutive terms as officers.

### **OUTREACH SERVICES TO EAST COUNTY**

Don Allgeier reported that demographics in East County reflect increases in the number of patrons who are new immigrants and continued steady use by patrons under the age of 18. The library's continued commitment to address needs in East County, particularly at the Fairview-Columbia, Gresham, Rockwood and Troutdale locations, has resulted in several positions and initiatives that help bolster services in these locations. The pilot position of regional technology coordinator, stationed at Gresham Library and serving other libraries in the area, focuses on ensuring that the latest trends in technology are accessible to staff and patrons. The makerspace that is in development at Rockwood Library will help increase engagement with all patrons in the area, particularly students. The new position of Creative Learning Spaces Coordinator will help develop the Rockwood makerspace and coordinate learning spaces systemwide. Additional expansions of a teen librarian position and bilingual Spanish-speaking librarian position will enable broader library services consistent with the needs of patrons in East County.

Mr. Allgeier shared demographic data and provided an overview of statistics pertinent to library services in East County. A worksheet with this information was provided to board members. After identifying a need in East County for expanded outreach services, MCL focused on staffing at Fairview-Columbia Library to address this need.

Mr. Allgeier introduced David Lee, administrator for Fairview-Columbia Library. Mr. Lee shared library statistics for Fairview-Columbia, Gresham, Rockwood and Troutdale libraries and described how intentional staffing at Fairview-Columbia Library facilitates outreach to the region, beyond Fairview-Columbia's service area, and better positions library staff to engage the community. Mr. Lee discussed the regional structure of libraries in East County. Several positions in the region support multiple library locations. Mr. Lee described some of the outreach activities that Fairview-Columbia staff regularly perform in order to deliver library services and learn about library needs in the community.

Mr. Lee introduced Laura Bradshaw, bilingual Spanish-speaking library assistant for Fairview-Columbia and other locations in the region. Ms. Bradshaw discussed her outreach work at the Wood Village Green mobile home park. Limited available transportation makes it challenging for many members of the community, particularly students, to travel to a library branch. In response to the needs of students in this community, Ms. Bradshaw offers a series of popular events, including a weekly storytime in Spanish for children from 1 to 13 years old, a weekly book exchange with books in English and Spanish and a bi-monthly Lego club, which started in November 2014. Additionally, Ms. Bradshaw described two workshops that were coordinated in collaboration with Portland Public Schools to help parents in the community navigate the school system and learn how to help students achieve success in school.

In response to an inquiry from Mr. Feldman, there followed a discussion about organizations in Multnomah County that provide legal and naturalization assistance to people who are undocumented. Multnomah County Library partners with an immigration law group that provides ongoing citizenship

programming and with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to which the library provides space for citizenship ceremonies. Library staff will also refer people to other beneficial resources and services in the community.

Ms. Oehlke observed that the rich programming and access to resources that this type of outreach work provides has a deep impact on the communities served. Mr. Potter related that he considers this work to be extremely important and thinks it would be beneficial to see it expanded into many more communities around the county.

Ms. Chun shared that, in addition to facilitating this work, Ms. Bradshaw is also on the My Librarian team.

### **THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION (TLF)**

No report provided.

### **FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY (FOL)**

Peg Holliday reported that FOL's online sales are about \$4,000 per month. Due to HVAC work at Title Wave, FOL is sorting books elsewhere for the time being. The 2015 Spring Used Book Sale will take place April 17-19 at Gresham Station Shopping Center. Friends of the Library is beginning to pack books for the next Fall Used Book Sale.

Ms. Holliday reported that FOL's nominating committee has begun to meet and they are looking for four to five candidates for the FOL board for the 2015-16 year. Library Advisory Board members were invited to refer candidates and FOL will have a promotional table at the Everybody Reads author lecture.

A Books for Brews event will take place June 24, 2015 at Laurelwood Public House and Brewery.

### **GOOD AND WELFARE**

Ms. Oehlke reported that, in addition to presenting at the Everybody Reads author lecture, Mr. Jackson will visit with students at Donald E. Long School and Reynolds High School.

Ms. Cooper shared that *The Residue Years* has been discussed broadly in her neighborhood, where the book is set.

Chair Whitehead adjourned the meeting at 8:40 am.

Respectfully submitted by:

Paige Hatcher

Administrative Analyst, Library Director's Office

Multnomah County Library, Oregon