

Library Advisory Board Minutes: May 12, 2015

For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, May 12, 2015, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Room. Chair Sola Whitehead called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

Board members present were: Emma Caplan, Erin Cooper, George Feldman, Elizabeth Hawthorne, Katie Lane, Ya-Li Lizik, Jack MacNichol, José Padin, Mardy Stevens, Danika Stochosky, Carlene Weldon, Sola Whitehead and Brian Wilson.

Board members excused were: Marc Alifanz, John Potter and Maegan Vidal.

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 and Strategic Initiatives; Cindy Gibbon, Access and IT Services Director; Jeremy Graybill, Marketing + Online Engagement Director; Rita Jiménez, Neighborhood Libraries Director; Katie O'Dell, Youth Services Director; Tom French, Regional Librarian; Lori Moore, Regional Librarian; Peg Solonika, Hillsdale Library Administrator; Matthew Yake, Belmont Library Administrator; and Paige Hatcher, Administrative Analyst, Director's Office.

Also in attendance were: Craig Gibbons, Executive Director, Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission; Matthew Timberlake, IT Project Manager, Department of County Assets, Multnomah County; Magnus McDowell, Friends of the Library; and Jamie June, The Library Foundation.

The Board approved minutes for the April 14, 2015, meeting with an amendment to wording in the director's report.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Sola Whitehead shared that this is Katie Lane's last meeting as an LAB member. Ms. Lane's second term on the LAB will expire at the end of June. Chair Whitehead and Vailey Oehlke thanked Ms. Lane for her service on the LAB and her support of the library.

Chair Whitehead encouraged everyone to vote in the May 2015 Special Election.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Oehlke reported that the proposed FY 2016 budget will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners and the Multnomah County Library District Board today, May 12, 2015, at 2:30 pm. Ms. Oehlke thanked Erin Cooper for her leadership of the LAB's finance subcommittee. Ms. Oehlke thanked Becky Cobb for her leadership and her staff for their work and preparation of the budget.

From the director's report, Ms. Oehlke highlighted the work of Cathy Schneider, who recently won Rose Community Development's Healthy Impact Award. The library increasingly directs more resources towards libraries and outreach in East County to address the shifting needs of the community.

Ms. Oehlke shared that she recently participated in a panel discussion sponsored by *Publishers Weekly* in New York City. The panel, which consisted of library leaders and representatives from the publishing industry, conversed about libraries being a natural place for readers to discover authors and books.

George Feldman inquired if the discussion would affect how publishers charge libraries for e-books. Ms. Oehlke related that during the conversation she made sure to emphasize how the shift toward digital content and the prohibitive cost of many e-books will have an impact on the sustainability of many libraries' budgets. Whether this will have an impact on e-book pricing for libraries remains to be seen. Ms. Oehlke shared that she currently serves on the American Library Association's Digital Content Working Group, which is focussing on how libraries pay for e-books.

THE ROLE OF REGIONAL LIBRARIANS

Rita Jiménez introduced Matthew Yake, Tom French and Lori Moore.

Mr. Yake provided background information about the development of the regional librarian position and referenced the map that illustrates which libraries are supported by each regional librarian. The regional librarian initiative came out of a need to rethink the model for how librarians work in the midst of significant budget cuts that the library system faced heading into fiscal year 2013. In our neighborhood libraries, these cuts led to a decrease in adult librarian positions, from 6.25 FTE to to 3.75 FTE. At that time, MCL administration posed the following questions:

- How can we deploy librarians so that their work continues to benefit patrons at all library locations?
- How can we reimagine the work of librarians in a way that positions them to respond to our communities, nurture the growth of our staff, and support and sustain systemwide evolution?

The regional librarian team launched in July 2012 with four regional librarians covering 18 libraries. Since then, the team has added a full-time regional librarian and a half-time bilingual Chinese-speaking regional librarian.

Mr. Yake discussed the issue of relevance that libraries across the nation are facing, including technological changes, as well as changing demographics in the Multnomah County community. As neighborhoods change, assessing and adapting to the changing needs of each library location is increasingly complex. Regional librarians work across locations to track changing community needs and coordinate responses. While regional librarians work directly with the public, the scope of their work allows them to integrate their experiences into larger plans and projects that determine how and what library resources are delivered to patrons.

Mr. Yake shared examples of some initiatives and benefits that have resulted from the regional librarian team, including the Book A Librarian service, regional study halls for library staff and support for management staff. Additionally, Mr. Yake shared Lori Moore's contributions to and support of a pilot project for Belmont Library's collections. The results of the project may be used to develop similar projects at other locations.

The proposed FY 2016 budget includes the addition of a sixth regional librarian to the team.

Lori Moore shared information about her experience as the regional librarian for the Belmont region, which includes the Belmont, Albina and Woodstock libraries. Ms. Moore works six days per month at each branch in the region. One of her primary responsibilities includes supporting and training paraprofessional staff. In the study halls referred to by Mr. Yake, library staff meet in small group sessions in which they learn new skills and best practices as well as have the opportunity to ask questions. The regional librarian role is dedicated to continually understanding patron, community and staff needs. Ms. Moore described specific examples of how this manifests in library services and operations, included improved efficiency at Woodstock Library through the use of pagers by front desk staff and support for digital literacy through Book A Librarian appointments.

Tom French shared information about his experience as the regional librarian for the Hillsdale region, which includes the Northwest, Hillsdale, Capitol Hill and Sellwood-Moreland libraries. Mr. French shared his professional background in Multnomah County Library and described specific examples of his work, including training and support for the Book A Librarian service and outreach in the community. Mr. French has worked to engage patrons from diverse backgrounds, including members of the Somali and Muslim communities. This work has helped develop relationships in the community and informs how the library develops collections and programs to align with patrons' informational needs.

Chair Whitehead inquired how the regions' geographic areas were determined. Ms. Jiménez shared that each region has a regional library as its hub, and the regional library administrator and regional librarian act as a leadership team for the region. The regions themselves are meant to reflect similarity in how patrons use the library.

George Feldman shared his experience with Mr. French in the Pageturners Classics program, and commented favorably on the amount and quality of community building that regional librarians effect.

Ms. Oehlke thanked Mr. French, Ms. Jiménez, Ms. Moore and Mr. Yake for their work. Ms. Oehlke noted that this work exemplifies how library staff have reimaged what it means to be a librarian and demonstrates the library's impact on the community.

POLICY PRIVACY

Chair Whitehead shared that the LAB Electronic Access Policy Advisory Committee (EAPAC) recently participated in the review of the library's Privacy and Confidentiality of Library Records policy (privacy policy). Today's presentation is in response to a recommendation from the EAPAC to share the revised privacy policy with the LAB.

Cindy Gibbon shared background information about the library's commitment to privacy and intellectual freedom and the impetus for the recent revision of the library's privacy policy. The last time the library revised the privacy policy was in 2006. Safeguarding privacy has become much more challenging over the years as more patrons use the library via electronic means, often accessing information through third-party vendors.

Ms. Gibbon acknowledged Percy Wise, Information Services Coordinator, who has a J.D. in addition to holding a Masters in Library and Information Science degree. Mr. Wise led the project to revise the

privacy policy, and in doing so, he conferred with the County Attorney's office, the Multnomah County Privacy Officer and County IT security staff, and solicited input from a large group of people, including the EAPAC.

A primary intention of the privacy policy is to educate library patrons and help them understand that when electronic content is accessed through a third party, their activity is under the purview of the privacy policies of the vendors providing the content and there are limits to the privacy protection that the library can provide in these circumstances. Ms. Gibbon related examples of how small changes in an electronic resource's operations can affect users' privacy. The revised privacy policy more accurately reflects the reality of today's frequently changing digital landscape. Additionally, in response to a suggestion from the LAB Electronic Access Policy Advisory Committee, the revised policy is intended to be more easily comprehensible and introduces a summary paragraph of the document's content.

Ms. Lane related that she appreciates the efforts that were made to make the new privacy policy a user-friendly document, in particular the provision of links to third-party vendor privacy policies.

There followed a discussion about the tension between the desire for convenience, i.e. an alert that a patron has already checked out a certain material, versus the desire for privacy, which entails the deletion of information that could be used to enhance convenience. Ms. Oehlke shared that libraries across the country struggle with this issue. Libraries have historically advocated for and been able to provide privacy, when they managed all of the content of a patron's record. Today, this is neither possible, nor is it necessarily what all patrons want.

Mr. Feldman commended Ms. Gibbon and her group for the work they have done to achieve a balance between the openness of community-building/social media resources and privacy and for making it transparent to patrons. Chair Whitehead noted that the revised privacy policy provides the necessary information for those who are interested in a comprehensive explanation of the policy. Remarking upon the variations that exist between different patrons' privacy concerns and needs, Chair Whitehead noted that the revised privacy policy successfully delineates what the library can offer in terms of privacy while also offering resources for further inquiry.

Ms. Oehlke thanked Ms. Gibbon for her leadership around the revisions to the privacy policy.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION (TLF)

Jamie June reported that TLF's Board of Trustees met to review and approve TLF's guarantee for MCL's 2015-2016 budget.

The Library Foundation is halfway through the spring fundraising campaign, the goal of which is to raise enough funds to help the library purchase 35,000 children's books and materials that will support school-age and early literacy programs.

Ms. June reported that TLF is wrapping up the procurement of prizes for the Summer Reading program. This year there will be over 33,000 prizes.

Ms. Oehlke thanked Ms. June for her work with the funding guarantee and TLF for its continued support of the library.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY (FOL)

Magnus McDowell shared background information about FOL, which is primarily a volunteer organization that provides advocacy and fundraising and support for the library's objectives. The advocacy component has reduced over the last few years. The Friends of the Library is smaller in scale than TLF. Primary fundraising operations are focused on the donation of books from the public and proceeds from the sales of those books at used book sales and online.

In April, one of the two biannual book sales took place at Gresham Station Shopping Center. The Spring Used Book sale generated around \$36,000 dollars in sales, which is about 2-3% less than what was raised at the 2014 Spring Book Sale. Overall, there was an increase in the sale of memberships and the quantity of books brought to and sold at the sale.

Mr. McDowell reported that on June 24, 2015, each Laurelwood Brewpub location (there are two) will be holding Beers for Books events. Friends of the Library memberships will also be sold at the event. A portion of sales between 4-8 pm will be donated to FOL.

Mr. McDowell reported that FOL was recently approached to work on a promotional activity with Tom's Shoes to help bring in donated books. It is still in the early stages and there are not too many details yet.

The Friends of the Library has identified 12 potential new board members. New board members' terms of service will start in July 2015.

Ms. Oehlke thanked FOL for their contribution to library staff celebrations for National Library Workers Day.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Ms. Cooper shared her positive experience attending a library program that provided information for homeowners who are interested in getting solar power.

Ms. Lane expressed appreciation for being able to serve on the LAB and shared that she looks forward to continuing to be involved with the library.

Chair Whitehead adjourned the meeting at 8:28 am.

Respectfully submitted by:
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