

Library Advisory Board Minutes: September 8, 2015
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, September 8, 2015, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Room. Chair Erin Cooper called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

Board members present were: Sarah Alibabaie, Marc Alifanz, Erin Cooper, Rob Edmiston, Elizabeth Hawthorne, Emma Keppler, Lois Leveen, Ya-Li Lizik, Jack MacNichol, John Potter, Danika Stochosky, Maegan Vidal, Sola Whitehead, Brian Wilson and Elliot Zais.

Board members excused were: Mardy Stevens and Carlene Wilson.

Staff members present were: Becky Cobb, Deputy Director; Terrilyn Chun, Public Programming and Community Outreach Manager; Shawn Cunningham, Director of Communications and Strategic Initiatives; Cindy Gibbon, Access and Information Services Director; Jeremy Graybill, Marketing + Online Engagement Director; Rita Jiménez, Neighborhood Libraries Director; Shelly Kent, Human Resources Manager; Katie O'Dell, Youth Services Director; and Paige Hatcher, Administrative Analyst, Director's Office.

Also in attendance were: Matthew Timberlake, IT Portfolio Manager, Department of County Assets, Multnomah County; Rebecca MacGregor, Friends of the Library; and Lisa DeGrace, The Library Foundation.

The board approved minutes for the July 14, 2015 meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Erin Cooper solicited reports from currently active committees. Sola Whitehead reported that the governance committee has met three times to collaborate on iterative drafts of bylaws for the LAB. The committee will convene once or twice more before providing the document to library leadership for review. Following that, the committee will send a draft to the LAB for review and adoption. Maegan Vidal reported that the capital planning committee, which meets on a monthly basis, has conducted four meetings. Items discussed have included international, national and local examples of library buildings and the upcoming capital facilities plan for the next five years. The committee is editing and reviewing the RFP for this work. A tour of MCL libraries is being planned for committee and board members this fall.

Chair Cooper advised that it would be helpful for the LAB to have a digital repository for LAB materials. She invited board members to email her with suggestions for how the repository should perform and ideas for specific platforms.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Becky Cobb highlighted several items from the Director's Report, including the positive comment from a regular Belmont Library patron and the new Spanish storytime, *La hora de aprender*, which is a 30-week program starting in September. Ms. Cobb also shared that Hollywood Library re-opened after a three-week closure for recarpeting and minor remodeling.

SUMMER READING PROGRAM WRAP-UP

Katie O'Dell shared that the final tally is pending, but currently 114,000 babies, kids and teens participated in the 2015 Summer Reading Program. [The final tally was subsequently revised to 111,000 participants due to duplicate entries.] There are approximately 157,000 kids under the age of 18 in Multnomah County.

Ms. O'Dell credited much of the success of the program to early childhood outreach and outreach at seven of eight public school districts in Multnomah County. Ms. O'Dell shared information about outreach services performed through the Books 2U program and the many locations B2U staff visit.

Ms. O'Dell reported that the library is currently working with Portland Public Schools on a project called Read Together. The project would cluster library services at five schools and streamline library interactions with the school district. The library is asking for spring reading scores for students in grades 3-5 as well as fall DIBEL (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) scores for earlier grades for the purpose of being better able to analyze how the Summer Reading Program contributes to student reading performance in the fall.

Ms. O'Dell shared that 770 volunteers contributed to the Summer Reading Program. The majority of volunteers are under 18 years old; many are 11, 12 or 13 years old. Ms. O'Dell shared additional information about the experiences and efforts of volunteers and of staff in Volunteer Services.

Ms. O'Dell related that one of the most important parts of the Summer Reading Program is the reading incentives, which are made possible by the The Library Foundation (TLF). Ms. O'Dell thanked TLF for its contributions to the program.

There followed a Q&A session with board members during which the following information was discussed:

- The public school district in Multnomah County with which the library does not currently partner is the Riverdale School District.
- While final statistics are still being determined, there is about a 25% finish rate for Summer Reading Program participants. Ms. O'Dell shared that there is no national standard for how reading should be quantified and measured. Multnomah County Library's Summer Reading Program focuses on encouraging the daily practice of reading.
- Currently there is no data point for students who are homeschooled. While the library liases with homeschool families and some private schools, data is not available.
- If the proposed partnership between Portland Public Schools and Multnomah County Library comes to fruition, it hasn't yet been determined if either of those organizations would perform the data analysis or if it would be analyzed by a third party.

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF YOUTH BOOKS

Ms. O'Dell described many of the resources that youth can access at the library and shared that today she would highlight the impact of the print book and the magic that happens "when just the right book for the right child at the right time connects."

Ms. O'Dell related that, in Multnomah County, there are thousands of children who are living without exposure to books or reading material. Research shows the direct relationship between children living in poverty and the number of books in their home. Reading Is Fundamental, a nonprofit children's literacy organization, determined that two-thirds of children living in poverty have no books in the home. Early learning and education outreach staff at the library work to create an abundance of books for children and do so while interacting and creating personal connections with children, students, families and schools.

Sharing examples of each, Ms. O'Dell discussed four types of children's books based on different stages in children's development:

Picture books

In *Where the Wild Things Are*, author Maurice Sendak gains access to fantasies that children might experience around emotions like rage, fear and wonder and provides reassurance that families forgive. In *The Hello, Goodbye Window*, author Norton Juster celebrates multicultural families, conveys the emotional warmth of intergenerational connections and affirms the experiences that children have with their grandparents while also showing the experiences they deserve.

Readers

Ms. O'Dell related that most kids learn to read between the ages of five and eight and described the transition from learning to read to reading to learn. In *We Are in a Book*, by Mo Willems, the main characters are children animals who discover they are in a book and that they can compel readers to say words. The conceit helps children discover their own power. Ms. O'Dell described the historical development of readers and shared that new high-quality, action-packed, non-fiction readers are becoming prevalent. In *Wolfsnail*, by Sarah Campbell, readers learn about a day in the life of the predatory wolfsnail.

Readers that feature youth as the catalyst for change

Number the Stars, by Lois Lowry, provides an entry point for children learning about the holocaust. Child readers can make the heroic journey with the main character and think about their own bravery and power. *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*, by Phillip M. Hoose, tells the true story of Colvin, who, as a teenager in 1955, refused to give her seat to a white woman on a segregated bus. The story serves as a record of the impact that a single young person can make, triggers readers to consider the ways that race, gender and social class influence how events occur and how history is recorded, and models that history is alive.

Young adult titles

The Outsiders, by S.E. Hinton, is a story for teenagers about teenagers and written by a teenager. A bestseller for 48 years, the novel exemplifies the importance of providing stories that reflect the realities of adolescent life. *American Born Chinese*, a graphic novel by Gene Luen Yang, explores self-image, identity, transformation and acceptance.

Ms. O'Dell shared that the library has partnered with local children's theaters for decades and discussed particulars of that work.

Sola Whitehead thanked the My Librarian team for providing exceptional recommendations for children's books.

Ms. Cobb thanked Ms. O'Dell for exemplifying the passion that many staff bring to the library.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION (TLF)

Lisa DeGrace reported that TLF has a close to pending piece of good news and that a new Director of Major Gifts, Laura Fay, was recently hired.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY (FOL)

Rebecca MacGregor reported that FOL has committed \$30,000 for the library's rebranding effort and they are ramping up their fundraising efforts. Their goal is to raise an additional \$1,000/month. They are currently ahead of their online and bookstore sales goals.

Ms. MacGregor reported that a literary trivia night has been added to the fall book sale, which will take place October 23-26. The trivia night is scheduled for Saturday, October 24 at 6 pm.

Ms. MacGregor shared that online sales staff are in the process of moving to the book sorting room at Central in order to better co-mingle knowledge and skills.

A recent trial pop-up sale at Holgate Library was a big success and FOL plans to pursue similar sales.

Ms. MacGregor reported that new board members have stepped up in many leadership capacities. Ms. MacGregor is leading Chinook Book sales, from which FOL receives 50% of proceeds.

Ms. MacGregor reported that FOL will have a table at Wordstock, which will take place Saturday, November 7, 2015 at the Portland Art Museum.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Chair Cooper shared a story about a teenager she is mentoring who, when she was a child, checked out *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus* so many times from the library that it fell apart. Someone at the library bought her a copy and gave it to her. She is now 16 and still has the book.

Chair Cooper adjourned the meeting at 8:29 am.

Respectfully submitted by:

Paige Hatcher

Administrative Analyst, Library Director's Office

Multnomah County Library, Oregon