

Library Advisory Board Minutes: October 13, 2015
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, October 13, 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, John Potter, Mardy Stevens, Sola Whitehead, Brian Wilson and Elliot Zais.

Board members excused were: Danika Stochosky and Carlene Weldon.

Board members absent were: Jack MacNichol 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 Information Services Director; Jeremy Graybill, Marketing + Online Engagement Director; Dave Ratliff, Central Library Director; Skylaar Amann, Internal Communications Specialist; Jane Salisbury, Supervisor, Library Outreach Services; Jenny Whittier, Library Assistant, Systemwide Assistance Team; and Paige Hatcher, Administrative Analyst, Director's Office.

Also in attendance were: Sean Files, Policy Advisor, District 4, Multnomah County; Craig Gibbons, Executive Director, Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission; Matt Timberlake, IT Portfolio Manager, Department of County Assets, Multnomah County; Barbara Bernstein, Elders in Action; Tanya Forrester, Friends of the Library; Laura Fay, The Library Foundation; and Merris Sumrall, The Library Foundation.

The board approved minutes for the September 8, 2015 meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Erin Cooper reported that the governance sub-committee is approaching a draft of bylaws for the LAB. The draft will be shared with library administration and then the Multnomah County Attorney's Office to ensure it is aligned with county policies and procedures. When completed, the bylaws will be brought to the LAB for review and approval.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

From the report, Vailey Oehlke highlighted and discussed a pilot project designed to empower parents to help their children succeed in school and the Lioness Writing: Women in the Military Writing Their Lives program.

FY15 BUDGET SUMMARY

Becky Cobb shared with board members the Fiscal Year 2014-15 Year-End Report and the 2014-15 Expenditures/Budget Comparison. The former provides a synopsis of budgeted and actual revenues and expenditures, as well as the year-end balance. The latter offers a line-item overview of budgeted versus actual expenditures.

Ms. Cobb noted that fiscal year 2014-15 was the second year of implementation of the Multnomah County Library District (MCLD) fund and described the relationship between the MCLD fund and the MCL operations fund and the process of transferring funds from the former to the latter.

Ms. Cobb reviewed the documents and responded to questions from board members.

There followed a discussion about the significance of overdue fines within the budget. Currently the library receives about \$1M in overdue fines and around \$116,000 in fines for lost materials, etc. Ms. Oehlke shared that libraries around the country are abolishing fines due to the idea that excessive fines may prevent patrons from returning to the library.

Chair Cooper shared that the LAB finance committee will reconvene in January and invited interested board members to consider participating in those meetings.

AGE-FRIENDLY CERTIFICATION FOR MCL

Ms. Oehlke introduced Jane Salisbury who supervises Library Outreach Services, including adult literacy services. Ms. Salisbury shared that outreach services provides library services to many older adults who live in various facilities in the community. In order to ensure the library serves these patrons in the best way possible, the library partnered with Elders in Action to participate in the age-friendly certification process.

Ms. Salisbury introduced Barbara Bernstein, Executive Director of Elders in Action. Ms. Bernstein described the history of the organization and shared that Portland has a longstanding devotion to maintaining an age-friendly community.

Ms. Bernstein described the four main programs of Elders in Action:

- Personal advocate program
- Community engagement
- Citizen advisory board
- Age-friendly business network

Ms. Bernstein provided details about the library's age-friendly certification process. Library volunteers are trained by Elders in Action volunteers, after which the volunteers return to library locations, assess services and environments, and make recommendations for improvements. The assessment stage is underway and is expected to be complete by May.

Ms. Bernstein shared a brochure that describes some of the characteristics that are assessed by Elders in Action, including bathrooms, stairs, lighting, flooring, etc. The library's website will also be assessed.

Ms. Bernstein described some of the ways the library is already serving older patrons well, such as delivery services, large print materials, reducing isolation through staff visits.

Ms. Salisbury shared information gleaned from the first round of audits, which took place at Hollywood, Gregory Heights and Albina libraries. Areas for improvement included low shelves, signage and navigation. Customer service at all four sites was described as exceptional. More data and a final report will be forthcoming.

There followed a discussion about digital content and access. One of the advantages to e-readers is that the font size can be controlled. Ms. Salisbury shared some of the ways library outreach services has tried to promote e-readers.

Ms. Bernstein shared additional information about the scope of age-friendly initiatives in Portland and around the United States.

Ms. Oehlke thanked Jenny Whittier and Jane Salisbury for their leadership of this initiative.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION (TLF)

Merris Sumrall introduced Laura Faye who recently joined TLF as its director of major gifts.

Ms. Sumrall shared that TLF has received a \$300,000 grant from the Meyer Memorial Trust. The funding will support an array of early literacy programs.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY (FOL)

Tanya Forrester shared that FOL is working on protocols for transitioning paper records to an electronic format.

Ms. Forrester reported that the annual Fall Book Sale is approaching. It will take place October 23-25 at the Lloyd Center DoubleTree.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Lois Leveen shared that she will be presenting at an upcoming Pageturners event at Hillsdale Library. Ms. Oehlke thanked FOL for funding the Pageturners program.

Ms. Oehlke introduced Skylaar Amann, the library's new internal communications specialist.

Mardy Stevens shared that she recently visited the Book of Kells at the Trinity College library in Dublin as well as other libraries in Ireland. She also had occasion to visit a Carnegie library in Union, OR.

Chair Cooper adjourned the meeting at 8:24 am.

Respectfully submitted by:
Paige Hatcher
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