

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

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, November 10, 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, Danika Stochosky, Carlene Weldon, Sola Whitehead, Brian Wilson and Elliot Zais.

Board members excused 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; Jeremy Graybill, Marketing + Online Engagement Director; Rita Jiménez, Neighborhood Libraries Director; Katie O'Dell, Youth Services Director; Dave Ratliff, Central Library Director; Jim Carmin, Librarian, John Wilson Special Collections; Anthony Cesario, Senior Human Resources Analyst; Mandy Tuthill, School-Age Services Supervisor; and Paige Hatcher, Administrative Analyst, Director's Office.

Also in attendance were: Anna Allen, Community Engagement Advisor, Office of Multnomah County Chair; Jeff Renfro, Budget Analyst Senior, Department of County Management, Multnomah County; Eric Zimmerman, Chief of Staff, District 4, Multnomah County; Krista Van Veen, Friends of the Library; and Merris Sumrall, The Library Foundation.

The board approved minutes for the October 13, 2015 meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Erin Cooper reported that the governance committee had forwarded draft bylaws for the LAB to Vailey Oehlke and Becky Cobb for review. From there, the draft bylaws will be shared with the Multnomah County Attorney's Office. Chair Cooper thanked the members of the committee for the broad scope of thinking about the functioning of the advisory board and attention to detail that went into drafting the document.

Chair Cooper reported that Mardy Stevens has resigned as chair of the nominating committee. Other members who are interested in chairing the committee were directed to confer with Ms. Stevens or Chair Cooper.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Vailey Oehlke thanked the governance committee for its work on the bylaws. Ms. Oehlke thanked Ms. Stevens for her service and leadership on the nominating committee.

Ms. Oehlke highlighted the following items from the Director's Report:

- Banned Books Week: The library coordinates annual programming to align with Banned Books Week and the library's role in upholding the principles of intellectual freedom. Ms. Oehlke thanked Cindy Gibbon for overseeing the program, which this year focused on a form of censorship exemplified by the reluctance to publish books that represent diverse populations.
- Golden Tickets for first-graders: Ms. Oehlke thanked The Library Foundation for its support of this program, which encourages children and parents to visit the library and facilitates the connection between schools and public libraries.

ANNUAL ART REPORT

Jim Carmin provided a brief overview of the six core collections of the John Wilson Special Collections (JWSC) and described representative examples of each. The six core collections are: the history of the book, Native American literature, English literature, natural history, Oregon history and children's literature.

Mr. Carmin thanked The Library Foundation for funding the acquisition of new materials to the JWSC and the Friends of the Library for remembering the JWSC when they come across interesting items from donations.

He reported on gifts received by the JWSC during FY 2015, including materials related to Henry E. Dosch, a Portland resident during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and papers related to longtime Portland poet and publisher, Carlos Reyes.

He described group and individual visits to the JWSC and discussed the popularity of Edward Curtis's *North American Indians*.

Mr. Carmin shared several notable items from the JWSC, including a medieval pocket bible, a drawing of Walt Whitman by the artist Marilyn Zornado, a collection of first edition serial publications of Charles Dickens's *Little Dorrit*, a rejection letter to an aspiring author by Charles Dickens, a review copy of Garth Williams's *The Rabbit's Wedding* and a manuscript written by Sherman Alexie.

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

- If the JWSC contains any materials related to missionaries to Oregon, they are few.
- Factors that affect digitization of materials in the JWSC include identifying which items can be digitized using scanners owned by the library and discerning which items are unique enough to warrant digitization to benefit the general public.
- Mr. Carmin does some outreach to regional libraries. More often groups and individuals are encouraged to visit the collections where they reside. Exhibits in the Collins Gallery are intended to inspire interest in the JWSC. School groups, reading groups, and staff from other libraries are regular visitors to the collection.

Ms. Oehlke discussed the remarkable nature of the JWSC in that it is owned by the community. Similar materials are often found in academic libraries or organizations that require a membership fee. It is rare for a public library to maintain this type of collection. As a public institution, it is important to ensure that people recognize that the JWSC belongs to the community.

PETTING ZOO: STEM DISCOVERY KITS

Katie O'Dell shared background information about the STEM Discovery Kits project, which are intended to create more opportunities for children to follow interest-driven learning. The project began with a number of kits focused on science, math and engineering concepts for students in grades K-5. This fall, the project expanded from 30 kits to 120, and the new kits have more interactive tools. Ms. O'Dell thanked The Library Foundation for funding the initial project as well as the expansion.

Ms. O'Dell introduced Mandy Tuthill, School-Age Services supervisor. Ms. Tuthill shared additional information about the kits, of which there are 15 different kinds, with materials that focus on a variety of interests, including coding, robotics, gravity and physics. Each kit contains a selection of books, chosen by School Corps. When kits are returned to the library, they are inspected for missing parts, for which there are backup supplies.

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

- Translated materials are available in some kits, depending on the contents. Visual or pictorial instructions accompany some items.
- The kits experienced immediate popularity and all have several holds on them. Checkouts are being monitored in order to determine when advertising will be most beneficial, i.e. not result in an excessive number of holds on the materials.
- To create the kits, the library consulted with OMSI and Yellow Scope on the topics and sourced relevant books and materials.
- The locations of the original set of kits were Troutdale, Hollywood and Midland libraries. The expansion located kits at North Portland, Belmont and Rockwood libraries. However, due to their mobility, they can move to other locations.

Ms. Tuthill invited board members to experiment with several kits that had been brought to the meeting.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION (TLF)

Merris Sumrall shared TLF's annual report with meeting attendees. The annual report was mailed to approximately 24,000 people and was provided to all of the libraries.

Ms. Sumrall shared information about different types of gifts to the library, including estate gifts, those in honor and in memory of others, and planned gifts. Ms. Sumrall discussed how TLF invests, maintains and deploys funds in order to support library programs.

Ms. Sumrall shared that TLF writes and thanks donors who give in memory or tribute to others. The Library Foundation mounts bookplates in four books to recognize donors who give more than \$100.

Ms. Sumrall related that donations can be made through the Willamette Week Give!Guide or on TLF's website.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY (FOL)

Krista Van Veen shared information about FOL's successful Annual Fall Book Sale. The sale stayed open three hours later on Saturday to host a literary trivia event.

Ms. Van Veen reported that the FOL booth at Wordstock was quite busy during the event, which took place Saturday, November 5, 2015.

Friends of the Library is currently interviewing candidates for its executive director position.

GOOD AND WELFARE

No items reported.

Chair Cooper adjourned the meeting at 8:36 am.

Respectfully submitted by:

Paige Monlux

Administrative Analyst, Library Director's Office

Multnomah County Library, Oregon