

Library Advisory Board Minutes: September 13, 2016
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, September 13, 2016, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Room. Chair Erin Cooper called the meeting to order at 7:28 am.

Board members present were: Marc Alifanz, Erin Cooper, Thomas Dwyer, Rob Edmiston, Alisa Folen, Elizabeth Hawthorne, Emma Keppler, Lois Leveen, Jack MacNichol, Lizzie Martinez, Mardy Stevens, Danika Stochosky, Cynthia Tseng, Carlene Weldon, Christopher Williams, Brian Wilson and Elliot Zais.

Staff members present were: Vailey Oehlke, Director of Libraries; Becky Cobb, Deputy Director; Terrilyn Chun, Programming and Community Outreach Manager; Shawn Cunningham, Director of Communications and Strategic Initiatives; Martha Flotten, Interim Youth Services Director; Cindy Gibbon, Access and Information Services Director; Jeremy Graybill, Marketing + Online Engagement Director; Rita Jiménez, Neighborhood Libraries Director; David Ratliff, Central Library Director; Jon Worona, Director of Digital Strategies; Seana Lane, Summer Reading Program Coordinator; Ana Ruiz Morillo, Bilingual Outreach Specialist; and Paige Monlux, Administrative Analyst, Director's Office.

Also in attendance were: Commissioner Diane McKeel, District 4, Multnomah County; Bianca Chakiryan, Friends of the Library; Amanda Delzer Hill, Friends of the Library; and Laura Fay, Friends of the Library.

The board approved minutes for the July 12, 2016 meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Erin Cooper welcomed new board members who were attending their first meeting.

Chair Cooper provided information about LAB members' responsibilities vis-a-vis political expression. Library Advisory Board members, like library staff and volunteers, are considered "public officials" and should refrain from any political advocacy during meetings or while engaging in LAB business. Chair Cooper has posted this policy on the LAB website with links to more information, including the Secretary of State's Handbook.

At Chair Cooper's invitation, committee chairs provided overviews of each committee's charge and meeting schedule.

Lois Leveen, chair of the Electronic Access and Policy Advisory Committee (EAPAC) shared that the committee meets to discuss how the library is addressing access and privacy issues, as increasingly more people are accessing digital materials through the library. The committee does not have a formal charge at this point in time but the issues are significant. The EAPAC meets on a quarterly basis at Central Library on the fifth floor. The first meeting in FY 2017 will be October 6, 2016, 4:30-5:30 pm,

with additional meetings planned for December 2016 and March and June 2017. Cindy Gibbon is the staff liaison for the EAPAC.

Jack MacNichol, chair of the Finance Committee, related that this committee serves as the Citizen Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) for the library. The Finance Committee reviews a variety of costs that drive the library budget and drafts an annual CBAC report, which is essentially a letter to the Multnomah County Library District Board that discusses changes to and recommendations for the library's budget. Mr. MacNichol recommended membership in the committee for new members as it provides a helpful introduction to the library and county. The committee meets six to eight times from January through April at Library Administration at Lloyd.

Mardy Stevens, co-chair (with Marc Alifanz) of the Nominating Committee, shared information from the LAB bylaws about the committee. The Nominating Committee establishes and implements general policies, programs and procedures to secure new members, coordinates LAB membership promotions, makes recommendations concerning LAB membership and serves the library district as a resource on LAB membership. The committee begins its work in January and generally convenes regularly during the spring. Paige Monlux is the staff liaison.

Brian Wilson, co-chair (with Erin Cooper) of the Capital Planning Committee related that a number of LAB members participated in the Multnomah County Library Community Action Team Capital Planning Kick-off event with G4 Architecture, the library's capital planning consultant, on July 26, 2016. Members of the Capital Planning Committee are members of this community action committee, which also includes representatives from other library stakeholders and community organizations. The kick-off event began the process of determining how we grow our library system in the 21st century and beyond. This work will continue over the course of the next year, including a large community Strategic Visioning Workshop on October 25, 2016. The Capital Planning Committee has been meeting on a monthly basis; however, it is anticipated that meeting frequency will be scaled back during the consultant's project work. The committee is next scheduled to meet on November 15 to debrief after the workshop. An email update is sent on a monthly basis. Mr. Wilson invited LAB members to contact him if they would like to receive the updates but are not currently on the email distribution list.

Chair Cooper discussed the Governance Committee, which meets on an ad hoc basis to address issues as they arise. When this happens, the chair will ask the group to convene and invite board members to join.

That said, a number of board members have recommended that the LAB have a more comprehensive orientation process for new members. Chair Cooper expressed the hope that a combination of newer and more seasoned LAB members can be incorporated into an ad hoc group and inform the LAB of what they would like to see in terms of orientation processes and resources. Liz Hawthorne volunteered to serve on the committee. The committee will meet in person a couple of times, collaborate via email and then coordinate with library staff.

Chair Cooper directed board members to review the committee list, determine which committees they would like to participate in and send her a list with their committee membership.

Library Advisory Board members may choose to change their committee membership at anytime. Per the LAB bylaws, all board members are expected to serve on at least one committee. All members are not expected to chair a committee.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

From the Director's Report, Vailey Oehlke highlighted the library's social media campaign that matched reading recommendations to patrons' pictures of their tattoos. The outreach was very popular and exemplified how the library's creative staff are engaging people in unexpected ways.

SUMMER READING WRAP-UP

Ms. Oehlke reported that the library's Summer Reading program engages over 100,000 kids every year. Ms. Oehlke introduced Seana Lane, who coordinates the program.

Ms. Lane shared her background and experience with the library. This is her first year coordinating Summer Reading, a popular community event and one that has a positive impact on "summer slide." Ms. Lane thanked The Library Foundation for supporting the program.

Changes to this year's Summer Reading program included:

- a new volunteer training model,
- revised staff trainings,
- a new database with better reporting tools,
- streamlined staff communications,
- green(-er) prizes, and
- more professional and efficient Summer Reading table aesthetics.

Also new this year were a staff-only t-shirt that library employees could choose to purchase and a staff Summer Reading game, the latter made possible by The Library Foundation. Both items supported staff engagement with the program and reinforced the importance of the program for youth development.

Of the 114,186 babies, kids and teens signed up for the 2016 Summer Reading program, 84,297 signed up through seven area school districts and 11,500 were reached through outreach classroom games.

Twenty six percent of participants finished all three levels. Several locations tracked the number of prize level interactions per hour, with the intention of using this data for volunteer scheduling. Based on a preliminary review of the data, it's possible that the participation rate may be 20-30% higher than the finisher percentage would suggest. For 2017 or 2018, Summer Reading coordination will include refining evaluation methods.

Volunteer Services recruited over 800 volunteers and organized 42 training sessions. Ms. Lane shared results of the volunteer experience survey.

The theme for the 2017 Summer Reading program is: "Build a better world: architecture, building and construction."

Ms. Stevens suggested reaching out to local community colleges where people may have students at home during the summer. Ms. Leveen shared that the library also partners with service providers in the community to recruit volunteers. Ms. Lane described how the Every Child and Books 2 U programs deliver the Summer Reading program.

Ms. Oehlke thanked Ms. Lane for her work.

LA HORA DE APRENDER: SPANISH STORYTIME

Ms. Oehlke introduced Ana Ruiz Morillo, Bilingual Spanish Outreach Specialist, who coordinates La hora de aprender, a 30-week educational program for Spanish-speaking children and their families.

Ms. Morillo shared her background, education and experience. Spanish is her first language. She worked for 11 years as a teacher in the Dominican Republic. Locally, she has worked with the Latino and African American communities in the area of child development.

Ms. Morillo described the work of outreach specialists at the library. Responsibilities include coordinating trainings with parents, connecting with leaders in the community, visiting apartment complexes, facilitating storytimes, supporting bilingual staff with training and outreach, coaching, and serving as a consultant for project management. It's important to connect staff with community leaders and develop partnerships in the community so that those people and groups can operate as library ambassadors within their communities. Ms. Morillo also works with supervisors at the 11 locations that have Spanish-speaking staff to help them create holistic outreach plans, participates in the coordination of the annual Día de los Niños y Día de los Libros event and is involved with the library's Diverse Audiences Committee.

Ms. Morillo shared that La hora de aprender (The hour for learning) is the current iteration of the library's Spanish storytime program. In the past the library had seen low attendance at Spanish storytimes. A 2010 report indicated that Latino students demonstrated significantly lower readiness for kindergarten than white students. Throughout the years, the library has applied different strategies to address this gap.

Spanish storytime at the library was previously known as La hora de cuentos (The story hour), and it was very similar to the library's traditional storytime in English. Often the majority of attendees were English speakers. In developing the LSTA grant-supported Listos para el kinder (Ready for kindergarten) program, the library identified culturally appropriate elements from that program that could be incorporated into the design of Spanish storytime to encourage Spanish-speaking families to attend and make the educational benefits more apparent to parents.

La hora de aprender, as it is now known, is a 30-week program that focuses on early intervention to help prepare children's brains for learning. There are still opportunities for play but the focus is more on education. Participants are given homework assignments to work on after each session. All participants receive a certificate at the end of the 30 weeks. Families value the registration process, the awarded certificate and the graduation event at the end. Participants can accumulate up to five certificates. At a certain point, they will be referred to the Listos program to prepare for kindergarten.

Ms. Morillo shared that Latino family attendance is increasing at the newly rebranded storytimes. In terms of next steps, she is currently working on an outcomes based evaluation with early literacy model.

There followed a discussion during which board members and Ms. Morillo conversed on the topics of:

- effective parent education,
- enrichment activities for families that want to learn languages,
- library services that are offered in multiple languages, e.g. Homework Center,
- developing programs and services that are appropriate for different cultures rather than attempting to duplicate programs, and
- the importance of community engagement when developing and evaluating programs

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY (FOL)

Bianca Chakiryan reported that the Fall Book Sale will take place October 21-24 at the DoubleTree in the Lloyd District. Friends of the Library is always looking for volunteers. There will be trivia on Saturday night, back by popular demand. The next three book sales will be held at the Lloyd DoubleTree.

Friends of the Library will have a booth at Wordstock on November 5, 2016 at Portland Art Museum.

Amanda Delzer Hill shared that FOL is teaming up with Laurelwood Public House and Brewery for a Books for Beer event on November 15, 2016 at both the northeast and southeast locations.

The 3rd annual Give Twice Holiday Sale will take place at Central Library, December 2-4, 2016.

Ms. Stevens suggested that FOL might consider holding a “books for beer” event in Gresham. Ms. Chakiryan and Ms Delzer Hill will bring that idea to the FOL board for consideration.

Ms. Chakiryan shared that the bookstore has been stocking new merchandize and encouraged people to stop by.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION (TLF)

Laura Fay reported that TLF is reporting back to donors about how the programs went last year. The Library Foundation is working on its annual and donor reports.

About 48 organizations and business sponsored the Summer Reading program through gifts or prize donations.

The Library Foundation is preparing for its fall campaign, and the LAB will hear more on this topic at its October meeting.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Chair Cooper shared her positive experience participating in the adult Summer Reading bingo card game, which encourages people to explore new authors and genres.

Danika Stochosky reported that Bruce Springsteen will be appearing at Powell's.

Mr. Alifanz noted that it was fantastic to see the 100% attendance turnout at this meeting.

Ms. Leveen shared that she and Lizzie Martinez are working on a grant. She thanked library staff and The Library Foundation for their assistance finding data.

Chair Cooper adjourned the meeting at 8:35 am.

Respectfully submitted by:

Paige Monlux

Administrative Analyst, Library Director's Office

Multnomah County Library, Oregon