

Library Advisory Board Minutes: October 10, 2017
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, October 10, 2017, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Room. Chair Elizabeth Hawthorne called the meeting to order at 7:31 am.

Board members present were: Marc Alifanz, Chester Ching, Erin Cooper, Thomas Dwyer, Rob Edmiston, Elizabeth Hawthorne, Lois Leveen, Jack MacNichol, Lizzie Martinez, P.K. Runkles-Pearson, Mardy Stevens, Cynthia Tseng, Brian Wilson and Elliot Zais.

Board members excused were: Alisa Folen and Clare Wilkinson.

Board members absent were: Amaya Gustave.

Staff members present were: Vailey Oehlke, director of libraries; Terrilyn Chun, deputy director; Don Allgeier, director of operations; Aaron Bluitt, neighborhood libraries director; Shawn Cunningham, director of communications and strategic initiatives; Johnette Easter, human resources manager; Sonja Ervin, equity and inclusion manager; Cindy Gibbon, director of policy and special projects; Jeremy Graybill, marketing + online engagement director; Rita Jiménez, neighborhood libraries director; Jon Worona, director of content strategy; Chelsea Bailey, communications strategist; Amy Honisett, staff development librarian; Kate Schwab, Central Library information services librarian; and Paige Monlux, administrative analyst.

Also in attendance were: Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson, District 3, Multnomah County; Jeff Renfro, budget analyst senior, Department of County Management, Multnomah County; Julie Peterman, The Library Foundation; Katie Winters, The Library Foundation; and Pattie Carlin, Friends of the Library.

The board approved minutes for the September 12, 2017 meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Liz Hawthorne advised that membership in the Electronic Access Policy Advisory Committee, aka the "DigiCommittee", would need to be reduced. It was suggested that committee members might notify committee chairs in advance when they will not be able to attend a meeting, thus opening a spot for another board member who might wish to attend in their stead. There followed a discussion about Oregon Public Meetings Law.

Lois Leveen shared that at its last meeting, the DigiCommittee learned about the IMLS grant-funded project on which Portland State University and Multnomah County Library have been collaborating. The title of the project is: Advancing Digital Equity in Public Libraries: Assessing Library Patrons' Problem Solving in Technology Rich Environments. The DigiCommittee's next meeting is scheduled for December 7, 2017, and the group will be discussing the implications, particularly those relating to the budget, of digital materials and resources at the library.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Vailey Oehlke shared that she is participating in an IMLS-led project that will convene library leaders to discuss how library science degree curriculum might change to ensure it addresses the requirements of 21st century librarianship.

From the Director's Report, Ms. Oehlke highlighted the following articles:

- A space for teens at Gresham Library
- Celebrating Welcoming Week

FY 17 BUDGET SUMMARY

Don Allgeier, director of operations, shared copies of and reviewed the Multnomah County Library District Fund Fiscal Year 2016-17 Year-End Report.

Mr. Allgeier noted that fiscal year 2016-17 was the fourth year of implementation of the Multnomah County Library District (MCLD) fund. He shared revenue sources for the MCLD fund and described how this revenue is transferred to the operating fund.

There was a change in revenue for this fiscal year due to the elimination of fines on youth materials and youth library accounts. Expenditures for the fiscal year were five percent under budget. Mr. Allgeier reviewed expenditures that were significantly higher or lower than budgeted.

Mr. Allgeier encouraged LAB members who are interested in learning more about the budget to join the Finance Committee.

There followed a discussion which concerned:

- the effect of winter closures on the budget.
- anticipated increases in labor costs.
- increasing vendor costs.
- the sunseting of the Gates Foundation's Global Libraries initiative.

ENGAGING WITH PATRONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Chair Hawthorne introduced Amy Honisett, staff development librarian, and Kate Schwab, Central Library information services librarian. Ms. Honisett and Ms. Schwab described their roles at the library.

In November 2016, the library began a research project with the Kettering Foundation to investigate what happens when libraries work *with* rather than simply *for* community members. Ms. Honisett and Ms. Schwab described working with community members who are unhoused to learn what library services, resources and programs these patrons currently use as well what they would find useful that is not available at present.

To accomplish this, Ms. Honisett and Ms. Schwab developed the first program, Coffee and Conversation, a monthly event during which patrons experiencing homelessness and other community members join staff for coffee and conversation. The purpose of this work is to create a sense of community and a welcoming space for patrons and staff and ultimately to use patron input to shape programs and services. During the Coffee and Conversation sessions, facilitators use conversation prompts to inspire discussion and offer drawing prompts as well. Staff from all classifications are invited to participate.

Ms. Honisett and Ms. Schwab shared data and outcomes resulting from this work. Based on survey data, 100 percent of staff who responded indicated they either felt more comfortable talking to patrons after participating in the session or already felt pretty comfortable. One hundred percent of patrons who responded indicated they felt that the session helped build community in the library.

The Kettering Foundation's six democratic practices informed this work:

1. Name the issues
2. Frame issues
3. Make decisions deliberatively
4. Identify resources
5. Organize actions
6. Collective learning

Coffee and Conversation will continue through the 2017 fiscal year. A writers' group is starting in November and movie "nights" (read: afternoons) are in the works. The ideas for both the writers' group and movie nights came from patrons. Two or three other library locations have expressed interest in hosting Coffee and Conversation sessions.

There followed discussion concerning the following topics:

- Staff self-select to participate in the sessions.
- Outreach to patrons includes going to where regular patrons often spend many hours day, distributing flyers, and actively inviting patrons to participate.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION (TLF)

On behalf of TLF, Ms. Oehlke introduced Katie Winters, TLF's new grants manager, and Julie Peterman, TLF's new development associate.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY (FOL)

Pattie Carlin congratulated the LAB trivia team for winning the trivia competition at FOL's Annual Fall Sale.

Ms. Carlin shared that total attendance at the sale exceeded 3000. Total sales exceeded \$85,000. It was the largest sale in seven years and resulted in 99 new memberships.

Friends of the Library will have a table at the Wordstock event on November 11, 2017 at the Portland Art Museum. The Give Twice Holiday Sale will take place December 1-3, 2017.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Lois Leveen shared that the NW Film Center and Portland Art Museum are showing the documentary film *Ex Libris* October 13-15, 2017.

Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson shared that she and Elders in Action are partnering to host a senior resource fair at Midland Library on October 28, 2017 from 10 am-12:30 pm. Resources from Multnomah County, the City of Portland, AARP and others will be in attendance.

Chair Hawthorne adjourned the meeting at 8:33 am.

Respectfully submitted by:
Paige Monlux, administrative analyst
Multnomah County Library, Oregon