Library Advisory Board Minutes: November 13, 2018
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, November 13, 2018, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Room. Chair Elizabeth Hawthorne called the meeting to order at 7:32 am.

Board members present were: Marc Alifanz, Thomas Dwyer, Rob Edmiston, Brendan Gallagher, Elizabeth Hawthorne, Willow Kelleigh, Jack MacNichol, Cynthia Tseng, Clare Wilkinson, Brian Wilson, and Elliot Zais.

Board members excused were: Chester Ching, Erin Cooper, Lois Leveen, and Bethel Sishu.

Board Members absent were: Lizzie Martinez and P.K. Runkles-Pearson.

Staff members present were: Aaron Bluitt, neighborhood libraries director; Cindy Gibbon, director of policy and special projects; David Ratliff, neighborhood libraries director; Don Allgeier, director of operations; Javier Gutierrez, collections and technical services director; Jeremy Graybill, marketing and online engagement director; Jon Worona, director of content strategy; Katie O’Dell, programming and outreach director; Shawn Cunningham, director of communications and strategic initiatives; Sonja Ervin, equity and inclusion manager; Terrilyn Chun, deputy director; Vailey Oehlke, director of libraries; and Maddelyn High, director’s assistant.

Also in attendance were: Hayden Miller, staff assistant to Commissioner Vega Pederson, District 3, Multnomah County; Jonathan Strauhull, assistant Multnomah County attorney; Julie Peterman, The Library Foundation; Joan Nelson, Friends of the Library; and Shane Kavanaugh.

The board approved the minutes for the October 9, 2018 meeting with a correction.

CHAIR’S REPORT
Chair Elizabeth Hawthorne granted the floor to Cynthia Tseng, who announced that the next DigiCommittee meeting is December 6, 2018 at 4:30 pm at Central Library. Tseng asked committee members to send an email if they're unable to attend so the meeting can be opened up to any potential non-committee guests. The focus of discussion for the December meeting is the library's new Integrated Library System (ILS).

LIBRARY DIRECTOR’S REPORT
Director of Libraries Vailey Oehlke highlighted the following from the Director’s Report:

- **LeFoster Williams: Helping the library better serve the Black community**
  - The library’s Black Cultural Library Advocate (BCLA) staff group is going strong with
24 members. These staff have what's called a KSA (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities) competency to help the library connect and relate more authentically with the Black community across the county. Oehlke thanked Equity and Inclusion Manager Sonja Ervin and Neighborhood Libraries Director Aaron Bluitt for their leadership of this group. Ervin added that the BCLA staff group has grown significantly in the past two years, and that folks are dedicated and excited about this work.

- **Library introduces caregiver kits for dementia**
  - The library is now offering caregiver kits that those caring for people with dementia can check out. Oehlke shared that she is proud of the library's effort here to provide support not only to people with dementia, but to their caregivers. Significant expertise was contributed to kit development.

- **Gresham patrons get broken items repaired for free at the library**
  - Oehlke emphasized that repair cafes and fix-it-fairs demonstrate another way the library serves the community beyond providing library materials.

Chair Hawthorne remarked that the Director's Report is a great resource for LAB member conversations with friends, neighbors, and colleagues.

**FY18 BUDGET SUMMARY**

Director of Operations Don Allgeier shared copies and provided a summary of the library's year-end financial report for its 2017-2018 fiscal year. Allgeier described how the library's different funds are related, including how revenue from the Multnomah County Library District (MCLD) fund is transferred to the library department's operating fund. Overall revenue for the fiscal year was higher than projected (by 1.4%) due to slighter higher property taxes, and expenses came in 3.4% under budget. Allgeier also called attention to a budgeted contingency, which was adopted last year as part of the library's financial policies.

Allgeier asked for questions, and a discussion followed concerning:
- How negative expenditure variance carries over into the next budget cycle
- The library's reserve fund and projected structural deficit due to property tax revenue limitations (which Multnomah County is also experiencing)

Chair Hawthorne thanked Allgeier for his presentation, and invited non-Finance Committee LAB members to attend a committee meeting if they're interested in learning more. Finance Committee Chair Jack MacNichol noted that the Finance Committee's work provides an excellent opportunity for newer LAB members to understand the scope of the library's work. MacNichol emphasized that how the library spends its money is a reflection of its values, and encouraged LAB members to reach out if they want to be a part of the library's budget process. This group meets on weekday afternoons in January and February (2019 meeting schedule forthcoming).

**LEGAL GUIDELINES FOR ADVISORY BOARDS**

Oehlke introduced Assistant County Attorney Jonathan Strauhull, who thanked LAB members for their service and gave an overview of legal guidelines for government employees as they relate to
advisory board members. The Library Advisory Board is an advisory board to a governing board, the Multnomah County Library District Board. As such, LAB members are considered public officials when acting in an official capacity for the library.

Strauhull provided copies of the state Elections Division manual on political campaign restrictions by public employees, and encouraged LAB members to familiarize themselves with these administrative rules. These rules apply to appointed board members when they are acting in official capacity, including while at a LAB meeting; working on a duty as assigned by the board; and appearing at an event in an official capacity.

Strauhull summarized restrictions from the manual, along with other guidelines that pertain to advisory board members, including:

1) Restrictions on political campaigning such as promoting or opposing a political candidate, initiative, or ballot measure while acting in official LAB capacity;
2) Code of ethics and conflict of interest policies for public officials, requiring LAB members to disclose in writing any potential conflicts of interest and recuse themselves from discussion and voting on an issue when a conflict arises; and
3) Rules regarding public records and public meetings, which apply to advisory bodies.

A brief discussion ensued about when and how campaigning restrictions apply to the LAB related to bond measures and ballot measures; and what constitutes “official LAB business.” Strauhull concluded by providing contact information for referral of any questions and/or requests for additional information about these rules. Chair Hawthorne thanked Strauhull for his presentation.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION (TLF)
Julie Peterman shared that the foundation is in the midst of its busy holiday fundraising season, and was accepted into The Oregonian's Season of Sharing fundraising campaign.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY (FOL)
Friends of the Library board member Joan Nelson shared that FOL’s Fall Used Book sale was a great success. Nelson noted that the four-day event met its goal on the second day of the sale. FOL’s Give Twice Holiday Sale runs November 30 - December 2 at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Room, and its Spring Used Book Sale will be held April 26-29 at the Lloyd Doubletree Hotel.

GOOD AND WELFARE
Chair Hawthorne recommended The Library Book by Susan Orlean, which chronicles the 1986 Los Angeles Public Library fire, as well as the history and evolution of public libraries.

Chair Hawthorne adjourned the meeting at 8:19 am.

Respectfully submitted by:
Maddelyn High, director’s assistant
Multnomah County Library, Oregon