Library Advisory Board Minutes: May 8, 2018
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, May 8, 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, Chester Ching, Erin Cooper, Rob Edmiston, Alisa Folen, Elizabeth Hawthorne, Willow Kelleigh, Lois Leveen, Jack MacNichol, Mardy Stevens, Cynthia Tseng, Clare Wilkinson, Brian Wilson, and Elliot Zais.

Board members excused were: Thomas Dwyer, Lizzie Martinez, and P.K. Runkles-Pearson.

Staff members present were: Aaron Bluitt, neighborhood libraries director; Terrilyn Chun, deputy director; Shawn Cunningham, director of communications and strategic initiatives; Johnette Easter, human resources manager; Sonja Ervin, equity and inclusion manager; Jeremy Graybill, marketing and online engagement director; Javier Gutierrez, collections and technical services director; Rita Jimenez, neighborhood libraries director; Katie O'Dell, programming and outreach director; Vailey Oehlke, director of libraries; David Ratliff, neighborhood libraries director; Jon Worona, director of content strategy; Maddelyn High, director's assistant; Chelsea Bailey, communications strategist.

Also in attendance were: Merris Sumrall, The Library Foundation; Julie Peterman, The Library Foundation; Katie Winter, The Library Foundation; Bianca Chakiryan, Friends of the Library; and Hayden Miller, staff assistant to Commissioner Vega Pederson, Multnomah County.

The board approved the minutes for the April 10, 2018 meeting.

**Chair’s Report**
Chair Elizabeth Hawthorne introduced LAB’s new youth member, Willow Kelleigh. Kelleigh is a student at Franklin High School and volunteered at Belmont Library.

Vice-Chair Jack MacNichol invited the Library Advisory Board to attend the library's budget presentation to the Multnomah County Library District Board on Tuesday, May 15, 2018 from 9:30 to 10:30 am at the Multnomah Building. Erin Cooper will present LAB’s Citizen Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) report, as MacNichol is unavailable. Director of Libraries Vailey Oehlke thanked the Finance Committee for their work, and also thanked MacNichol for their committee leadership. Chair Hawthorne echoed this appreciation.

**Gendered Prefixes in Meeting Minutes**
Chair Hawthorne asked LAB members about their preferences around use of gendered prefixes in meeting minutes. Lois Leveen suggested a move away from gendered forms of address in the minutes. Cooper seconded, and reminded that this would mirror the effort made to not use
gendered language in the bylaws. Going forward, the board agreed, with no objections, to initially reference people by their first and last names and then by last name only upon successive mentions in the minutes.

**Library Director’s Report**

Oehlke thanked Communications Strategist Chelsea Bailey for her work on the new format of the Director's Report and highlighted the following articles from the report:

- Library offers sewing classes for the Somali community
  - The mobile sewing lab came about as part of the library’s Curiosity Kick! program. Curiosity Kick! was created to seed innovation among library staff, and to engage staff in developing innovative services and in the logistics of new program roll-out.

- Public libraries in a rapidly changing world: it’s up to us
  - Oehlke recommends LAB members read a recent blog post in response to the OCLC report, *From Awareness to Funding: Voter Perceptions and Support of Public Libraries in 2018*.

Oehlke also shared that this week is National Digital Inclusion Week. Digital inclusion and digital equity have long been a focus for the library, as MCL is the largest provider of free access to the internet in the state of Oregon. MCL was a founding member of the Digital Inclusion Network and a lead partner in development of the Digital Equity Action Plan. Oehlke noted the importance of access to digital assets in creating equal opportunities for success. Oehlke and other library staff will attend Portland’s Digital Inclusion Summit and Technology Association of Oregon's 2018 Oregon Technology Awards on May 10, 2018 and will report back at the June 12, 2018 LAB meeting. Oehlke thanked Director of Content Strategy Jon Worona for his leadership related to the Summit.

**Annual Equity & Inclusion Report Presentation**

Oehlke shared that MCL has long held serving those in marginalized communities as a priority. Thanks to the leadership of Neighborhood Libraries Director Rita Jimenez, the library has a robust expectation around serving immigrants and refugees, and MCL is open and welcome to all. But there is always more work to be done. Oehlke introduced the library’s first equity and inclusion manager, Sonja Ervin, who has formalized and expanded the library’s equity and inclusion work since her hiring a year and a half ago. One of Ervin's early charges was to create an annual equity and inclusion report to codify the work and to foster accountability.

Ervin presented the library’s first Equity and Inclusion Annual Report, including MCL’s equity and inclusion vision:

*Operationalize a system that equitably nurtures, empowers, and lifts staff, patrons and the community to their highest potential*

The library recently created an Equity and Inclusion Steering Team, a subteam of the library’s Executive Management Team. This team is able to lift up what the library is doing well in terms of
equity and inclusion in order to enhance those efforts, and to identify gaps. The existence of this team also supports the normalization of equity conversations and creates champions and allies. The group provides one-on-one support for managers navigating equity and inclusion issues, who can then take those conversations back to their locations. A cross-classification Equity Team will eventually be developed.

Ervin gave an overview of the library’s equity and inclusion goals, and highlighted 2016-17 achievements and ongoing challenges related to those goals. Details can be found in the full report provided in the library advisory packet for May.

**Goal 1: Strengthen and demonstrate institutional commitment to equity and inclusion**

**Goal 2: Create and sustain an institutional culture where individuals of differing cultural backgrounds, identities, abilities and life experiences are welcomed, valued and supported**

**Goal 3: Expand community engagement and relationships**

**Goal 4: Recruit, retain and support a diverse staff that reflects the community it serves**

**Goal 5: Gather and utilize culturally relevant data and information for use in organizational planning and decision making**

One of the library's next steps is to look at these goals alongside the library's 2019-2021 priorities. The library is also working to apply Multnomah County's Equity and Empowerment Lens as it makes decisions at different levels across the organization.

Levene asked how the library might proactively apply an equity lens to something like a capital planning process to factor in external forces such as gentrification. Levene encouraged MCL to engage community around how future library spaces are shaped. Oehlke affirmed that robust community engagement is integral to the library's planning efforts.

Mardy Stevens noted that the Nominating Committee reached out to Ervin for guidance around LAB recruitment in an effort to be proactive around equity and inclusion.

Chair Hawthorne complimented and thanked Oehlke and Ervin for their leadership in moving the library forward on equity and inclusion, and for focusing and nurturing that work. Chair Hawthorne indicated the Library Advisory Board's interest in contributing to these efforts.

**The Library Foundation (TLF)**

Merris Sumrall provided an update on The Library Foundation’s annual call for funding requests from the library. Twenty projects and initiatives were approved for fundraising support from the Foundation for the next year. Sumrall also shared that Julie Peterman has been able to secure prizes valued at $400,000 to date for this year’s Summer Reading Program.
**Friends of the Library (FOL)**
Bianca Chakiryan reported that proceeds from the Spring Used Book Sale exceeded FOL’s $70,000 goal by $4,117 and thanked Chair Hawthorne for volunteering. Friends of the Library is wrapping up its board member candidate search. It received 20 applications, including three from East County residents, and interviewed 12 candidates. A slate of recommended nominations will be presented shortly and new board members and board officers will be voted in at the Annual Meeting on June 6, 2018, at which author Molly Gloss will speak. Oehlke will also speak. Gloss was involved in development of the Friends Library Store at Central Library, which celebrates 21 years of operation on June 6, 2018. Treats and a special store discount will be offered to celebrate.

**Good and Welfare**
Stevens noted that the Nominating Committee will not meet as originally planned on May 10, 2018, as business will be conducted via email. The committee will present a slate of new library advisory board members at the next LAB meeting on June 12, 2018. The committee seeks nominees for the positions of Board Chair and Board Vice Chair prior to that meeting. Self-nominations are welcome.

Leveen announced that the DigiCommittee will meet twice in the coming month before the next LAB meeting on June 12, 2018 and LAB members who are not on the DigiCommittee may attend.

- May 30, 2018 at 11 am to discuss privacy implications for third-party vendor apps
- June 7, 2018 at 4:30 pm to discuss digital equity work. MCL’s new Digital Equity & Learning Librarian Brian McGuirk will attend.

Chair Hawthorne adjourned the meeting at 8:32 am.

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