

Library Advisory Board Minutes: January 8, 2019
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, January 8, 2019, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Room. Chair Elizabeth Hawthorne called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

Board members present were: Bethel Sishu, Brian Wilson, Clare Wilkinson, Cynthia Tseng, Elizabeth Hawthorne, Elliot Zais, Erin Cooper, Jack MacNichol, Lizzie Martinez, Lois Leveen, Marc Alifanz, P.K. Runkles-Pearson, Rob Edmiston, Thomas Dwyer, and Willow Kelleigh.

Board members excused were: Chester Ching.

Board Members absent were: Brendan Gallagher.

Staff members present were: Aaron Bluitt, neighborhood libraries director; Cindy Gibbon, director of policy and special projects; Dave Ratliff, neighborhood libraries director; Don Allgeier, director of operations; Javier Gutierrez, collections and technical services director; Jeremy Graybill, marketing and online engagement director; Johnette Easter, human resources manager; Jon Worona, director of content strategy; Katie O'Dell, programming and outreach director; Rita Jimenez, neighborhood libraries director; Shawn Cunningham, director of communications and strategic initiatives; Sonja Ervin, equity and inclusion manager; Terrilyn Chun, deputy director; Vailey Oehlke, director of libraries; Jim Carmin, John Wilson Special Collections librarian; and Maddelyn High, director's assistant.

Also in attendance were: Jeff Renfro, Office of County Management, Multnomah County; and Katie Winters, The Library Foundation.

The board approved the minutes for the December 11, 2018 meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Elizabeth Hawthorne yielded the floor to Director of Libraries Vailey Oehlke.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Oehlke provided a quick update on the library's capital improvement planning. Due diligence work is ongoing, including high-level planning around 21st-century library spaces and cost estimates. Oehlke remarked that the last time library spaces were updated, Google hadn't been invented — a lot has changed since then, and community members Oehlke has engaged so far about this work are enthusiastic about modernization efforts.

In response to a question from Lois Leveen about the role LAB can be playing now, Oehlke responded that members of the library advisory board will be asked to participate in planning

conversations and to engage in opportunities to connect with the public. Oehlke encouraged LAB members to start sharing information about the library's due diligence work and space needs.

Oehlke noted a recent [Think Out Loud segment](#) on OPB with City Librarian Sarah Strahl on Salem Public Library's collection development policy, which is creating community discussion. Oehlke shared that Multnomah County Library has long had a collection development policy, which is periodically refreshed as part of standard library operations. The library's collection development framework, along with circulation and other data, inform what items the library buys and weeds. The collection is also carefully managed with space constraints in mind. Oehlke emphasized that, as a public library system, MCL's goal is to build and maintain a collection that resonates with the community it serves. While the library does have some historical collections, the purpose of a public library's collection is different from that of an historical archive. Oehlke also noted that MCL partners with academic and other libraries around the country to provide access to titles it doesn't own.

Thomas Dwyer and other LAB members requested a future presentation on MCL's collection policy, including an overview of the data that inform the library's strategy.

Lizzie Martinez shared an update from the Nominating Committee. Rob Edmiston's and Leveen's first terms will end June 30, 2019, and both have indicated their intention to stay on for second terms. The Nominating Committee plans to meet to strategize around its future outreach and recruitment efforts with equity and representation in mind.

Leveen announced that the DigiCommittee scheduled an additional meeting on January 10 to further discuss the library's new Integrated Library System (ILS), which the committee needed more time to discuss following its December meeting.

ANNUAL ART REPORT

Oehlke introduced John Wilson Special Collections Librarian, Jim Carmin. Carmin visits with LAB annually to showcase some of the unique and rare items in the John Wilson Special Collections, which contain more than 12,000 volumes organized into six core collections. The John Wilson Room at Central Library is open 14 hours a week to the public and by appointment.

Carmin noted that many LAB members have made use of the collection, including Erin Cooper, who visited to see Audubon's *Birds of America* collection. From January 12 to March 4, lithographs from Audubon's lesser-known final project, *The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America*, will be shown in the Collins Gallery on the third floor of Central Library.

Carmin highlighted some noteworthy items in the collection, including:

- An Edward Curtis North American Indian photograph set from the early 20th century;
- A 1765 volume of poetry recently viewed by a patron doing a Master's thesis on fairy salve;
- A pocket-sized bible from the 1890s;
- An 1838 Dickens letter rejecting a submission to *Bentley's Miscellany*, which Dickens edited;
- A 1965 postcard from Allen Ginsberg to William S. Burroughs, acquired with funds from The Library Foundation;

- Oregon artist Rick Bartow's final work, "Bosch," a hand-bound book of drypoint prints;
- A Sherman Alexie manuscript, acquired through former Oregon Poet Laureate Elizabeth Woody;
- A transcript of a 1916 trial on Native American fishing rights on the Columbia;
- and a design workbook of the rooms at Timberline Lodge.

Carmin also shared considerations (including space, condition, and fit) for how the library decides which items to accept into this special collection. Carmin concluded with an invitation to LAB members to visit the collection for a tour, either as a group or individually.

Chair Hawthorne thanked Carmin for his presentation.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION (TLF)

Katie Winters shared that the The Library Foundation's year-end fundraising effort went well, as did its Season of Sharing campaign with *The Oregonian*. The foundation is on track to meet its 2018 fundraising goals (final totals are still being tabulated).

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY (FOL)

Cindy Gibbon provided an update on behalf of Friends of the Library, which sold \$10,000 in raffle tickets as part of the Trail Blazers Foundation's [5050 Raffle](#) in January. FOL will receive 25% of net raffle proceeds.

GOOD & WELFARE

Oehlke noted that copies of the library's Everybody Reads selection, *Americanah*, are now available at library locations. Oehlke thanked the The Library Foundation, and encouraged LAB members to pass along copies of the book to friends and neighbors once they've finished reading it.

Chair Hawthorne adjourned the meeting at 8:22 am.

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