

**Library Advisory Board Minutes: March 12, 2019**  
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

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The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board met on Tuesday, March 12, 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: Brian Wilson, Chester Ching, 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: Bethel Sishu, Brendan Gallagher, Clare Wilkinson, and Cynthia Tseng.

Staff members present were: 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; Shawn Cunningham, director of communications and strategic initiatives; Sonja Ervin, equity and inclusion manager; Terrilyn Chun, deputy director; Vailey Oehlke, director of libraries; Becky Blumer, volunteer services manager; and Maddelyn High, director's assistant.

Also in attendance were: Commissioner Lori Stegmann, District 4, Multnomah County; Nathan Clark, District 4, Multnomah County; Julie Peterman, The Library Foundation; and Joan Nelson, Friends of the Library.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Lizzie Martinez reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee, announcing that LAB will have two spots to fill as of July. Two applications have been submitted so far. The committee recently drafted a strategy to support outreach to prospective LAB members in East County. Martinez encouraged LAB members to reach out to people and organizations they know and have relationships with in East County (or to folks who have contacts in East County) for coffee and conversation. Martinez requested LAB members report back on how outreach is going at the April LAB meeting. Rob Edmiston stressed the importance of talking individually with folks, and P.K. Runkles-Pearson asked LAB to keep in mind that reaching out only to close personal contacts could result in replicating LAB's current make-up.

**DIGICOMMITTEE UPDATE**

DigiCommittee Chair Lois Leveen announced the library is close to the go-live date for its new Integrated Library System (ILS). Leveen invited LAB members to join Director of Content Strategy Jon Worona to test the new system's public interface for self checkout stations after the LAB

meeting. LAB members unable to participate in testing after the meeting may contact Worona directly to arrange a time to do so.

### **LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director of Libraries Vailey Oehlke thanked LAB members in advance for their intentional work around board recruitment in East County, noting that she recently met with leaders in Gresham who are eager to engage with the library and its work.

Oehlke also highlighted the following from the Director's Report:

- New teen hygiene health space at Rockwood makerspace
  - Neighborhood library staff often have a strong awareness of the needs experienced by folks in nearby communities. This project represents the second time Rockwood Library staff identified a basic need not being met. The first time resulted in MCL's participation in a summer free lunch program (offered at Rockwood, Gresham, and Midland libraries). With this new project, Rockwood staff noticed and heard that basic hygiene items are often hard to come by for some of the library's patrons. Through donations, Rockwood now makes these types of items available.

Oehlke also reminded that Literary Arts' author event on March 14 with Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is the culmination of this year's Everybody Reads programming. Several LAB members will attend the event, and Oehlke will visit Jefferson and Gresham high schools earlier that day to introduce Adichie, who will talk with students. Oehlke thanked The Library Foundation for purchasing all of the books for this program, and thanked the library's programming and outreach staff, who coordinated Everybody Reads programming.

### **CBAC REPORT**

LAB Co-Chair and Finance Committee Chair Jack MacNichol brought everyone's attention to the Finance Committee's draft Citizen Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) report in support of the library's proposed Fiscal Year 2020 budget, which was shared in advance of the LAB meeting. This report will be forwarded to the Office of Citizen Involvement as part of executive budget review by the Board of County Commissioners. MacNichol invited questions and edits, and made live changes to the report on-screen.

Chair Elizabeth Hawthorne asked how this year's budget reflects MCL's strategic goals, and Oehlke answered that resource allocation closely aligns with the library's priorities around equity and inclusion and serving people facing the greatest barriers. In addition, funding is dedicated in the budget to maintain existing library spaces and to support the library's space planning work.

Leveen summarized comments previously provided via email, and other LAB members shared edits and additions to the report, which MacNichol captured.

MacNichol represents the Library Advisory Board on the county's central CBAC group, comprised of CBAC volunteers from departments across the county. MacNichol noted that the library district

puts MCL in a distinctly different position from other county departments in that the district allows the library to project and plan further out into the future.

Leveen commented that it's important that county commissioners are aware of the range of services the library provides. Commissioner Lori Stegmann underscored this, adding that it'd be beneficial to highlight some of the library's lesser-known services and programs, especially work that the library does to supplement the county's social services work.

Erin Cooper made a motion to approve the budget recommendation letter with incorporation of discussed edits and correction of any typos. Chester Ching and Willow Kelleigh seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The report recommends adopting the library budget as proposed.

MacNichol thanked Director of Operations Don Allgeier for his support of this process. Oehlke expressed thanks to MacNichol for four years of leadership on the Finance Committee, and to the full committee, acknowledging the time commitment involved. Oehlke also thanked Allgeier for coordinating presentations and information-sharing to inform the Finance Committee's work.

### **VOLUNTEER SERVICES PRESENTATION**

Oehlke introduced Volunteer Services Manager Becky Blumer, who provided an overview of the library's robust volunteer program.

Blumer shared that the library engages volunteers for a number of reasons — to complement and support the work of paid staff; to help the library build strong community connections; and because volunteers are important ambassadors for the library and its work. Blumer likened the work of Volunteer Services to "HR for volunteers" — the work of this team includes recruitment, screening, placement, and retention; training; and the creation of policies and procedures.

Some recent statistics demonstrate the strength of the library's volunteer program (a library volunteer compiles this data):

- The library currently has 2,012 volunteers.
- In the past year, 1,412 people applied and 1,288 people were placed in a volunteer role.
- Volunteers give almost 65,000 hours of services — 90% at library locations and the remaining 10% in community outreach programs, filling 50+ different types of roles.
- About a third of library volunteers speak two or more languages.
- 61% of volunteers are under the age of 18 — MCL is the largest youth volunteer program in our area.

Blumer shared some of the goals and challenges the library's Volunteer Services staff are working to address, including removing barriers to engage more volunteers with disabilities. The library also recently revised its volunteer application to be more inclusive and to capture language and other specific skills library programs need, and Volunteer Services is working to provide additional training, resources, and support to library staff who work directly with volunteers. In addition, this team looks for creative ways to expand and enhance library services with MCL volunteers and by building connections with other community organizations who utilize volunteers.

Just as the library benefits greatly from volunteers, library volunteers also benefit from donating their time — building skills and work experiences, community relationships, and enjoying lifelong learning. Blumer encouraged LAB members (as volunteers themselves) to invite others to engage with the library as volunteers, calling attention to the library's dynamic listing of [volunteer opportunities](#).

P.K. Runkles-Pearson thanked Blumer for her work, noting that one of her first jobs was shelving books as a library volunteer, which allowed her to demonstrate prior work experience and job skills when applying for paying jobs. Oehlke and Blumer added that a lot of youth volunteers reference library experience in college applications and in job applications, and the library writes many reference letters. Erin Cooper commented that the library's volunteer application process is easy and well-organized. Hawthorne concluded that providing volunteer opportunities is yet another important way in which the library provides a community service beyond books.

### **THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION (TLF)**

Julie Peterman announced that TLF is gearing up for its spring fundraising campaign. Collection of in-kind gifts for Summer Reading incentives just concluded, resulting in more than \$450,000-worth of prizes from 60 different sponsors.

### **FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY (FOL)**

Joan Nelson shared that FOL raised \$1,500 at their Mcmenamins Friends & Family night, despite the snowy weather that February night. FOL also recently completed its first equity training with ResolutionsNorthwest, and will continue its equity work going forward. Nelson invited meeting attendees to FOL's upcoming Spring Used Book Sale, April 26 - 29.

### **GOOD & WELFARE**

Deputy Director Terrilyn Chun announced that Oehlke has been selected by *Portland Business Journal* as a 2019 Woman of Influence. The award recognizes and celebrates women changemakers making important community impacts as leaders in our region.

Chair Hawthorne adjourned the meeting at 8:25 am.

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