The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met virtually on Tuesday, September 14, 2021. The meeting began at 5:04 pm.

Board members present were: Clare Wilkinson, Erin Cooper, Lizzie Martinez, Nathan Senters, Rob Edmiston, and Salma Sheikh. Gabby Shaffer was unavailable.

Staff members present were: Terrilyn Chun, deputy director; Vailey Oehlke, director of libraries; and Maddelyn High, director’s assistant.

Commissioner Lori Stegmann, District 4, Multnomah County; and Jeff Renfro, Office of County Management, Multnomah County were also in attendance.

ATTENDANCE & CHECK-IN
Meeting attendees joined the virtual meeting either via video or phone, and broke into virtual breakout rooms for small group check-ins.

UPDATES FROM LIBRARY DIRECTOR
Library Director Vailey Oehlke celebrated that, after more than a year of closure, all public library locations are now open.

Oehlke also provided an update on Multnomah County's vaccine mandate for employees, sharing that library staff vaccination rates are close to 100%, and that in general, staff seem supportive of this decision aimed at keeping folks safe in our public spaces. Oehlke also reminded that masks are still required for both patrons and staff in library buildings.

Oehlke offered some context about a recent story in the media highlighting that a location for the new Northwest Library is being sought, noting that one of the goals of the bond work is to get out of as many leased spaces as possible, including the current space where Northwest Library now sits. Northwest Library is slated to be rebuilt as part of the bond measure. Due to current market conditions, the library was advised to explore opportunities for property in northwest Portland — which has an incredibly tight property market. Seeking available property in northwest does not signal a change in the bond project schedule, and work on Northwest Library isn't moving ahead of other slated projects. Identifying an appropriate location for the East County Flagship library is still a high priority, and presents some challenges due to the amount of acreage needed and other criteria that must be met to adequately serve the community. Oehlke reminded that work is currently moving forward as planned on the operations center, Albina, North Portland, Midland, and Holgate libraries; with the flagship project next in line.
In response to questions, Oehlke and other library staff shared that there is no date yet for when the public will be able to use library meeting rooms (which are currently needed for staging things like computers and overflow materials); and that, similarly, there is not yet a timeline for when interlibrary loan services will resume, due to both slack of staff capacity and the fact that many of the library's key lending partners are also not currently offering ILL services.

UPDATES FROM LAB LEADERSHIP
LAB Vice-Chair Lizzie Martinez shared that Svetlana Karpe is stepping off the Library Advisory Board as of September 2021 to take on family care responsibilities abroad, and Martinez thanked Karpe for her service.

Meeting minutes for the July 13, 2021 meeting were approved.

Martinez also shared a dashboard created to help track progress of LAB's goal and related action items, reminding that next spring will be a big push for new member recruitment. Martinez shared a hope that LAB's current infrastructure work will support recruitment.

The board then briefly discussed meeting frequency for the full board and for workgroups, agreeing to move to an every-other-month schedule for full board meetings through the current fiscal year (June 2022), with workgroups meetings during "off" months, according to the following schedule:

Tuesday, November 9, 2021
Tuesday, January 11, 2022
Tuesday, March 8, 2022
Tuesday, May 10, 2022

LAB will continue to meet virtually for the time being, and the meeting time was pushed back to 5:30 pm to accommodate current LAB member schedules.

LAB staff liaison Maddelyn High added that LAB's required Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) work will happen separately, led by Clare Wilkinson with Rob Edmiston and Erin Cooper supporting (similar to how this work happened in the past when LAB had an active Finance Committee). LAB members agreed that this structure is preferable to how this work unfolded during the prior budget cycle, when this work moved to the full board during regularly-scheduled meetings (due to COVID and a smaller board roster).

The meeting adjourned at 5:52 pm.

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