

Library Advisory Board Minutes: March 17, 2022For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met virtually on Thursday, March 17, 2022. The meeting began at 5:30 pm.

Board members present: Clare Wilkinson, Gabby Shaffer, Erin Cooper, Nathan Senters, Rob Edmiston, and Salma Sheikh. Lizzie Martinez was not available.

Staff members present were: Vailey Oehlke, director of libraries; Don Allgeier, director of operations; Jon Worona, director of innovation & technology; Annie Lewis, community services director; and Maddelyn High, director's assistant.

Commissioner Lori Stegmann, District 4, Multnomah County, was also in attendance.

WELCOME & CHECK-IN

Meeting attendees joined the virtual meeting either via video or phone, introduced themselves, and participated in a quick quiz about MCL's annual budget. Meeting minutes for the January 11, 2022 meeting were approved.

BUDGET UPDATE: FISCAL YEAR 2023 PROGRAM OFFERS

Director of Operations Don Allgeier shared a summary of library budget program offers, highlighting differences from prior budget cycles. Allgeier reminded that Fiscal Year 2023 program offers reflect reorganization of the library's public services division, as well as changes to regional groupings for library locations. In addition to library regions, Allgeier gave an overview of program offers by category, including:

- Community Information
- Community Learning
- Mobile and Partner Libraries
- Library Director's Office
- Business Services
- Facilities
- Human Resources
- IT Services
- Marketing and Communications
- Integrated Library Services
- Public Services Division Management
- Community Engagement
- Library Building Bond Administration

Allgeier noted that *Community Engagement* is a new program offer, with a team that is still forming, which Annie Lewis, community services director, oversees. Lewis added that this new program offer brings together cross-functional teams to build better collaboration in terms of how the library engages with the communities it serves and centers community feedback in the development and delivery of services.

The *Community Information* team is another new program offer this year that brings together staff (as part of an internal reorganization) who provide remote library services via email, chat, and phone; reducing barriers to accessing library services.

Allgeier shared that with his departure from the library this summer, the *Project Management and Evaluation* team will move from his portfolio (where it lives currently) to the Deputy Director's portfolio, as the Deputy Director has oversight for many facets of the organization on a systemwide level in terms of project planning and evaluation work.

Another newly-created program offer is *Integrated Library Services*, which includes the library's sort center that distributes materials throughout the entire system; technical services (which handles orders and cataloging of materials that come into the library); as well as Interlibrary Loan (ILL) and the mail system for the entire organization. This team is core to the function of the library's new operations center (included in the library building bond) and how that building will function.

Allgeier also explained that the library's proposed budget for FY23 includes two "out of target" program offers focused on American Recovery Plan Act funds — for the *Central Library Terrace*, and *Outreach Hotspots*. The terrace project has been in the works for a while and requires additional funding beyond support already received from Prosper Portland. This will be an exciting addition to Central Library, allowing folks to utilize a dynamic outdoor space. For the second request, Allgeier reminded that, with the onset of the pandemic, the library increased its ability to provide Chromebooks and mobile wifi hotspots to meet access needs. Currently, the library has a goal of doubling the amount of hotspots it can loan and increasing the take-home loan duration.

Allgeier closed by sharing excitement for all of the efforts and exciting work this budget represents. Clare Wilkinson and Salma Sheikh expressed their gratitude for Allgeier's work with LAB over the years to make learning about the library's budget fun, interesting, and informative.

CBAC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) leads Erin Cooper and Wilkinson recapped the CBAC process, reminding that every county department has a CBAC and LAB fulfills this role for the library department. Cooper shared that LAB is different from other departmental CBACs in that LAB members interact with library leadership on an ongoing, year-round basis, rather than on a more time-limited basis like many other CBACs. Cooper added that the library's budget is also distinct from other county departments because the library is primarily funded through the library district (created in 2012); resulting in better funding certainty and the ability to budget on a longer-term basis.

Cooper reminded that each year, the library's CBAC leads meet with Allgeier, county economist Jeff

Renfro, and others to learn about different budget-related topics relevant to the development of the library's fiscal year budget. Topics differ year to year depending on priorities and CBAC member interests. For FY23, topics included the library's economic forecast; library staffing and personnel costs; a deep dive into facilities; and an overview of program offers.

Cooper offered Commissioner Steggman time to share what board members look for in CBAC memos. Stegmann offered that concise, clear recommendations are most helpful — as the county budget process involves an incredible amount of information from different departments — and thanked LAB for presenting its memo in this way, sharing compliments to LAB for its dedication and care about the library and how it serves the community.

Cooper screen-shared a draft CBAC recommendation letter (which was emailed to LAB ahead of time), highlighting changes in this year's budget, emerging issues, and recommendations. Cooper reminded that next steps are to approve CBAC recommendations for FY23, and to send the memo to the Board of County Commissioners. Highlights will then be presented during the library's public work session on May 26 at 9:00 am, which all LAB members are welcome to attend.

Cooper moved to approve the CBAC memo pending two minor edits, and Wilkinson seconded the motion. The Fiscal Year 2023 CBAC memo was approved unanimously with edits.

Sheikh thanked Cooper and Wilkinson for their CBAC work this year, including drafting the memo; and several attendees expressed gratitude to Erin Cooper, the longest-serving LAB member. Cooper has been involved with the CBAC process for several years, and also initiated adoption of LAB's first bylaws. Cooper's term ends this June.

ACTION ITEMS + CLOSING

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.

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