

**Library Advisory Board Minutes May 8, 2007**  
for Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB)

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The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, May 8, 2007, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Meeting Room. Chair Alice Meyer called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

Board members present were: Rob Brading, Marian Creamer, Gwen Farnham Hyland, Stephen Feltz, Martha Gies, Dean Gisvold, Molly Gloss, Rick Gustafson, Virginia Koontz, Diane McKeel, and Ellen Wallin. Board members Joe Arellano, Mark Garber, Jon Kruse, Donna Oden-Orr and Garrett Shephard were excused.

Staff members present were: Molly Raphael, June Mikkelsen, Becky Cobb, Ellen Fader, Cindy Gibbon, Penny Hummel, Rita Jimenez, Lance Murty, Vailey Oehlke, Patricia French, John Cabrera, Gretchen Brown, Virginia Tribe, Abigail Elder, Mary Beth Lawrence, Sara Ryan and Yvonne Chambers.

Also in attendance were: Merris Sumrall, The Library Foundation; Stephanie Vardavas, Friends of the Library; Dr. Melanie Bloodgood and Brenda Clark, community members.

The minutes of the April 10, 2007 meeting were approved as presented.

**CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Alice Meyer opened the meeting by again offering LAB members the loan of the Metropolitan Briefing Book. She also announced that Jon Kruse will act as mentor to LAB teen members.

As a follow-up to recent Central Library and Library Administration tours, Alice would like to schedule tours for other libraries in the system. LAB members were asked to state their preference for meeting days and times and will be contacted, in the next few weeks, regarding specific tour dates and sites.

Alice shared her recent experience representing MCL at the National Library Legislative Day in Washington DC. where she, along with the seven other members of the Oregon delegation, attended workshops, speaker presentations, and interviews with Oregon's Congressional delegation or, in some cases, representatives thereof. As a culmination of the conference, Maine Senator Susan Collins, long-time library advocate, was honored at an evening reception hosted by FOLUSA.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Permanent and Stable Funding Committee (PSFC):** Dean, co-chair of the PSFC Committee, reported that a resolution establishing the library funding taskforce will be presented to the BCC May 10, 2007. The taskforce, co-chaired by Dean Gisvold and Susan Hathaway-Marxer, will be comprised of 13 to 16 members to be appointed by County Chair, Ted Wheeler. Committee membership will be representative of library stakeholders, among whom are the AFCSME Local 88, Library Foundation, Friends of the Library, MCL staff, other community representatives. Nominees to the taskforce are being recommended to the Chair's Office with the intention of holding the first meeting by the end of May 2007.

**Finance Committee:** Alice Meyer reported on behalf of the Finance Committee. An overview of the FY 2007-2008 library budget was presented to the BCC on April 24, 2007. Alice gave the CBAC report. A public hearing is scheduled tonight (May 8) at North Portland Library with another hearing on May 22 at the Multnomah Building. Everyone is encouraged to attend these hearings and support the library.

**Nominating Committee:** Alice reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee. Martha Gies, Mark Garber, and Molly Gloss will meet before the June meeting with a slate of new officers for the coming year. If you know someone who would like to provide leadership for the LAB, please let them know. Also, keep in mind others in the community you would like to recommend for future nomination to the LAB.

There were no other committee reports.

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Alice called the board's attention to the recent and successful reopening of the FOL store at Central, as noted in the Director's Report (page 1).

Molly Raphael recommended LAB members read the **Director's Report** and focused her time on updating the LAB on recent developments in the strategic plan and the Metropolitan Interlibrary eXchange (MIX) Agreement. Molly presented an update on implementation of the Library's Strategic Plan. Library work groups throughout the organization are completing activities for each of the goals of the **strategic plan** to be undertaken in the 2007/08 fiscal year. Each activity has three elements: a measure (what will be done), a standard (e.g., number of times something will be done), and a timeframe (e.g., each year, quarterly, etc.). The goals of the plan (what people in Multnomah County will get) will be achieved through the activities the staff undertake each year of the plan. The 2007/2008 activities are expected to be completed by or near the beginning of the fiscal year.

Molly noted that one of the plan's activities is to increase the number of bi- and trilingual staff in branches targeted by the Needs Assessment (the Needs Assessment report was presented to the LAB last year). Even though it appears that the new Target Language Program offer will not be funded this year, the library will work to expand access to library services to speakers of these three target languages (Chinese, Vietnamese, and Russian), by recruiting volunteers in the community who speak a second or third language.

The library is also currently investigating ways to assess our community's literacy needs in much the same way as the target language needs were assessed.

The plans implementing the strategic goals will be available for FY 2007-08.

Molly gave background on the current **Metropolitan Interlibrary eXchange (MIX) Agreement** between MCL and surrounding library systems in Clackamas, Washington and Clark Counties. The agreement makes it possible for Multnomah County residents to use other libraries within the MIX region and for residents of those other communities to use our libraries. Agreements such as the MIX agreement are not unusual, and are common in areas around the country, such as New York City and Washington DC, where several library systems serve the needs of the public in large metropolitan areas. Some agreements are revenue neutral; others involve the exchange of funds.

Library patrons have many reasons to use other library systems, including work, residency and school locations. In the past MCL lent more books to patrons of neighboring jurisdictions than Multnomah County residents borrowed from those MIX libraries, making MCL a "net lender". MCL was compensated for this extra work. With Millennium we are now able to calculate the number of checkouts that are first time checkouts, versus checkouts plus renewals. Renewals are not a good reflection of work load, and MCL permits a higher number of renewals than the other MIX libraries.

Molly asked that the LAB continue to support the agreement as a model of cooperation between neighboring library systems. She outlined five options for LAB to consider, with a recommendation that the agreement be renewed in accordance with Option 3, with no revenue exchange between library systems represented in the MIX agreement. The current agreement expires on June 30, 2007. Board discussion followed.

**It was moved and seconded that the LAB support Option 3 of the five options in order to continue the long-standing library partnership with Clackamas and Washington counties in Oregon, and Clark County in Washington. This important relationship benefits the residents of all counties by providing important services across county lines. Motion passed unanimously.**

Molly **recognized Dean and Alice** for being honored by the County for their work on county-wide CBAC and their contribution to the library at the County's annual volunteer recognition ceremony.

**FLIGHT OF FRIENDSHIP: Vailey Oehlke, Central Library Director; Stephen Feltz NW Natural Treasurer/Controller, LAB member**

Vailey, as a private citizen, and Stephen, as a representative from NW Natural, joined more than 100 Oregonians participating in the Flight of Friendship to New Orleans, to contribute to the rebuilding effort and learn more about what help is needed. While there they learned about, and volunteered for, efforts coordinated by Mercy Corps that focused on sustainability, while deconstructing and rebuilding portions of New Orleans continues 19 months after hurricane Katrina.

There was a shared overall disappointment in the lack of progress and of governmental efficiency. Vailey showed the Board photos she took on site. Both she and Stephen told personal stories of people they met and commented about how much they admired those who were trying to put their lives back together.

The trip was organized by Sho Dozono, owner of Portland's Azumano Travel agency, and his wife, Loen. It included people from many different positions in Oregon, including Governor Kulongoski and Mayor Potter.

### **FRIENDS AND FOUNDATION UPDATE**

Stephanie Vardavas reported on behalf of the **Friends of the Library**. Their Annual Meeting will take place on Tuesday, May 22, from 5:30 to 7:30 in the US Bank Room at Central Library. Featured speaker will be Karen Karbo, author of "The Stuff of Life" and "How to Hepburn". The Friend's fifth mid-year book sale will take place on June 2 and 3, Sat 9 am – 6 pm, Sun 10 am – 4 pm, at the Gresham Village Shopping Center, 2430 SE Burnside (SE Burnside and E Powell Blvd., across from Fred Meyer).

Merris Sumrall reported on behalf of **The Library Foundation** sharing the recent good news of a \$300,000 grant from the Collins Foundation, which reflects its commitment to the work of the library over an extended period. This is an unrestricted gift for all aspects of TLF's Campaign for a Lifetime of Literacy.

### **GOOD & WELFARE**

There were no comments from Board members.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dr. Melanie Bloodgood, community member and former educator, shared her concerns with the LAB regarding what she considers to be the deleterious effect of headphones on children who use them in the library. She talked about several articles and other sources that focused on a possible link between cell phones and their effect on the brain, especially in young children. Because Portland is known as the most wired city in the world, not to be concerned would, she said, be counter-intuitive.

LAB member Dean Gisvold commented that the headsets children use with library computers are plugged in but they are not wireless. He added that cell phones long have been a stated concern of some in the medical community.

Chair Alice Meyer noted that as individuals, parents and families we can perhaps more directly address the topic of children's health, than can the library, and thanked Dr. Bloodlove for taking the time to share her concerns with the board.

Next meeting will be on June 12, 2007.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 am.