

Library Advisory Board Minutes August 14, 2007
For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB)

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, August 14, 2007, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Meeting Room. Chair Alice Meyer called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

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

Staff members present were: Molly Raphael, June Mikkelsen, Becky Cobb, Ellen Fader, Cindy Gibbon, Penny Hummel, Rita Jimenez, Lance Murty, Vailey Oehlke, Leila Wrathall, Carol Rogers, Patti Vincent, Susan Corrigan, Andrea Milano and Yvonne Chambers.

Also in attendance were: Merris Sumrall, The Library Foundation and Stephanie Vardavas, Friends of the Library.

The minutes of the June 12, 2007 meeting were approved with minor corrections.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Alice Meyer opened the meeting by reminding LAB members of the **St. Johns and North Portland Library tours and potluck** on Monday August 27. A sign-up sheet was passed around for both the tour and the potluck, which will be at Alice's house, while Janice Morlan, Administrative Assistant, Neighborhood Libraries, is organizing the tour. Tentative plans are to visit other branches in the system in future.

Alice urged the Board to encourage people interested in serving on the LAB to offer their names to them personally or to self-nominate through the form available in Chair Wheeler's office.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Troutdale Siting Committee is moving forward in its site search. Diane McKeel extended her appreciation on behalf of the committee to June Mikkelsen, Molly Raphael, and Mike Sublett for the work on the Troutdale project. There are now three

active sites. The committee has discussed the positives and negatives of each site, reviewed individual concerns, and is still within the committee's timeline.

Molly extended a formal commendation to June Mikkelsen and Mike Sublett, and thanked them for their commitment to the community.

North Portland-area Siting Committee: Molly updated the LAB on behalf of the North Portland-area siting committee. The committee is continuing to look at prospective sites, most of which are in the Kenton area, identified by eleven different local neighborhood groups as the most desirable area for the new library.

Site feasibility is currently being reviewed for each potential location. Donna Oden-Orr and Gwen Farnham Hyland asked, at the beginning of the process, to be on North Portland site committee, and Molly assured them they would be, even if no longer members of the LAB.

Public meetings are scheduled for:

Thursday, **September 20, 6:00 to 8:00 pm**
University Park Community Center
9009 N Foss St.

Monday, **October 22, 6:00 to 8:00 pm**
North Portland Library
512 N Killingsworth Ave.

LIBRARY FUNDING TASK FORCE (LFTF)

Dean Gisvold reported on behalf of the **Library Funding Task Force** on which Robert Brading and Rick Gustafson also serve. It is the goal of the Task Force to make a recommendation to the BCC by the end of September 2007.

Recent highlights include a presentation by Mark Campbell from the County budget office.

The Task Force is looking at two options for organization and governance: one, to remain with the status quo; and two, to get a measure on the ballot creating a library district with its own tax base.

There are three ways to form a library district, and the committee is looking at the pros and cons of each. The three potential funding levels being reviewed are: \$35 million that would raise roughly the current levy amount in a permanent tax rate provided by a district with no General Fund support; \$50 million that would include the current levy amount and the current General Fund support; and \$60 million that would include the current levy amount, the General Fund support, plus funds for future expansion.

The committee is also looking at how alternative funding would affect the cities in Multnomah County. Two of the three alternatives, a county service district or a library service district, would require certification or approval from all of the cities within Multnomah County. An amendment to the current county charter would not require certification or approval from the cities. Funding for the library, in a form other than how it is currently funded, will have an effect on the taxing ability of the cities within the County. The committee is aware of the effect on other entities that depend on property taxes to operate.

A utility tax is also an option and will be studied, though looking at sources other than a property tax is complicated. Historically, a levy has been supported when a dedicated utility tax has not.

The goal of the committee is to make a recommendation to the County Commission in order to get the measure on the ballot in November 2008. The November election may be a challenge if a public safety measure or other money measures are presented to the voters at the same time. The status of current and future levies includes the park levy that will not continue, the children's safety levy that will continue, and a proposed new public safety levy. There is also the possibility that a city will propose a new levy or bond.

The committee will continue to meet during August and September. Becky Cobb will forward a historical financial picture to the LAB.

TERMS-OF-OFFICE REPORT

During the last, June, LAB meeting there was a discussion of making board membership consistent with the library's fiscal calendar, as outlined in the LAB ordinance. Historically, there have been attempts to organize board membership around the expiration of member terms.

Rick Gustafson reported on his work towards realigning the terms of office of LAB members to be consistent with the ordinance, as well as the county's fiscal year. The current ordinance establishing the board allows for two, four-year terms. Members can stay on the board once their term expires until their replacement has been named. Of the fifteen current board members, nine terms will expire at approximately the same time, and seven of those are term limited. Because it is more effective not to have so many members leave at the same time, Rick is investigating ways of staggering terms, with some terms ending in June each year.

The process for nominating new board members should begin in March or April with a presentation to the LAB followed by a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners asking for their timely confirmation. New terms would begin in July. It was noted that LAB members could self-nominate for their second term.

Rick will develop procedures, forward them to the Nominating Committee, and make a recommendation to the LAB.

Terms for the youth members on the Board have slightly different requirements.

Molly Gloss, as a member of the nominating committee, will begin to put together an explanation for the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners with Rick's input.

Molly Raphael will check to see if there needs to be a formal change or amendment to the ordinance to reflect the current procedures for membership recommendation.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Molly Raphael announced the Library's acquisition by anonymous donation of an **art piece created by George Johanson**. The piece will be hung at Central Library in the second floor lobby. The work is a contemporary, 6' x 9' tile depiction of the Willamette River and some of the bridges that cross the river.

Installation of the piece will take place on September 17 with an unveiling scheduled to take place on September 19 at 12:00 noon. Chair Wheeler and Commissioner Rojo de Steffey will be present at the unveiling.

A link to a recent article in *The Oregonian* about George Johanson will be forwarded to LAB members. Another piece by Johanson, on loan from the Regional Arts & Culture Council, is currently hanging in the US Bank Room of Central Library.

Molly shared the library's current **vision statement** with the LAB. The statement identifies what the library's vision is and what we are doing to fulfill that vision. In the past MCL has had an internal focus of being a great library. In the future MCL will focus on empowering people in the community to read, learn, and connect.

Main points include the library as: **inviting** and **inclusive**, by delivering services, developing collections and welcoming people into the library; **involved**, by developing partnerships with the Friends, Foundation, schools and community that create positive change; **invested**, by providing highly trained staff who provide friendly professional and culturally appropriate services; and **innovative**, by constantly looking at new ways to improve what we do and the services we provide.

LAB members were asked to read the Vision Statement and respond directly to Molly with any comments and/or questions.

A brief overview of the Director's Report included the Public Library Data Service statistical report that showed MCL still doing well as number 2 in circulation for public libraries, second to Queens Public Library. By comparison Queens serves 2.2 million people to Multnomah's 700,000. MCL continues to be number one in circulation per capita in service areas of over 250,000 and has the highest turnover, or circulation per item.

Gale Virtual Reference will become available to MCL patrons in September. A demonstration will be set-up for the LAB at a future meeting. LAB members will also learn what other electronic resources are available at MCL.

Molly also extended a formal thank you to all of the staff and volunteers for their work on the last Title Wave sale.

FRIENDS AND FOUNDATION UPDATE

Stephanie Vardavas reported on behalf of the **Friends of the Library**. Their next sale is Friday, October 5 through Monday October 8 in the former Wild Oats space on SE 30th and Division.

Merris Sumrall reported on behalf of **The Library Foundation**. Raising a Reader is currently in the final year of the pilot. Spirit Mountain has given \$25,000 per year to support the program. (Raising a Reader outcomes were included in the Director's Report.)

Over the last fiscal year The Foundation has given \$2.1 million to library; \$1.3 million cash and \$850,000 audited "in kind" contributions. Early literacy is the largest cash recipient.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Molly Gloss reported on behalf of the **Nominating Committee**:

Mark Garber will renew his 4-year term and continue on the board for four more years with his term expiring June 30, 2011.

A motion was made and all voted in favor.

Mark Garber and **Virginia Koontz** were presented as candidates for Chair and vice Chair, respectively.

A motion was made and all voted in favor.

The committee submitted **Ruth Gundle** for recommendation to the BCC to serve on the LAB. Ms. Gundle is a small press publisher and Director of Soap Stone, a retreat for writers. She is a library user, has served on the board for the Oregon Institute of Literary Arts, and currently serves on standing committees for the Oregon Book Awards and Oregon Literary Fellowships.

A motion was made and all voted in favor.

Molly Gloss will forward Ms. Gundle's application to Molly Raphael, who will forward the recommendation to the BCC on behalf of the LAB.

GOOD & WELFARE

The Register will now be made available to LAB members electronically.

The next meeting will be on September 11, 2007. The meeting adjourned at 8:43. am.