
Library Advisory Board Minutes April 8, 2008

For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB)

The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, April 8, 2008 at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Meeting Room. Chair Mark Garber called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

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

Staff members present were: Molly Raphael, June Mikkelsen, Becky Cobb, Ellen Fader, Cindy Gibbon, Rita Jimenez, Lance Murty, Vailey Oehlke, Mary Beth Lawrence, Susan Corrigan, Candy Bertleson, Patrick Provant, Jane Salisbury, Abigail Elder, David Miles, Patricia Welch and Yvonne Chambers.

Also in attendance were: Matthew Lashua; Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey's Office; Debby Simone and Carol Clifton, Friends of the Library; and Karie Trumbo, The Library Foundation.

The minutes of the March 11, 2008 meeting were approved.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Mark Garber opened the meeting with an announcement that the tour of East Multnomah County Libraries will take place in the afternoon of May 1. A detailed schedule will be forwarded to LAB members prior to the tour.

Initially the LAB goal planning session was scheduled in May in lieu of the regularly scheduled LAB meeting. It will now take place in June and the location will be announced at the May LAB meeting.

Mark congratulated Molly Raphael as she has been awarded the Arthur Flemming Civil Rights Award for her efforts to increase diversity in library employment, collections and programming. This annual award is given by the Multnomah County Managers of Color. According to the nomination, Raphael has been outstanding in her "commitment to increasing diversity in the library's workforce to better reflect and serve the community ... she has been an active voice and supporter of creating more bilingual and bicultural positions and services."

LIBRARY FUNDING TASK FORCE

Dean Gisvold reported on behalf of the Library Funding Task Force (LFTF). Dean and Susan Hathaway-Marxer are scheduling a meeting of the LFTF in April. The purpose of the meeting will be to review, revise and approve a plan for permanent and stable funding for the library that was proposed by LAB and LFTF member Rick Gustafson. The proposal will not include recommending a library district measure for the November 2008 ballot.

Rick has recommended establishing a goal of stable funding through the year 2020, meaning expenses will not exceed revenues for that period of time. In 2008 or early 2009, it will need to be determined if there is the political will to implement a utility tax to replace the County's General Fund contribution. That decision will determine what needs to be done in 2010. If the double majority rule is still in place, the tax levy in 2010 would be equivalent to what it is now (with the utility tax). If there is no utility tax imposed, then there will need to be discussion with the Board of County Commissioners about continuing their support of the General Fund contribution.

A financial and strategic plan will be completed during 2008-09 and this will provide a framework for the rate discussions. In 2010 we would need to pass the levy, and in 2011 gear up for a vote in 2012 for the library district and a permanent rate. The Task Force will bring their report to the LAB in May.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Martha Gies reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee. The Committee proposes that we fill position 5, Donna Oden-Orr's current position, with Carlene Weldon. Carlene is the Management Coordinator for the City of Gresham. She has extensive volunteer experience and is currently a board member and treasurer of Snowcap Community Charities. The Nominating Committee voted unanimously to send her recommendation to the LAB.

A motion was made to recommend Carlene Weldon to Chair Wheeler and the Board of County Commissioners for position 5 on the Library Advisory Board.

The motion was seconded and the LAB vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

The Nominating Committee also recommended leadership positions for the next fiscal year. Martha made the motion for Virginia Koontz to serve as Chair and Mark Garber as Vice Chair for the Library Advisory Board for the 2008-09 fiscal year, effective July 1, 2008.

The motion was seconded and the LAB vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Martha passed out an updated LAB roster which included recent appointments to the LAB, which begin in May 2008. The Nominating Committee is currently working towards filling position 8 which is a two-year term. Once position 8 is filled all of the terms of office of LAB members will be in compliance with the ordinance establishing the LAB.

YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Gwen Farnham Hyland gave an update on the Youth Advisory Committee. The Committee has met and recommendations will be presented to the LAB in May.

NEW LIBRARIES SITING REPORT

Molly Raphael reported on the siting for the Troutdale and Kenton libraries. Responses to the Lease Terms Solicitation have been received from five owners and/or developers of the different sites. There are three sites in Kenton and two sites in Troutdale currently being evaluated. The evaluation is expected to be complete by the end of April and a recommendation regarding the siting of both new libraries will be presented to the BCC in May.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Molly Raphael expressed her gratitude for being honored with the Arthur Flemming Civil Rights Award for her efforts to increase diversity in library employment, collections and programming.

Molly discussed the implementation of the new lock-a-shelf system at Midland Library. The system protects DVDs from theft. It is a total self service operation. It will also help with some of the materials handling issues that cause repetitive motion injuries on the part of staff. The system is currently in a testing phase.

Andrea Milano, Youth Librarian, recently received a Celebrate Literacy Award for the work she's done at the Hollywood Library in Youth Services. This award is presented by the International Reading Council. Andrea was nominated by a teacher at Hollyood-Fernwood School as well as a local family.

Thursday, April 3rd was dedicated to Staff Development Day. All of the libraries and administrative offices were closed. Staff Day was held at Portland State University in the Smith Center. Five hundred twenty-seven library staff members attended. There were 32 formal programs, Molly's State of the Library speech, a brief address by Multnomah County Chair Ted Wheeler, and the keynote address on the library of the future by Aaron Schmidt, Director of the North Plains Public Library. Informal lunchtime drop-in opportunities included a technology "petting zoo," a staff art show, and

informational talk tables including one by the Friends. Learning, connecting with other staff, and focusing on technology were the themes of the day. One hundred seventy flash drives were presented to staff who completed the Web 2.0 program. In addition, 66 MP3 players were awarded through a drawing. Molly and the LAB recognized the Friends for their support of the Web 2.0 program for providing these incentives.

ADULT LITERACY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Jane Salisbury, MCL Library Outreach Services, Abigail Elder, MCL Central Library Administrator, and Elizabeth Raymond, Executive Director of Oregon Literacy, Inc., reported on the recently completed Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant-funded Adult Literacy Needs Assessment and Recommendations. An important impetus for this project was meeting one of the goals in the library's strategic plan relating to adult and family literacy; i.e., "Adults and families of all ages and backgrounds will have materials and programs to help them reach their personal literacy goals."

In the course of the needs assessment, staff from Oregon Literacy, Inc., the contractor hired to conduct this work, met with staff and many community stakeholders to interview them about what role the library could fill in helping to improve adult and family literacy. Key to what people said was that the library should not try to replicate what literacy services other stakeholders already provide, but rather focus on how to partner with others to improve services countywide. From those discussions and focus groups came three recommendations:

- Hire a full time literacy coordinator. (According to Molly there is a vacant position in the library's budget to accommodate this.)
- Implement a program of literacy labs in library branches.
- Conduct an awareness campaign focused on needs and opportunities for adult and family learners.

The recommendations have been accepted by the library's Executive Management Team, and implementation will begin early in the next fiscal year.

FRIENDS AND FOUNDATION UPDATE

Karie Trumbo reported on behalf of The Library Foundation. As was mentioned in the March meeting, The Foundation was recently awarded four stars by Charity Navigator. Charity Navigator is one of the primary on-line watchdogs of non-profit organizations and four stars is their highest rating.

The Foundation has also received an award for outstanding donor communication from the Willamette Valley Development Officers.

Debby Simone reported on behalf of the Friends of the Library. Their Annual Meeting will be May 20, Tuesday from 5:30 to 7 PM in the US Bank Room. Debby invited everyone to attend. The guest speaker will be Professor Primus St. John, a Portland State University professor and a nationally known poet.

The Friends of the Library Spring book sale in Gresham will be Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27 at the Gresham Town Fair on Eastman Parkway. The shopping center is adjacent to the Gresham Library. For the first time the spring sale will feature a members only pre-sale on the first day.

GOOD & WELFARE

Mark Garber has been honored as the Gresham Area Citizen of the Year. A banquet will be held for Mark and the youth award winner by the East Metro Association of Realtors, in partnership with the Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce, to recognize them for their outstanding contributions to their community.

The retreat has been rescheduled for June at a location to be determined.

The next LAB meeting will be on May 13, 2008. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 am.

Respectfully submitted by:

Yvonne Chambers
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