

**Library Advisory Board Minutes May 12, 2009**

For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB)

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The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, May 12, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Meeting Room. Chair Virginia Koontz called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

Board members present were: Heidi Beebe, Robert Brading, Mark Garber, George Feldman, Ethan Johnson, Kate Kerns, Virginia Koontz, Henry Li, Alice Meyer, John Potter, Carlene Weldon and Sola Whitehead, . Board members David Blount, Marian Creamer, Rick Gustafson and Henise Telles-Ferreira were excused.

Staff members present were: Becky Cobb, Dave Ratliff, Cindy Gibbon, Rita Jiminez, June Mikkelsen, Nancy Arvesen, Lance Murty, Vailey Oehlke, Leila Wrathall and Yvonne Chambers.

Also in attendance were: Multnomah County Commissioner Diane McKeel and Corie Wiren from the Commissioner's office, community members Brenda Clark and Laurie Orr, Kurt Krause with Friends of the Library and Jamie June from The Library Foundation.

Prior to any business being conducted, Virginia welcomed Vailey as the new Director of Libraries. The full LAB gave Vailey a standing ovation.

The minutes of the April 14, 2009 meeting were approved .

Virginia shared the appreciation of Jana McLellan, Chief Operating Officer, Multnomah County Chair's Office, for the LAB's help in the selection process for the new Director of Libraries.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Access Policy Committee**

Rob Brading, Chair, Access Policy Committee, reported that they had begun discussions regarding social networking policies.

## **Nominating Committee**

Alice Meyer reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee. Ethan Johnson will be joining the committee.

The Committee recommended that Virginia Koontz continue for another year as Chair of the LAB and Marian Creamer would serve as Vice Chair.

A motion was made to approve Virginia Koontz and Marian Creamer as Chair and Vice Chair of the LAB for FY 2009-10. The motion was seconded and passed by a unanimous vote.

The Nominating Committee will conduct interviews and make recommendations for candidates to fill upcoming vacant positions

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Vailey Oehlke, began her report by talking about the new MCL-produced video series, "Welcome to the Library," which provides basic information, about how to use the library, in Russian, Chinese and Vietnamese. These 17 to 18 minute videos will be available for checkout and will be accessible through the library's website and on YouTube.

Funding for the videos was provided through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), administered by the Oregon State Library. Copies of the video in each language have been sent to each Oregon public library system to fulfill requirements for the LSTA grant.

Vailey noted current economic challenges the region is facing, and expressed the need to establish the library as a provider of basic services to the community. Multnomah County librarians have compiled an online resource designed to help library patrons find economy-related information in one place, thus, making it easier for patrons to seek help.

Vailey indicated she will no longer staff the Library Futures Committee. She will determine staffing shortly.

## **LIBRARY BUDGET UPDATE**

Virginia opened the library budget update with a summary of the her presentation to Chair Wheeler and the Board of County Commissioners on April 28th. Molly Raphael made a lengthier presentation.

Virginia's report included a summary of the membership and function of the LAB for the Commissioners. She reported to the LAB that the new program offer, the materials

movement project, was not included in Chair Wheeler's proposed budget for FY 2009-10. All other program offers were funded in the Chair's budget. At the budget hearing she urged the Commissioners to fund the new program offer as it is crucial to the library systems' ability to meet service level demands.

Commissioner McKeel proposed a budget amendment at the end of the Library's presentation to the BCC, to fund the materials movement project.

Becky Cobb shared information from Molly's budget presentation to the BCC. For example, all-time records were set in March 2009 for circulation and usage. The LAB will be sent the link to the full presentation.

The FY 2009-10 budget is scheduled to be adopted June 4, 2009.

## **INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND THE LIBRARY**

Cindy Gibbon, MCL's Access Services Coordinator, provided an overview on the issues of intellectual freedom and privacy and how they are the foundation of the policies in public libraries.

The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States is the origin of the idea of intellectual freedom. The First Amendment addresses the freedom to express ideas, but public libraries provide the opportunity to receive ideas. Libraries have been designated by the courts as a limited public forum. Public libraries are a place where people have the right to receive information.

The Oregon Constitution, Section 8 Article 1, is where the concept of intellectual freedom is articulated in the Oregon constitution. The Oregon constitution is more protective of free speech than the U.S. constitution.

Public libraries fulfill their roles in intellectual freedom in a variety of ways. They build collections that are broadly representative of a range of viewpoints that meet the needs of a diverse community. They respond to requests from the public for materials and formats that are of interest to them. They use cataloging to make materials *available* to the intended audience - not to keep them away. The library asks that parents be responsible for what their children are reading or accessing. Staff are trained on a regular basis about their responsibilities related to intellectual freedom and privacy

Privacy relates to the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which was intended to protect us from unreasonable search, seizure or the invasion of our home for government purposes. Only those records of patron activity required for business purposes are retained and library records are purged once items are returned.

Confidentiality means we do not disclose the information on Patrons' use of the library unless we are required to by law. Library staff are to use library records for work purposes only in the course of their duties.

These concepts of intellectual freedom and privacy also relate to a variety of library policies. For example, our rules of behavior and their enforcement policy incorporate a way for people to have due process.

For example, use of library resources such as display areas, bulletin boards and meeting rooms are affected by the fact that the library is a designated public forum. In a designated public forum -as opposed to a full and open public forum- we are allowed to have time, place and manner restrictions, but we cannot have content restrictions.

For example, the library provides access to a variety of materials through the internet. The internet access policy has evolved over time, based primarily on the library's experience in making public internet access available. The current policy was last revised in 2005. It was approved by the BCC, based on advice from the LAB's Access Policy Committee and the full LAB. The full policy is posted on the library's web site.

### **THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION**

Jamie June reported on behalf of The Library Foundation. Merris Sumrall and Karie Trumbo will be attending the June LAB meeting and will give a report on the end of The Foundation's fiscal year and new projects.

### **FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

Kurt Krause reported on behalf of the Friends of the Library. The spring used book sale in Gresham was very successful, with \$26,700 in sales and over 1,800 people in attendance.

Kurt invited everyone to attend the Friends' annual meeting on Wednesday, May 13, 2009, 6:30 pm, at the Old Church. The two featured speakers are Ursula Le Guin and Molly Gloss. They will be discussing American Women Writers - East and West. He asked those attending to bring a few books to donate for future sales.

Alice Meyer noted that Ursula was mentioned in a New York Times article titled "Print Books Are Targets of Pirates on the Web," May 11, 2009. The article focuses on author works being featured on the internet without their permission.

It was also noted that Ursula has just won her sixth Nebula Award for young adult literature. The Nebula Award is given each year by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA).

Respectfully submitted by:  
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