

**Library Advisory Board Minutes: March 4, 2025**For Multnomah County Library Advisory Board

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The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met for a hybrid meeting at Midland Library on Tuesday, March 4, 2025. The meeting began at 5:05 pm.

Board members present were: Clare Wilkinson, David Jarvis, Domiè Newton, Jade Chan, Joe Marquez, Kate Fleming, Kelsey Fong, Kristi Ketchum, Madison Riethman, Megan Parrott, Naomi Margolis, and Nikia Kae Solbjor.

Cassie Duprey, Ingrid Jacobson, London Sorcinelli, Taryn Sauer, and Tia-Theo Thompson were unavailable.

Staff members present were: Annie Lewis, library director; Jen Studebaker, community services director; Katie Shifley, finance and facilities director; Kim Sutton, director of marketing & communications; Kirby McCurtis, location services director; and Maddelyn High, management analyst.

Commissioner Vince Jones-Dixon and Goldann Salazar, District 4, Multnomah County; Jackie Starr, Executive Director, Friends of the Library; and three members of the public were also in attendance.

**WELCOME & CHECK-IN**

Meeting attendees joined the meeting either in person or via video; and folks introduced themselves and engaged in a warm-up question as a group.

**UPDATES FROM LIBRARY LEADERSHIP**

Library Director Annie Lewis shared recent systemwide updates and highlights from the Director's Report, including:

- Celebration of the opening of [North Portland Library](#), and a thanks to folks who attended opening celebrations. Lewis also noted that since opening, a plumbing issue was discovered, and the Bond PMO and county facilities have identified a solution that is now in progress. Lewis noted that operational disruptions, other than intermittent restroom closures, are not expected.
- Submission of the Fiscal Year 26 proposed library budget to the chair's office. Lewis shared that this is a big milestone, and thanked LAB members who led the work on the CBAC memo.
- A shout-out for the Everybody Reads event on March 11 with Javier Zamora, which is sold out.
- An acknowledgment and thank you to library staff who recently supported county emergency shelter operations during winter storms (and library closures) on February 4 and 5.

- Announcement of a new [Director's Desk](#) page on the MCL, which is designated place for Lewis to provide more transparency and visibility about major library initiatives. Lewis thanked Kim Sutton for her leadership on this effort.
- Some unfortunate news that lease negotiations fell through on the in-progress site for temporary St. Johns community services during bond-related closure. The space was leased to another tenant offering longer-term stability. Folks are working as quickly as possible to evaluate other options. Mobile Library services will continue with extended hours.
- Kudos and appreciation to Black Cultural Library Advocate (BCLA) staff, who just finished leading a monthlong celebration with many events across the county for Black History Month.

Questions, suggestions, and conversation about St. Johns temporary service options ensued.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

A member of the public, Cory Walden, shared appreciation for MCL and for library staff, particularly the library's efforts to celebrate culture and diversity. Walden made a suggestion that the library continue to explore the ability of livestreaming events and programming.

### **BOARD BUSINESS**

Meeting minutes for the February 11, 2024 meeting were approved.

### **FISCAL YEAR 2026 CBAC MEMO**

LAB Finance Committee members Madison Reithman and Kate Flemming summarized this year's Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) workgroup process, noting that LAB CBAC leads met with Finance & Facilities Director Katie Shifley several times from January through March to learn details about budget priorities and revenue projections for the Fiscal Year 2026 budget cycle.

Reithman summarized this year's memo, which highlights challenges related to constraints due to the economic forecast; noting that the library has had to weigh some tough options to avoid the loss of positions and cutting priority services. No library staff will be laid off — something that not all county departments will be able to achieve. However, some programs will be sunset (specifics noted in the memo). Reithman shared the group's recommendation that the library (and LAB) continue to monitor the impact of ending these programs.

Reithman also highlighted the library's Future Staffing Initiative, which, alongside the library's strategic plan, established helpful guardrails and context for evaluation of the budget by LAB's Finance Committee.

Reithman summarized other cost-balancing measures, and recommendations put forth by the Finance Committee, including continued collaboration around evaluation of internal service rates; and support for Supportive Housing Services funds requested for library peer support specialists. The memo also includes a note that financial strain may be the new norm, and as community

members representing the library, LAB requests county leadership continue to evaluate and offer strategies to address this challenge.

Overall, the memo expresses support for the library's proposed FY26 budget.

Kate Flemming added appreciation for Finance & Facilities Director Katie Shifley and Management Analyst Maddelyn High for their support of the Finance Committee's work this year. Lewis and Shifley echoed gratitude for the Finance Committee (which was a large group this year) and the time folks volunteered for this important work.

After some discussion, including an explanation of how internal service rates are determined, Reithman asked for edits, and hearing none, made a motion to vote to approve the memo. Clare Wilkinson seconded, and after a vote, the memo was unanimously approved by all LAB members in attendance.

### **CLOSING**

Nikia Kae Solbjor reminded that they will host two Google Meet chats on the Everybody Reads book selection for any LAB member who would like to join to talk about the book with others.

Community Services Director Jen Studebaker invited folks to attend another author lecture, if interested, with Kyle Lukoff at The Judy on March 20 with the Association of Library Service to Children.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.

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