

Library District of Clackamas County Advisory Committee

Minutes – Approved May 15, 2023

January 23, 2023, 7:00pm

Meeting held at Clackamas County Red Soils Campus,
Development Services Building, Room 115 and virtually on Zoom.

ATTENDANCE

Advisory Committee Voting Members

MEMBER	LIBRARY	ATTENDANCE	NOTES
Denise Fonseca	Canby Public Library	Present	
Grover Bornefeld	Oak Lodge Library	Present	
Desiree Dumitrescu	Estacada Public Library	Absent	
Natalie Smith	Gladstone Public Library	Present	
Al Matecko	Happy Valley Public Library	Present	Chair
Mark Pontarelli	Lake Oswego Public Library	Present	
Karla Branson	Ledding Library of Milwaukie	Present	
VACANT	Molalla Public Library		
Nick Dierckman	Oregon City Public Library	Present	(on Zoom)
Kathleen Draine	Sandy/Hoodland Public Library	Present	
VACANT	West Linn Public Library		
Natalie McNown	Wilsonville Public Library	Present	

Others Present

NAME	NOTES
Diane Morrow	Happy Valley Public Library ALTERNATE (on Zoom)
Anatta Blackmarr	Oak Lodge Library ALTERNATE
Mitzi Olson	Director, Oak Lodge Library & Gladstone Public Library
Doris Grolbert	Director, Happy Valley Public Library
Melissa Kelly	Director, Lake Oswego Public Library
Brent Husher	Director, Ledding Library of Milwaukie
Diana Hadley	Director, Molalla Public Library
Greg Williams	Director, Oregon City Public Library
Sarah McIntyre	Director, Sandy and Hoodland Public Libraries
Doug Erickson	Director, West Linn Public Library
Sarah Roller	Library Services Manager, Wilsonville Public Library
Rick Peterson	Manager, Library Support Services, LDAC Liaison
Commissioner Paul Savas	BCC
Sarah Eckman	DTD
KT Austin	Member Services Librarian, Library Support Services (minutes)

CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order by Chair Al M. at 7:00pm. Natalie Smith has accepted the role of Vice Chair. The group introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The group reviewed minutes from 11/14/2022. Kathleen addressed a typo on page 6 and Diane caught one on the first page. These changes have been made. Grover moved to approve the minutes as amended. Kathleen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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OLD BUSINESS

- **Use of District Revenues for capital reserves, debt payment and allocated cost formulas**

- Grover proposed that the group have a discussion prior to voting on anything.
- Kathleen restated the general purpose of the motions:
 - Asking the BCC as the Library Board to give guidance on how to address the three issues highlighted by the annual reports. She believes this will lead the BCC and staff to have discussions with each of the individually referenced cities, privately, allowing each city to present their explanations and issues directly to the county.
 - LDAC would then ultimately receive clarification on how to handle these questions when viewing future annual reports.
 - The BCC would be reminded of the importance of continuing to refine and improve district governance, funding, operation, and mission, whether in the form of the taskforce or subcommittees under LDAC.
- Kathleen expressed her intention to resubmit the motions, but deferred to Grover for discussion.
- Grover wanted to add context after reading the minutes from the previous meeting and revisiting measure 3-310 and the IGAs. While details aren't always clear, it is a cooperative. He thanked Kathleen/Jack/George and others who worked hard to get the original ballot measure passed. This ensured that cities received all district funds for their city residents. It also included those in unincorporated areas. LDAC was intended to represent their interests as well as city residents. The IGA set up LDAC to consider issues and find solutions.

Last meeting folks mentioned feeling criticized or attacked, and Grover wanted to retract anything that could have made people feel that way. His concern about passing issues along to the BCC is that they oversee over 70 boards. Covid disrupted everything and LDAC has a lot of new members, so the group is in a different place. He suggested some kind of taskforce/subcommittee to dig into what we need to do to move forward and make things more transparent.
- Al said he received calls from members saying that the last meeting got out of hand and that they couldn't speak up. He reiterated that the group values everyone's questions and comments, even if we don't always agree. He said he doesn't oppose what Kathleen or Grover are proposing, except that we've gone over these issues for a long time. There are so many holes in 3-310 and the IGA, perhaps intentionally so cities would get on board. He acknowledged that Kathleen had made a motion and he wanted to honor that.
- Natalie Smith said the documents don't work well together. If we have documents as a guideline for handling policy moving forward, they must coincide. A subcommittee or task force should be highly considered to come up with possible solutions. This has been an issue since at least 2016, and there haven't been solutions yet.
- Al provided context for newer members: LDAC proposed a taskforce that was comprised of LDAC members, directors, city managers and others to look at three main issues:
 - Funding
 - Services
 - Governance

There were great intentions, but then Covid started and the group never got going.
- Rick followed up after checking with County Counsel. They are not able to provide a black and white answer on the issues raised. While they did refer to memos they've issued, those specifically referred to the county's involvement with the Oak Lodge and Gladstone libraries.

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- Denise Fonseca agreed that looking at all the components and making them cohesive may be too big of a task for LDAC as a whole to hash out, but perhaps a smaller group may be able to make sense of it, and supports a smaller subcommittee.
- Kathleen said she finds it disingenuous that County Counsel isn't willing to instruct LDAC on what we're expected to do with the documents they drafted which are supposed to be the construct under which the libraries work. She agreed that we need to fix things for the future, but we also need to address what isn't working well now. This group doesn't have the authority or standing to resolve the issue.
- Al said that's a good point, but each library board for individual cities should be dissecting/analyzing this. The overarching issue of what constitutes capital improvement and what constitutes debt relief should be clarified by the county attorney. But at this point, each library board should be considering their library's spending on behalf of their taxpayers.
- Denise said it is our responsibility to lighten the load, look at everything, and propose some adjustments or changes.
- Kathleen said she doesn't think that will get us anywhere.
- Al invited Commissioner Savas to address the concerns. Commissioner Savas first apologized for missing the November meeting and refreshed the group's memory on pre-Covid LDAC work: to consider funding issues and the possibility of going back to voters, and adjusting service areas. The BCC sincerely supported that effort, but priorities shifted with the pandemic. City managers haven't been ready to address this since they are still putting their cities back together. The county also does not have a single attorney on staff who was with the county in 2008.
- Commissioner Savas mentioned that Doris Grolbert has the most institutional knowledge of LINCC/LDAC/etc., and other folks have some as well, but there aren't other county staff with that history. When the ballot measure was put together, it couldn't conflict with Estacada's capital district. Adjustments were made in the Master Order accordingly. Savas asked folks who were present back then: What was the spirit and intent? Was it for library district funds to only be spent on operations and maintenance or was that an adjustment?
- Doris said yes, at the time, county counsel said we could not have two overlapping districts that did the same thing. Therefore, language had to be added that made certain to exclude capital expenses because of Estacada's capital bond. It was the County Commissioner's intention that as soon as they paid the bond off, the Master Order would be updated to include capital expenses. She said everyone expected the County to pay off Estacada's building ASAP, but Mark Gonzales declined to pay it off early, and the update was never made. However, it was always the intention of the county to change the master order to include the use of district funds for capital expenses once the bond district was gone.
- Commissioner Savas said this reflects what he has heard. When he worked with the Clackamas County Coordinating Committee, in 2004, City Managers complained that unincorporated people were patronizing their libraries but weren't paying a tax. The library district was a way for everyone to contribute to libraries. Regardless, it goes back to intent and spirit of why things happened the way that they did.
- Grover recalled that half the population of the district were not in the cities, so they are now contributing money and libraries must serve those residents. He also brought up concerns of unincorporated taxpayers not being represented in decision making. While Doris may be correct about the intent, that was not what citizens voted for and it is not the promise made in 3-310.
- Kathleen followed up on Grover's statement, noting that she was at the meetings Doris referred to. Former county counsel Chris Storey was the drafter in 2007-2008, but he is no longer working at the County. Regardless of intent, the voters were never told that there was going to be an adjustment and had every reason to believe that the money was going

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to go to services. But there is money being used in other ways. That is why she focused on the annual report data the way she did in her motions. There is a problem, and LDAC needs to deal with it.

- Greg responded to Grover's concern about unincorporated taxpayers by sharing how much work Oregon City and other cities are doing to support their unincorporated patrons and that library boards also have unincorporated members.
- Al agreed and noted that Happy Valley also has unincorporated members on their board as well as services for schools, seniors, and homebound folks.
- Natalie S. asked Commissioner Savas if this group wanted to get a subcommittee together for resolutions or recommendations, would it have his support? He said that if the suggestions were supported by city managers and/or library directors, it would be easier for commissioners to get behind it. The point of the taskforce was to bring all those voices together. He pointed out that we've lost a great deal of momentum as well as people with institutional knowledge, and that perhaps LDAC can get reoriented with the history of the taskforce.
- Natalie S. asked for other specific pieces of information Commissioner Savas considered necessary to move something like that forward. Savas deferred to Doris and Greg.
- Al said some city managers have other issues taking precedence and are likely going to say now is not the best time.
- Greg agreed with Commissioner Savas that without the buy-in of city managers and finance directors, it wouldn't be a good use of LDAC's time.
- Sarah McIntyre said the group could consider a consultant to address the issues sooner than a large task force could.
- Kathleen tabled her motions so discussion can move forward.
- Al asked where funding for a consultant would come from.
- Kathleen suggested the funds set aside for the task force could be redirected for a consultant.
- Greg confirmed that there was funding in the budget for the task force or consultant back when he was with the county.
- While there was general agreement that a consultant would be a good option, Denise suggested the work could be done with a smaller subgroup from LDAC before enlisting a consultant.
- Mark said he was concerned that this discussion still isn't addressing the issues Kathleen presented. The longer there are differing interpretations of the IGA and master order, the more it will keep the group from looking to the future.
- Al went around the room and asked for thoughts:
 - Natalie S. liked the idea of getting a consultant to move the process along quickly.
 - Grover said he was behind the idea of a consultant or getting a task force going this calendar year.
 - Anatta deferred to others.
 - Karla agreed that a consultant sounded like a good idea.
 - Kathleen said a consultant was preferable to a 3-year task force.
 - Mark said using available funds for a consultant sounded good.
 - Natalie M. said getting new eyes on the IGAs and master order would help and wanted the group to move on to the budget issues..
 - Denise suggested initial work could be done through a smaller group within LDAC before trying with a consultant.
 - Diane had concerns that even a small group would be a long process.
 - Nick said a subcommittee would be needed to develop a scope of work for a consultant.

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- Al agrees that a scope of work / RFP would need to be thorough and clear. He asked how much money was available in the Network budget.
- Rick said it's difficult to address this in the middle of the budget process.
- Natalie S. reiterated that the group needs to make sure there's buy-in from all interested parties before moving forward.
- Mark asked for clarification for an amendment process for the IGAs.
- Greg said it depends on the type of amendment. Changes affecting how district funds are used would need unanimous support. Others would need 2/3 city approval (and BCC approval).
- Greg suggested it would be easier to get city manager support with a consultant's recommendation.
- Natalie M. asked for clarification on the potential next steps.
- Al explained that the task force was originally created with three subcommittees: service definitions, library funding, and district governance. If a consultant looked at all of that, it would be a good starting point. Al suggested Rick send out documentation from the task force to get new members up to speed. While initial scope was considered, it would only be a starting point and coordination with a consultant would be incredibly expensive.
- Kathleen suggested that each director and library board have a discussion with their city managers about whether they would adopt the concept of having a consultant.
- Doris said her city manager would want to know what the bottom line is, and an estimate of how much they're going to need to pay for it. A consultant is a great idea, but we need to know how much it is going to cost.
- Al suggested having a subcommittee look at the old task force documentation and identify what details they would like a consultant to consider. They could then send it to city managers and LDAC.
- Nick agreed with Al's suggestion.
- Natalie S. asked Doris if she thought that approach would be enough for city managers.
- Doris said each city will have a different approach and it could take time to even determine who would pay for a consultant.
- Commissioner Savas proposed that he would take 30-60 days to talk with the County Administrator and others about options and then come back to LDAC. Al said the group would welcome that at the next meeting in April.
- The group gave thumbs-up all around.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Network budget concerns**
 - Doug expressed concern about potential general fund budget cuts to Library Network's budget to support paying for the County Courthouse. Directors and city managers want to know how those cuts will affect Network, city libraries, and patrons, and if there's anything cities can do to advocate for minimizing the impact. He also noted he does understand the process is still in progress and the County may not be able to share info at this time.
 - Rick expressed appreciation for the support and advocacy. He then read a statement to provide some context for the budget situation:
 - As with ALL General Fund programs, our office has been directed to look for ways to reduce costs. In the interest of transparency, we shared with the Library Directors some possible adjustments. No formal cuts or adjustments have been proposed or presented to the Board of County Commissioners for consideration yet. The County Administrator is assessing various General

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Fund adjustments submitted by many departments, not just Library Network. Until such time as a recommendation comes forward, such discussions will not be productive and will likely add to confusion. County staff will not be discussing this topic further until more direction is received internally.

- Kathleen asked about the budget schedule.
- Sarah Eckman, Assistant Director of DTD said the schedule has changed over the last few years. This year it is very condensed. The DTD budget needs to be submitted by mid-February.
- Kathleen asked if the public could go directly to the budget committee or if they should go to the County Administrator before going to the budget committee. Sarah said there is a review process with department leadership and the administrator before things go to the committee.
- Al asked what Sarah has been told thus far about any proposed reductions. She said no decisions have been made yet and the budget is being evaluated in the context of the whole county.
- Commissioner Savas noted it is going to be a difficult year and we need to cut a significant amount of money. The County is just in the beginning stages of this process.
- Melissa pointed out that the Library Network budget is already quite lean, so there are concerns about how even small cuts will impact patrons. She asked when it would be appropriate to ask what cuts may look like. She doesn't want to miss an opportunity to advocate for the Network office.
- Commissioner Savas clarified that the library district itself will not see cuts through this budget cycle. Only the Network operating budget could be affected.
- Sarah M. pointed out that any cuts to the Network budget *are* cuts to the libraries/patrons.
- Anatta asked if this budget issue was exclusively related to the courthouse expense. Savas said it is a long story, but the courthouse came along on top of existing budget stresses.
- Doug reiterated that information is coming via the city managers and not directly from the county. Concerns may have been less intense if information was being shared directly to library directors.
- Al asked Commissioner Savas if he knew what city managers have been told. He wasn't aware of anything being shared and it would be premature if the BCC hadn't even considered it yet. If cuts do happen, the county will be forthcoming with that information. Sarah E. said two conversations had occurred with the county administrator and city managers in July and September. Commissioner Savas had not heard about these.
- Greg agreed with others and said the Library Network office runs incredibly lean. While it is a small monetary amount in overall budget cuts, even small cuts will have a big impact on libraries. When thinking about the future of the district, getting Network out of the general fund is the best way to keep services sustainable. Commissioner Savas agreed.
- Kathleen said calculations indicate it would cost \$0.05 per \$1,000 of assessed value to run the Network Office. Greg clarified that he meant including Network in a *new* rate; taking it from the current rate would not work.
- Natalie S. reminded everyone that if we had to outsource Library Network services it would cost 3-4 times what libraries pay now.
- Sarah M. asked about appropriate times to come to the BCC to advocate for libraries. Commissioner Savas said there are many issues facing the Board, but no one is discouraged from coming to BCC meetings. The public comment period for the budget is in May.

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- Al wants to make sure Sarah E. and Commissioner Savas understand how much everyone appreciates the Library Network Office and what they do. He understands Rick is in a difficult position and is limited in what he can say at this point.
- Doug shared that one of the poorest counties in Oregon, Curry County, has a library tax rate of \$0.66 per \$1,000 of assessed value. If they can afford that much, there's a real chance that LINCC could too.

FUTURE PLANNING

- Al asks if April 24th works for everyone. Folks agreed.

ADJOURNMENT

- Al had the group share one word to describe the person next to them.
- Natalie moved to adjourn the meeting; Grover seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.

*Minutes submitted by KT Austin.
Approved*