

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG LIBRARY
FOUNDATION

Library Foundation Board

Library Foundation Board Meeting

Main Library

Dowd Learning Studio

Thursday, October 2, 2014

Board Members Present

Robin Branstrom (Chair), Alan Blumenthal, Jennifer Green, Bill Gorelick, Thom Graham, Molly Griffin, Lee Keesler, Julie Lerner Levine, Linda Lockman-Brooks, Nikki Moore, Sally Robinson(Vice Chair), Holly Welch Stubbing, Darrel Williams, Jim Woodward, Martha Yesowitch

Staff Present

Karen Beach, Shelley Book, Brittany Bumgarner, Mandy Drakeford, Jenni Gaisbauer, Arden McLaughlin, Angie Myers

Others Present

Mark Kutny, Library Legal Counsel, Kristin Hills Bradberry, Non-profit Advisor

Board Members Absent

Pepper Dowd, Peter Larkin, Patty Norman, Bill Williamson

Call to Order and Welcome

Robin Branstrom called the meeting to order at 12:10 pm

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Branstrom requested a motion to approve the minutes from the March 27, 2014 meeting that had been distributed previously via email. On the motion by Jim Woodward, seconded by Jennifer Green, the Board unanimously approved the March 27, 2014 meeting minutes.

Library Report

Lee Keesler gave a report on the progress of the Library's Strategic Plan noting the following items:

Innovate for 21st Century Access

- Thanks to the support of Mecklenburg County, beginning on September 2, 2014, the Library's hours expanded from five to six day service at community/neighborhood libraries and from six to seven day service at Main and ImaginOn. He also reported that door count was up 6% due to the expanded hours. Mr. Keesler also thanked Jim Woodward for his leadership on the Task Force.

- The Library is close to hiring an Enterprise Architect to move the Digital Strategy forward. Currently we are working with Seismic on a few quick wins.
- 51,000 CMS students took home a library card application their first week of the school year.
- The Library is in the early stages of planning and expanding the Morrison branch. The expansion will include approximately 4,000 square feet of space and will force the branch to close for a period of time.
- The Library's household penetration is currently 27%.
- It is a goal of the Library to be in the top 15 most recognized brands in the community.
- The Belk Foundation is leading a team that will create a leadership vehicle for a 3rd grade reading initiative in our community. The organization that is created will be housed at Main Library.
- The Library, with funding support from the Knight Foundation, is transforming the Dowd Learning Studio space into a makerspace equipped with 3D printers and laser cutters. A tentative opening is scheduled for February, 2015.

Increase Operational Excellence, Fiscal Stability and Financial Sustainability

- Due to State funding caps enacted this year for public libraries, the Library lost approximately \$140,000 in funding.
- The Library will be creating a new road map that will help guide our future. When we have more information we will share it with this Board.

Sales Tax Referendum

- The Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners has voted to put a proposal for a quarter-cent sales tax increase on the ballot November 4. If the measure is approved it is expected to bring in approximately \$35 million a year in additional revenue to Mecklenburg County. The allocation would be 80% to CMS, 8% to CPCC, 7% to Arts and Science Council and 5% to the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.
- The Library would use the funds to purchase books and materials, to fund the Digital Strategy and to fund deferred maintenance projects in our branches.

Sally Robinson asked what the verbiage on the ballot would be and if it would state what the tax would be used for. Mr. Keesler responded that it would be a simple "For or Against" verbiage and that it would not indicate what the funds would go to support.

Mr. Keesler announced that if individuals were interested in advocating, they should contact the advocacy group Together 4 Meck.

On a motion put forth by Molly Griffin and seconded by Darrell Williams, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation Board of Directors unanimously agreed to support the Resolution Supporting Sales Tax Referendum And Levy.

Foundation Report

Jenni Gaisbauer recapped the FY2014 strategic goals and reviewed the successes related to those goals that the Foundation accomplished, including:

- Exceeded fundraising goal of \$1MM by \$70,000
- Raised more than \$1.2 million with endowment earnings
- Developed new fundraising event, Verse & Vino

- Launched new website, hired new marketing & communications manager, and implemented a comprehensive marketing and communications plan
- Garnered media exposure with New14, WBTV, News46, Charlotte Observer, Business Journal and Society Charlotte
- Secured more than \$400,000 in grant support
- Launched formal Legacy Society, The Dewey Circle and received 2 commitments, for a total of 33 planned gifts
- Unrestricted endowment seeded with \$1.7 million from the Library
- Successful year of Friend Council activities

Ms. Gaisbauer also shared the newly developed strategic goals for FY2015:

- Raise \$1.3 million in gifts, pledges and endowment earnings
- Increase engagement among stakeholders of the Library and Library Foundation
- Establish Library Foundation as leader in community and industry
- Complete campaign readiness tactics

Ms. Gaisbauer shared that the Foundation raised \$1,210,720 in FY 2014 of which, \$508,201 was unrestricted and \$222,593 was for the endowment. She also shared the budget for FY2015 that included a total projected revenue of \$1,546,000 with FY2015 expenses, including allocations to the Library, projected at \$1,200,000.

Bill Williamson asked if the Foundation was considering “living” off what they raised the year before to which Jenni responded that that was indeed the direction they were heading.

Sally Robinson commented that she was concerned about the drop in number of donors and would like to see that number go back up. Ms. Gasibauer agreed and explained that there is a perception with some people in the community that since the Library is County funded, that we are flush with cash.

Ms. Gaisbauer explained that she and Karen Beach met recently with longtime Charlotte Mecklenburg Library donor, Jim Preston and his daughter, Mary Lane Lennon. Jim and Mary Lane presented an exciting opportunity to the Foundation to create a children’s program in honor and memory of their late wife/mother, Elizabeth “Libby” Preston.

The program that Ms. Gaisbauer and Ms. Beach proposed will create a family-oriented weekend literary festival that would take place in conjunction with the Library Foundation’s new literary event, Verse and Vino. This program aligns with the Library’s new strategic plan, specifically with the goal of increasing community awareness and engagement. Additionally, the Library Foundation’s Board of Directors expressed interest in adding a family-oriented weekend to the Verse & Vino event that would be accessible for the entire community, promote literacy and focus on children.

Several board members commented they thought this was a great program.

Re-envisioning Main Library

Lee Keesler and Kristin Hills Bradberry explained that there is an effort underway to create a master plan for the North Tryon area being led by The Foundation For The Carolinas. Currently, there is a Steering Committee made up of approximately 20 members who represent the interests, businesses and non-profits in the North Tryon area.

The charge of this Steering Committee is to create a master vision for the North Tryon area bounded by 5th Street, Caldwell St., 11th Street and Church Streets. The three dimensions of the plan are as follows:

1. Foundation For The Carolina's plans for the Carolina Theater
2. "Campus" framed by 6th St., 7th St., Church St. and Brevard that contains Discovery Place, Spirit Square, Main Library, Levine Museum of the New South and ImaginOn
3. Balance of the plan area

The planning team is being headed by MIG, out of Berkeley, California and includes Finland-based architectural/urban planning firm Snohetta. You may recognize the MIG name as they were the planning team of record for Charlotte Center City Partners' 2020 Vision plan and Snohetta had significant contributions to the design of the new Hunt Library at NCSU in Raleigh.

The timeline for the project is very nebulous at the point but generally it is as follows:

- Summer/Fall 2014 is the Discovery phase
- Fall 2014 is the Discussion phase
- Winter/Spring 2014/2015 is the Design phase
- Summer 2015 is the Delivery phase

Early themes of the project include lifelong learning, strategic importance of the Library's block and "Village."

Mr. Keesler explained that alongside the North Tryon planning is the reinvention of the Main Library. The Main Library Reinvention Advisory Committee is made up of twelve stakeholders and advisors. The committee's charge is to recommend a story and strategy to the Library Board of Trustees for the next generation of the Main Library, in alignment with the broader concepts of the North Tryon Master Plan vision.

The process of re-invention so far has been to examine the current features, assets and activities of Main Library, a review of what's happening with central libraries across the U.S. and early conceptual development.

Early concepts of the new Main Library include:

- People centric vs. book centric
- Flexible, comfortable spaces
- Plenty of meeting space
- Technology rich
- Bright, vibrant, natural light, inviting
- Outdoor/Indoor space
- Food and beverage space
- Gateway to North Tryon
- Collaborations and partnerships

Robin Branstrom commented that she would love to have a place to grab lunch while she was in the Library and feels we need to explore this concept further.

Sally Robinson commented that when she travels to Boston she enjoys having lunch at the Boston Public Library and we should look at their food and beverage model.

Darrell Williams commented that he would like to see interactive exhibits to help educate the community on certain issues that relate to our area.

Robin Branstrom stated that she believes parking is an issue at Main Library that must be addressed during this process.

Holly Welch-Stubbing commented that she believes we are sitting on a great asset as it relates to our property and maybe a food and beverage establishment could fund the endowment.

Board Engagement

Robin Branstrom commented that the Board's leadership group is appreciative of every board members commitment to the Board, to the Library and Library Foundation. If you would like to become more involved and engaged in the work being done, please look at the items we discuss as opportunities for involvement and let us know what you are interested in.

Other Business

Lee Keesler commented that recently the Library partnered with the Housing Authority to assist residents in signing up for public housing. The application process can be lengthy and complicated and our librarians worked hard to help people understand the process and make application.

There being no further business, Ms. Branstrom asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. On a motion by Thom Graham, seconded by Molly Griffin, the meeting adjourned at 1:32 p.m.