

Astoria Public Library
Astoria Library Board Meeting
January 22, 2013
3:30 p.m.

Present: Library Board members David Oser, Arline LaMear, Gregory Lumbra, Susan Brooks, and Emily Hill; ALFA representative Charlotte Langsev; and Staff Library Director Jane Tucker.

Guests: City Councilor Drew Herzig

Call to Order: Chairman David Oser called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of November 27, 2012 and December 20, 2012 were approved as presented.

Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved as submitted.

Library Director's Report: Director Tucker passed out and reviewed an article from the Advocates Corner of the American Library Association (ALA), which offered suggestions about supporting libraries. Her additional comments included:

- The Passport Program has begun with the Clatsop County Community College Library and Astoria Library as two local participants. Only about three passport cards have been issued statewide. The Astoria Library recently sent out a press release and Staff has talked to people, who seem to be excited about the program. Any member of a participating library can participate in the Passport Program.
 - The start of the program was delayed due to technological issues.
 - Seaside will evaluate the program following the summer tourism season.
 - About 45 or 50 libraries in the State of Oregon are participating in the Passport Program.
 - She clarified the Passport Card was created for the Astoria Library due to the technical issues, but every library would handle the program individually, allowing library patrons access to other participating libraries. Each library is required to keep statistics on the program. Individual libraries have the authority to control the authentication of each Passport user.
- Key library statistics for December 2013 included a \$111,846 value to the community and a total of 82.8 transactions per open hour.
 - She also noted statistics reports from past years were available for the Board.

Greg Lumbra noted the State of Illinois celebrates National Library Day by encouraging library supporters to call local representatives. The event, known as Legislative Day, is effective at keeping library support in the forefront of legislators. Director Tucker agreed to send the information about Oregon's event to Board members via email. Mr. Lumbra believes the Passport Program will be successful once more people know about the program. Passports will be an advantage to tourists in the summer time.

Board Reports:

Chairman Oser suggested that Arline LaMear's liaison report regarding City Council and library issues be a standing item under the Board Reports section of the agenda. As discussed, it is critical that the Library Board keep in sync with City Council, especially with regard to the library renovation.

Councilor Arline LaMear reported that City Council will hold a goal setting session on Friday, January 25, 2013. Presentations featuring library concepts by University of Oregon (U of O) student panels to the Council and general public have been tentatively set for February 2013. A contract with a library planner futurist will be brought to Council for consideration in February or March of 2013. She is not sure if a request for bids would be used.

Director Tucker noted that she and Community Development Director Brett Estes created an estimated timeline to assist City Council with goal setting to know when certain amounts of work will fall. She confirmed the date and time of the student presentations would appear on the City Council agenda, and that she would inform the Board.

Councilor LaMear stated that between March through June of 2013, the library planner futurist will take concepts from the U of O students and conduct a more detailed assessment of the library's needs, and then work with the City Council and Library Board to develop a plan on which the City Council would move forward. That plan is anticipated to include an estimated budget. In July 2013, Staff will work with City Council and the Library Board to implement concepts identified by the library planner futurist, which could include development of a fundraising program.

Update on ALFA Activities: Charlotte Langsev reported that the ALFA balance is \$3,714.66. A donor asked ALFA to concentrate on popular fiction authors from the Northwest. A corporation fee of \$50 was paid to the State of Oregon. Patty Skinner and Ami were provided funds for their programs. Ami will use the funds to provide a Kindle for the adult winner of the Read in the New Year program.

New Business:

Item 7(a): Budget for the 2013-2014 Fiscal Year

Chairman Oser noted the Library Board does not approve the budget, but understanding the budget and the resources available to the library is very useful for the Board.

Director Tucker presented the proposed draft budget, which is essentially the same as that presented last year, with these key additional comments:

- No increase in materials and services has been requested from last year.
- Travel expenses have increased due to the Public Library Association (PLA) Biannual Conference being held in Indianapolis in March 2014. The budget conservatively estimates costs for two people to attend the conference, which is beneficial for library specialists and trustees.
 - The differences between ALA and PLA were discussed.

Susan Brooks noted that having the library's actual budget comparisons would help the Board better understand the budget process. Chairman Oser explained he has reviewed the budget with Director Tucker and the library's incomes and expenses are on target for the year overall. However, there are considerable variances in various line items, some of which are due to timing. Director Tucker confirmed there are no indicators that the library's budget will be off track by the end of the year.

Ms. Brooks asked when the comparison data would be received. Director Tucker explained she did not have the clearance to obtain this information; the Finance Department must create a special report. Ms. Brooks stated it is difficult to justify the budget in the categories without this report.

Director Tucker added that the Astoria Budget Meetings are on the same nights as the Oregon Library Association meeting, which creates a scheduling conflict for her. Chairman Oser explained that last year, the Board believed additional funds were necessary in certain categories. He, Ms. Brooks, and Mr. Lumbra attended the budget hearing and answered questions about the library's needs. After considering the City's current financial situation and the upcoming library renovation, the library should be able to comply with the City's request to keep spending flat for the 2013-2014 fiscal year. Therefore, he did not believe having Board members at the budget hearing is as critical.

Director Tucker noted City Manager Benoit asked the library to prepare for a 5% cut and a 10% cut in its budget, and she had done that.

Chairman Oser did not understand to what extent the City maintains a capital budget for the library or other departments to cover the library's major repairs or equipment replacement. Director Tucker said she included a capital expense in the first proposed budget draft for the servers that will need replacement in 2014. This is a necessary expense. The library could convert to cloud space or purchase new servers at an estimated cost of about \$14,000. Cloud space cost \$11,600 two years ago.

Ms. Brooks was concerned that without a reporting function, the library would have no means of keeping track of funds donated through the City for the renovation. Chairman Oser believed this would be discussed during Old Business, including how to create, when to create, and the relationship between separate fundraising entity and the City.

Chairman Oser noted patrons can print tax forms directly from the IRS website. The library charges \$0.10 per page for printing. Director Tucker did not believe the IRS forms are available yet for printing this year.

Old Business:

Item 8(a): Naming the Fundraising Non-Profit

Chairman Oser noted all the advice received by the Board pointed to having a separate fundraising non-profit because many funders, both individual and foundations, are loath to give to governments where the tracking and managing of donated funds may be questioned. A separate capital campaign by a separate non-profit is preferred. Attorney Heather Reynolds has offered to assist the Board on a pro-bono basis to keep costs minimal. Ms. Reynolds advised that the non-profit needs a good name.

- One issue for the Board from an organizational point of view is to not get too far ahead of the Council in the process.
- He suggested using the word "revitalization" in the name because it accurately reflects the project.
- While it is unclear how much time establishing the non-profit organization will take, several aspects of the process can begin while the non-profit is being established. In waiting for the legal paperwork, other details can be discussed, such as how things should be organized, the delegation of duties, etc.
- This non-profit organization will be an entity separate from the Library Board.

The Board briefly debated about whether the 501(c)(3) organization should be a foundation or used as a capital campaign because the purposes of these two structures differed. A capital campaign is used for short-term projects, like the renovation itself, while a foundation supports needed upgrades, such as furniture, as well as the ongoing maintenance and repair of the building.

- The Forest Grove Library formed its foundation after its renovation to pay for upgrades like new furniture.
- An endowment fund would enable the library to tend to changing needs like technology; however, only the interest can be spent from an endowment fund. The Oregon Community Foundation only provides two distributions of income each year and does not allow the principal to be spent.

Chairman Oser believed one entity should be created as the vehicle to serve two purposes: to collect capital campaign funds for the renovation; and then reform to serve as a foundation after the building is built to raise additional monies for capital improvements and repairs. These funds or reserves will be used for large necessary expenditures that the City may not be able to cover for a building as heavily used as a library. The tax base should support the normal operations of the library.

Chairman Oser stated this item would remain on the Board's agenda and that a name for the non-profit would be determined in March 2013. He is reading the *Oregon Non-Profit Handbook* and reminded that Ms. Reynolds will assist with the legal aspects of forming the non-profit organization.

The Board agreed that understanding the purpose of the non-profit will make it easier to develop a name.

Councilor Herzig excused himself from the meeting.

Item 8(b): Newspaper Column

Chairman Oser noted the Board's previous discussion about creating a monthly column for *The Daily Astorian*, and perhaps other local papers, to publicize library events and the library's value to the community. This would make the library more visible to the public as the revitalization process and renovations begin.

Director Tucker noted the Professional Services Fund would be used to cover the costs of hiring someone to create the column's template as a marketing and advocacy tool and incorporating more visual aids.

Ms. Brooks suggested that the Astoria Library submit an article to the coastal business journal in collaboration with the Seaside Library who recently campaigned for building funds. Seaside could talk about their success and Astoria could discuss the launch of its capital campaign or building renovation.

Director Tucker stated that having a clear purpose and a template will make the process easier. Visual aids should be used in the column.

- She requested that a work plan be created in consideration of Staff's time, which is already at capacity. The plan should include the working hours required each month to complete the column, coordinate with Staff's existing tasks, and consider what trade-offs may result when allocating more Staff time. Implementing a media plan requires much work which also must be factored into Staff's time and work load.

Comments and discussion regarding the newspaper column continued with these key comments:

- Once the purpose of the column is defined, everything else will follow accordingly. Originally, the Board proposed the column to let people know what the library has done and is doing.
- The purpose of the column is to inform the public of the library's value to the community on a regular basis and to develop the library brand. This statistical information is already available, minimizing any additional time required of Staff.
 - The purpose must be intentional; right now, the brand might be revitalization and the newspaper column would promote that concept.
 - This purpose would evolve over time to inform the public of the library's goals and needs, which will help when fundraising for the renovation.
 - Publishing the statistics, schedule of events and two or three paragraphs would not take a lot of time. The Board and Staff will work to get the column started, and then the Board will continue to maintain the column. Others will likely step up to contribute as writers of the column.
 - Having Board members submit the column will carry a lot more credibility.
 - Form follows function, so determining the function of the column will define its form.
 - The Board needs to find out what *The Daily Astorian's* requirements are for visual aids.
- Multiple media outlets should be utilized, if possible.
- Some of the less popular programs, like the Passport Program, could be advertised in the column.
 - Many programs and events are not advertised because they are at capacity and space is limited. Overcrowding creates a negative experience for some library patrons.
- The column should develop the story, providing the monthly statistics and discussing the library's success to lay the groundwork for explaining why the renovation/revitalization is needed and to help with fundraising.

Reading "Public Relations, Promotions and Communications: A Big Media Plan" may help the Board. Board members were asked to bring examples of visual aids that catch their eye to the next meeting. The Board would think about the column's purpose and the various media venues to be used for discussion at the next Library Board meeting.

Arline LaMear excused herself from the meeting at approximately 4:38 p.m.

Board Member Comments: None

Public Comments: None

Items for Next Meeting's Agenda:

Board Reports will now include updates from Arline LaMear about City Council. Old Business will continue to include the Naming the Fundraising Non-Profit and the Newspaper Column. The next meeting will be on February 26, 2013.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Library Director