

Minutes
Boards of the Auburn Public Library and the Lewiston Public Library
Joint Meeting
May 6, 2015
7:30 a.m., Auburn Public Library

Present: LPL: Darby Ray, Liz Clifford, Ted Walworth, Adam Sherman, Jennifer Gendron-Carleton, Rick Speer (Director)
APL: Sonia Buck, Doris Bonneau, Jane Morrison, Kirk Egge, Barbara Trafton, Mark Foster, Bill Low, Ed Cormier, Pat Gautier, Mamie Anthoine Ney (Director)

APL President Sonia Buck opened the meeting at 7:35 a.m. and welcomed every one. Introductions were made.

Rick Speer began the discussion by listing the various services and programs that LPL offers. Highlights include children's after-school programming with the Art Van and St. Mary's Nutrition Center, homework help provided by Bates College's Harvard Center, reality lending, the "Digital Divide" computer lab in collaboration with Kaplan University, and the Great Falls Forum. The Library's FY16 budget is still under review. The current year saw a cut of 30% in the materials budget. He also spoke of the Library's opportunity to lend their Marsden Hartley painting, "Shady Brook," to New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. In looking ahead the Library values its role as a community center with programs like the digital divide computer lab. The Library is also working on developing a maker space. The staff has the equivalent of 19 full-time employees.

Mamie Ney remarked that APL mirrors many of the same services that LPL provides. The Library has tried a homework help program but it was not successful, despite the request from students for such a program. The Library is getting ready to launch its first online auction as a new fundraiser. The Library Café is now under new management, having been sold to Auburn businessman Dan Gagnon.

A discussion of efforts to align the libraries closer followed. There are joint lending policies although there have been a few hiccups lately. There have been efforts to bring the staffs together and Rick and Mamie meet on a fairly regular basis. The joint subcommittee has been discussing a number of ways to ferret out what the libraries should do going forward in terms of combining the libraries. There seemed to be a feeling that we need a clearer picture of what will become of the efforts to merge the two cities. We need to be able to meet the challenge of why we need two libraries.

It was put forth that we should consider marketing our services together more efficiently. We need to understand what metrics people should judge us by. This gave rise to the sentiment that we should investigate joint strategic planning. We need to address service duplications, understand our constituencies, and recognize our staff and philosophical differences. LPL is a city department. APL is an independent non-profit corporation. This would help us present a

unified front to our communities. We should seek not to compare and compete, but to complement each other. Are county-wide services a possibility? APL has a services contract with the Town of Minot. Lewiston has been approached by Sabattus residents to discuss library access.

What followed was a discussion of what our next steps should be. The opportunity for focus groups was discussed. Asset mapping seemed to be a way to begin the process, identifying parallels and gaps. If the process of combining the libraries is going to move forward, it would probably be best if a consultant for future planning be brought in. At a minimum a facilitated discussion should take place, most likely starting at the staff level. The joint committee will continue to meet as will Rick and Mamie to see how the process can be brought forward.

The meeting was then adjourned at 8:45 a.m.