

LPL/APL Joint Board Meeting: Lewiston Public Library: 10/25/16
Minutes

Attending:

LPL – Jennifer Gendron Carleton, Elizabeth Clifford, John Painter, ZamZam Mohamud, Darby Ray, Ted Walworth, Noel Madore, Rick Speer.

APL – Bill Lowe, Barbara Trafton, Nicole Rancourt, Pat Gautier, Ed Cormier, Mark Foster, Kirk Egge, Sonia Buck, Jane Morrison, Jonathon LaBonté, Doris Bonneau, Mamie Ney.

Guests: Gene Geiger, Bob Stone, Jayne Byron, and Jim Howaniec.

Darby Ray made a motion to accept the minutes from the May 6, 2015, meeting. Doris Bonneau seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

Gene Geiger, chairman of the Joint Charter Commission, reviewed the joint charter process. They are using the Princeton New Jersey model to guide their work. It is hoped that the vote will take place in November 2017. There are currently four work groups focusing on various municipal functions. They are pulling information together to issue a final report to the Commission, which should be done in a couple of weeks. The Commission will then review the groups' recommendations and decide how to move forward in writing the new charter. There will be a community meeting January 25, 2017. If passed the combination of the cities will be based on the charter itself, plus the consolidation agreement between the two cities. There will be a defined way to make decisions for consolidation and experience in other municipalities indicates that the process usually takes at least fourteen months. The charter, plus the elements of consolidation, and the steps for making decisions will be made by a group other than the Charter Commission. The deadline for getting the ballot proposal ready for voting is near Labor Day 2017.

The group discussed the possible effect of the municipal combination on both libraries. The libraries are seen as being very similar in general structure, operations, and programming. In combining the entities they will be looking for cost savings. It seems logical not to close either building. The challenge is that APL is a private, non-profit corporation whereas LPL is a city department. Barbara Trafton cited that we need information from the work groups so the libraries will be able to react to any consolidation moves. Gene replied that the Commission is not getting into the details regarding operations, except for personnel. CGR is a consulting group that gathered information for the Commission about various departments including the libraries. They issued a baseline report which provided primarily statistical comparisons. The consultants met only with the directors to gather information. Barbara Trafton replied that the report doesn't consider the importance of the buildings to the cities. Jennifer Gendron Carleton commented that both libraries are well supported and have strong boards.

There was a discussion on what's in store for the libraries. The possible impacts of consolidation including the political, emotional and financial factors were discussed. We need to find out what the realities are.

The joint subcommittee has not been meeting as it was decided that it was best to wait for the outcome of the Joint Commission process. The boards felt that there was communication value in having the subcommittee continue meeting.

There was a joint staff meeting held on November 13, 2015. It was an asset mapping session designed to discover what each library offers and what the similarities/differences are. There was a discussion of the possibility to collaborate more. This brought the discussion to the point of what more can the libraries do to keep things going in terms of collaborations. What can we try next? Can this come from the staff? It was pointed out that Rick and Mamie's time are maxed out, so we can't put anymore items on their plates.

The joint group suggested that both library staffs should be queried to see if there were any new ideas for collaboration that might emerge.

There being no further items to discussed, the meeting was adjourned.