

## **LIBRARY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Thursday, May 3, 2012, 5:00 pm

Local History Room

### **In attendance:**

Robert Resnick, Barbara Shatara, Eric Lindstrom, Rebecca Goldberg, Emer Feeney, Amber Collins, Anne Nixon, Peter Ireland, Christine Webb, Robert Coleburn, Rachel Van Vliet, Peg Boyle Single, Denise Dunbar, Mary Ellen Sulek, Dan Balon, Tenzin Dhondup

*Next meeting is May 17, 2012*

### **Leadership Structure Vote**

*Eric sent out a document with previous job descriptions and rationales for leadership models as a starting base for our discussion*

### **Support Staff**

- It is essential to have a strong support staff with any type of leadership structure
- In other libraries, a Single Director had an administrative assistant who handled budget and had an assistant librarian for other duties
- A good candidate for the Director position will want a strong support staff

### **Funding**

- We may be able to use money from the co-directorship (about \$18,000 estimate) to go towards support from librarians
- We can perhaps allocate some of those duties to other staff members (who can earn some extra money)
- We want to make a choice that is resource neutral

### **Candidates for the Position**

- We want to attract some experienced directors. Peg worries that if we don't have support staff, we will attract underemployed or new hires rather than experienced directors. Barbara noted that we could make the case that we have the support already (Rebecca suggested we re-work it to make it more efficient).
- We need to sell all that we do here at the library and emphasize that we are an innovative and that we need a strong candidate who can help us move further.
- Any good applicant for a director would have a good vision for the library. This director could help with restructuring. We don't want to hire a director who comes into a library who is in the middle of being restructured.

- A good director will trust the middle managers to do their jobs with autonomy.
- The new director needs to be fair and equitable and treat all staff members with respect.
- We need a director in a leader role and a manager role.
- Fundraising needs to be a major component of the new director's role
- We need to hire someone to make the library run and hopefully grow it and the external looking person with the vision and experience to the FFL.

### **Co-directorship**

- Pros: 20 years of success behind it, good for a tight budget, built on strengths of 3 original co-directors, co-directors serve as support staff to each other
- Cons: what is needed may not be what is exactly in the job description, built on strengths of 3 original co-directors which may not work for the new candidate
- Co-directorship totally depends on the personalities and strengths of the three directors
- We haven't been convinced that the co-director model is the best way for the library to have a new vision and grow.
- The workers have more insight and can give a realistic assessment of where the organization can go: This is where the co-directorship came from.
- The sense from the staff is that the co-directorship is maintaining things, but the single director may help create change and move things forward.
- The culture of the library is very different from an organization with a single directorship. It makes individuals more responsible for what they are doing. Middle managers have a lot of autonomy- as long as their work is getting done, things are okay.

### **Single Director**

- One of the problems with this is that Miro hasn't been clear about this and that it isn't at the top of their agenda. They want us to make a decision so they can move forward with it. He recommended a single directorship but asked us to make a decision and create a political document outlining our decision.
- Now, most of the staff is leaning towards a single directorship.
- We worry about getting a single director who is bad, but that could also happen in a co-directorship. It's a risk we take with any new person.
- If change and energy is going to happen no matter what configuration we hire for, why are we making a massive shift from co-directorship to single director? For a central vision, A better understanding of who you report to,

what you should be doing, The co-directorship doesn't seem to be working really well now.

- What happens to Robert and Robert if we go to a single director? They responded that they have discussed it and their want what is best for the library. Most likely, they would both go back to being librarians. They are encouraged to apply.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Timeline: There is some urgency because of the budget and Amber's retirement.
- Volunteers can be utilized better, Peter noted. The issue is that training volunteers takes up a lot of staff time and the library is understaffed.
- There are so many innovative and exciting things going on around the country that we want to do at the library.
- There needs to be a total restructuring of the library as a whole with either model.

### **The Vote:**

- The FFL Board unanimously voted to change the structure of the library leadership to a single directorship.