

Minutes
Board – Facility Overview Retreat
Monday, August 17, 2009 – 9:00 a.m.
Yakima Neighborhood Health Clinic

Trustees Present: President Carolyn Calhoon-Dillahunt, Vice President Melba Fujiura, Secretary James E. Barnhill, Trustee Jerry Maggard, Trustee Richard E. Ostrander

Staff Present: Interim Director Kim Hixson, Administrative Coordinator Terri Reeder

The planning meeting was called to order at 9:20 a.m.

I. Goals for the Day

Interim Director Hixson reviewed the tentative agenda for the day. The goal is to review the current facilities, look at services, and begin to develop an overall plan for the district.

II. Branch Review

Interim Director Hixson provided the Trustees with a spreadsheet comparing and contrasting the community libraries to include:

Open Hours, FTE's, current square footage of building, collection size, total circulation, number of computer appointments, number of assistance questions, direct and indirect costs, application of contract revenue to costs, breakout of property tax per area, and breakout of other funds.

In addition to the statistics, a map of the district with the community libraries on it was distributed. The map allowed the group to visualize the area to see where the most and least used community libraries are located.

From the map and the statistics, it is evident that the Summitview Branch is the largest community library in the District. The total assistance numbers are the same or greater than the Yakima Branch – it was noted that the full time equivalents in Summitview are significantly less than in Yakima. The data also demonstrates that some branches are open more hours than support the use, some branches are understaffed and have no hours for community outreach, branch maintenance, or counting money and closing duties.

Interim Director Hixson reviewed the status of the remaining five contract cities. The contracts date back to the 1980's and had a six percent cap on the revenue based on the percentage of increase on the assessed value for each city. The current levy rate for YVL is .4483 cents per thousand. The five remaining cities each pay less than .2505 cents per thousand and some as low as .1676 cents per thousand. Annexation would bring the rates back in line with the District, but most of the cities could not afford this process, nor could they afford to lose the library rate that they receive as cities. It was agreed that the contracting cities should be reviewed closely and that the service provided should be more in line with the revenues received. Ms. Hixson noted that this would be a part of the 2010

budget process and she would notify the contracting cities before their budget processes begin.

III. **Facility Considerations**

Discussion included review of the buildings that are now leased by YVL: Southeast, Summitview, and the Liberty Building. The lease on the Summitview building will expire in 2013. The current lease expense including common area maintenance (cam), advertising, property taxes, and rent is over \$10,000 per month. The lease also requires that YVL pay for utilities, janitorial, and maintenance of the HVAC. The lease can be broken if the District - 1.) builds a new building or 2.) leases a new building out of the designated area. It was generally agreed that a focus on this branch will be important: location, what type of services will the branch include – headquarters, and to build or lease.

YVL also owns the building at 102 North 3rd street. The Trustees asked Interim Director Hixson what the vision was for that building. The statistics for this community library are very close with Summitview but as noted earlier, Downtown Yakima has more FTE's per customer service hour than Summitview. One of the primary considerations for leasing the Liberty Building, was to update and modify the Yakima building. Replacement of the HVAC and chiller, bringing in a secondary power source for the computers and servers, updated cabling to accommodate the new technology and increased staff in the building, and parking are all considerations to the future use of this building. Whether or not this building should continue to house the Service Center as well as the branch library was discussed. Interim Director Hixson said she believed it was important for administration to stay in the downtown area – across the street from the City and County. She also reported that during the strategic planning session for the Committee for Downtown Yakima (at which she was *not* present) plans around building a new modern downtown library – “to jazz up the library” were a significant part of their discussion. Hixson said she met with the CDY Executive Director to let him know that overall facility planning was in process with the Yakima Valley Libraries Board of Trustees. The Trustees agreed with Interim Director Hixson that, although CDY may want the focus on a new/updated downtown branch, the direction for the Yakima Branch has not yet been determined. (Hixson sits on the CDY committee.) There are several options for the Yakima branch: make a smaller branch – upgrade service center; larger branch – move out service center, larger computer lab – smaller collection available, etc. Issues to look at: overall services, future maintenance, parking, ability to modify current electrical, heating, and cooling systems – accessibility to the downstairs (current elevator is 50 years old).

The lease on the Liberty Building also expires in 2013; it is the objective of the Trustees that the people in this building be integrated back to an existing YVL building. The cost of the Liberty Building with cam charges, taxes, and rent is approximately \$3000 per month.

The Trustees again reviewed the map and statistics for each of the branches. YVL is still limited to the one percent increase for the property taxes. Although Yakima has been a bit more stable economically, if the District were to plan on the increase alone without new construction this would be less than \$59,000. More and more of the entities that support the individual community libraries by providing space, are asking for increased financial support

of those buildings from the Library District. The District must look critically at each facility to determine the best point of service for the public as well as maximize the property tax dollars available.

One of the fastest growing community libraries in the District is Selah. It appears that the City is still negotiating with a local building owner to purchase a building to move the library into. There has been no official contact with Interim Director Hixson, but there has been information exchanged with Community Library Supervisor, Michael Martin, as well as Trustee Jerry Maggard. It is apparent that a larger branch with increased staffing and equipment will be necessary in Selah. This will also be a factor in the 2010 budget.

The Friends of the Buena Library continue to work toward a capital campaign to build a new library building in Buena. Although the Buena statistics show an increase in service it is located in a grouping of community libraries very close in location. Interim Director Hixson stated that she has not received an official lease from the Friends after her letter earlier this summer reporting that YVL will not be able to make a rent payment to the Friends for the building. The District provides staff, resources, and computers but not buildings.

How to provide effective and efficient services to the Lower Valley was a part of the discussion. YVL also owns the Sunnyside Building. The District was given the building when the City of Sunnyside annexed to YVL in 2005. At that time there was a significant amount of “deferred maintenance” on the building. YVL has replaced the HVAC and is now working on fixing the concrete, the restrooms, the public meeting room, installation of a new circ desk, and updated small equipment. The building is strategically located in the lower alley and could increase services with additional hours and staffing. Trustee Ostrander noted that there was a previous study that said five miles between branches was an optimal distance to travel. Looking at the District map, there are several groupings of community libraries that are closer than five miles.

IV. **Where to go from here**

Interim Director Hixson said that what she would like to do is maintain a status quo for the preparation of the 2010 budget. Between now and when the budget will be due for adoption; there is not enough time to complete a significant strategic plan. After the adoption of the budget, she would like to conduct a strategic plan which would include: determine type of plan, involve the community in focus groups, identify the community needs, select service responses, write the goals and objectives, identify activities and determine resource requirements, write the plan, have the Trustees adopt and implement. Hixson said there are a variety of processes available – she has applied and been accepted in the PLA Boot Camp – a week long public library training based strategic planning process. It will be held in Seattle October 11 – 16th. After the training, and hopefully with the hiring of a new Deputy Director, staff would begin the strategic planning process. She estimates it will take four to six months to complete the process. That should put the timeframe to the middle of 2010 in time for any mid-year budget amendments and time to plan for the 2011 budget. She believes making significant changes to the structure of the district without this planning could have serious public impact. It is important that staff and the public work together to determine what services should be available in the District. She stated that the

District cannot continue to operate as it does now – 19 branches throughout the district; many of them one person small areas are no longer effective and efficient. It is important to review our services – ensure we are meeting the needs of the public, embody the changes in the technology (including the new self check and print management systems), and develop a district that is sustainable and flexible to meet the changing needs. Our current finances are stable, but it is essential that we continue to maintain our expenditures within the allotted revenues – and this will take planning and buy in from everyone.

V. **Wrap Up**

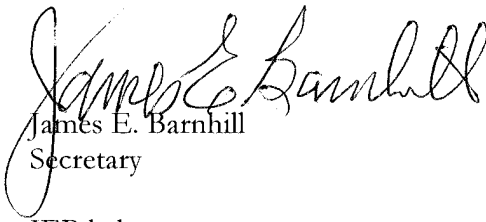
The Trustees support the planning process. They will continue to review options for the Summitview Branch. Interim Director Hixson will work on budget and modifications for 2010. She will also work on a plan for the Yakima building with the intent of relocating staff from the Liberty Building. She will work with Susan Miller, Accounting coordinator to design an RFP for the HVAC and Chiller in the Yakima Building. She will also continue work on a restructure of the current operations (with the resignation of Community Libraries Manager, Karen Spence), and the hiring of a Deputy Director.

The Meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

The next regular meeting for the Board of Trustees is:

Tuesday, August 25th
4:00 p.m.
Boardroom of the Downtown Yakima Branch.

Respectfully submitted,


James E. Barnhill
Secretary
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