



**Library Board of Trustees**

**Library Board of Trustees**  
**Main Library, Dickson Boardroom**  
**Thursday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

**4:00 p.m.**

**TRUSTEES PRESENT**

*Robin Branstrom, Chair*  
*Bob Sink, Vice Chair*  
*Molly Griffin*  
*Reneé Casali*  
*Sally Robinson*  
*Magdalena Maiz-Peña*  
*Tami Simmons*  
*Joan Martin*

**TRUSTEES ABSENT**

*Charles Bowman, Treasurer*  
*Darrel Williams*

**STAFF PRESENT**

*Charles Brown, Director of Libraries*  
*Vick Phillips, Chief Executive Officer*  
*Karen Beach, Director of*  
*Communication Engagement*  
*Frank Blair, Director of Research,*  
*Innovation and Strategy*  
*David Singleton, Director of Library*  
*Experience*  
*Linda Vitlar, Executive Assistant to*  
*the Board*  
*Cordelia Anderson*  
*Angela Haigler*  
*Rick Ricker*  
*Jenifer Daniels*  
*Chuck Mallas*  
*John Zika*  
*Jonita Edmonds*  
*Patrice Ebert*  
*Lois Kilkka*  
*Melanie Baron*  
*Tamara Osborne*

**OTHERS PRESENT**

*Bob Stephens & Mark Kutny,*  
*Hamilton, Moon, Stephens,*  
*Steele & Martin PLLCJ*  
*Jim Woodward, Chair, Task*  
*Force*  
*Sean Hogue, Library*  
*Consultant*  
*Amanda Anderson, President,*  
*Friends of the Library*  
*Bruce LaRowe, Executive*  
*Director, Children's Theatre of*  
*Charlotte*

**MINUTES**

Chair Robin Branstrom called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

Ms. Branstrom began with opening remarks regarding the Foundation for the Carolinas Annual Luncheon meeting earlier that day. Chair Branstrom explained that she thought it was an energizing experience to hear Speaker John Wood talk about literacy and libraries. Ms. Branstrom highlighted Mr. Wood's comments about how important libraries are not only to third world countries but to every community.

Ms. Branstrom then acknowledged Dr. Jim Woodward, Chair of The Future of the Library Task Force.

Dr. Woodward delivered a summary of the decisions made by the Task Force and offered a timeline for reports soon to be completed. Chair Woodward commented that his remarks reflect the views of the Task Force. Dr. Woodward explained that Task Force will finalize their recommendations at the last scheduled meeting on March 1<sup>st</sup>. A “placeholder” meeting for March 15<sup>th</sup> was set by the Task Force in case a follow-up meeting is necessary. The following are minutes of Dr. Woodward’s report to the Board as posted on the Charlotte Mecklenburg Web Site at [www.cmlibrary.org](http://www.cmlibrary.org)

### **Hours and Locations**

After much discussion, the Task Force was asked the following question: “Regarding hours and distribution of resources, *and assuming that resources remain flat* (meaning that current staffing stays the same), should we stay where we are or change?” The Task Force voted to change. They then made the following decisions about the kinds of changes they will recommend:

- Hours at regionals should be increased. The exact number of hours has not yet been finalized, but it would be closer to a double shift.
- Branches in challenged neighborhoods should be kept open, with current hours.
- After calculating the Full-Time Employees needed for increased hours at regionals and maintained hours at branches in challenged neighborhoods, the remaining FTEs should be reallocated to branches that are geographically isolated (farthest from regionals), and with the highest circulation. More specific criteria for circulation have not yet been determined.
- For the remaining branches, there would be an offer to work with the neighborhoods/communities of those locations to secure funding to help keep the location open.

**Note:** For the purpose of this discussion, the term FTE does not refer to specific staff; it is a calculation based on an average.

### **Main/ImaginOn**

- The Task Force agreed that a Library location that provides services to adults is needed in Uptown Charlotte; however, the current Main location may be too large for current needs. They felt this issue needed further examination, and recommended the creation of a committee appointed jointly by the Library Board and County Commission to further explore the feasibility of consolidating, down-sizing or relocating Main Library functions.

- The group all agreed that ImaginOn was a unique asset in Charlotte. They did not reach any decision about ImaginOn, but will likely discuss it more at their next meeting.

### **Governance**

- A subcommittee formed to examine the current governance structure of the Library shared their thoughts about making the Library and its assets a part of County government. They suggested a structure that would still have a Board of Trustees to formulate and adopt programs, policies, and regulations for the governance of the Library, as well as appoint and remove the Chief Librarian or Director, prepare a budget, assist in evaluation of the organization and employees, etc.
- The Task Force discussed what this might mean, offered their thoughts and agreed to continue deliberating on governance. They have not made any decisions on this recommendation.

### **Funding**

- A subcommittee formed to examine Library funding reported their thoughts about creating a per capita funding model that would bring the Library closer to the average of peer library systems. This per capita funding model would be used from year to year, providing more stable funding going forward. The Task Force was receptive to this idea, but did not vote or reach a decision.

Dr. Woodward reminded the Board that the Library faces a budget shortfall of \$500,000.

The Trustees asked questions regarding the governance and operations of those libraries that may be supported by independent funding. Dr. Woodward stated that policies and procedures with regard to operations would be negotiated between the Library and the individual community.

Chief Executive Officer Vick Phillips added that after talking to folks throughout the county there has been a very subtle and positive point about the Task Force's recommendations. Mr. Phillips went on to say that the outcome formed by the Task Force is a validation of the original thinking and initial decision made by the Library Board of Trustees in March 2010.

Trustees also asked questions about libraries operating in fragile neighborhoods. Dr. Woodward explained some factors in determining those locations would be staffing requirements in terms of Full-Time Employees, distance from another Library and usage as criteria. Trustee Sink commented that there are additional factors involved in determining Library locations in fragile neighborhoods.

Vice Chair Sink requested more information on how the Task Force determined peer Library's. Dr. Woodward explained that 6 communities were identified by the

Charlotte Chamber and 8 were identified by Mecklenburg County. Chair Woodward identified population served by a Library system as one of the criteria used. The Urban Institute will provide a report that will be shared with the entire Library Board that contains additional facts regarding peer Library comparisons.

The Trustees commented on the Task Force Sub-Committee reports regarding governance. Several Members of the Board voiced support for the current structure and governance of the Library Board of Trustees established in 1903. Library Board members also cited the long history of strong working relationships with Mecklenburg County and swift action taken by the Library Board during a difficult period. Vice Chair Sink added that reviewing the governance of the Library was one of the focus areas of the Task Force. Mr. Sink further explained that one approach to the future structure of the Library Board may include a more defined line of communication and accountability that could be accomplished through an ordinance. Trustee Simmons asked if the County is receptive to the recommendation that the Library become a department of County government. Dr. Woodward answered that the County would most likely accept the recommendation.

After further discussion and comment regarding the initial findings, Chief Executive Officer Vick Phillips reminded the Library Board that the two Sub-Committees studying governance has not yet reached a final consensus.

Trustee Casali asked in what format the final report from the Task Force will be presented. Dr. Woodward explained that the report will contain an outline, divided into chapters devoted to every subject study. The report will also include observations and recommendations with accompanying reports and appendices.

Vice Chair Sink and Trustee Robinson commended the work and effort of Dr. Woodward and voiced their every confidence in his ability. Mr. Sink also expressed the Library Board's intention to bring flexibility to the process and respond openly to the recommendations made by the Task Force. Further Mr. Sink stated the Board will bring the kind of intensity of the past 10 months and take it forward.

Chief Executive Officer Vick Phillips asked presenters Director of Community Engagement Karen Beach, Deputy Director of Communications & Marketing Cordelia Anderson, Senior Library Manager John Zika and Library Supervisor Jonita Edmonds if they would agree to reschedule their respective reports to either the March or April Library Board of Trustees' meeting. All were in agreement.

Chair Robin Branstrom welcomed Executive Director of the Children's Theatre of Charlotte Bruce LaRowe and ImaginOn Library Manager Lois Kilkka. Mr. LaRowe began by highlighting the positive news about the partnership between the Children's Theatre and Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, the shared programming between the Library and the Theatre and the impact ImaginOn is making on families that are served through this facility. (Hand-out Attached) Ms.

Kilkka then described some of the most impactful programs currently and planned for the future.

Chair Branstrom asked the Board of Trustees for approval of the minutes of the January 19, 2011 Library Board of Trustees meeting. On a motion by Bob Sink, seconded by Molly Griffin, the Trustees unanimously approved the minutes of the January 19, 2011 meeting.

Chief Executive Officer Phillips highlighted the Library's Financial Summary Report for end of month January 2011. (Full Report Attached)

Chair Branstrom commented on the accomplishments of the Library's Development Department and congratulated Director of Community Engagement Karen Beach on the year to date figures.

Director Brown delivered his report and reminded the Board of the media coverage the Library has received and provided a link where this information could be found: [http://www.plcmc.org/about\\_us/in\\_the\\_news/press.asp](http://www.plcmc.org/about_us/in_the_news/press.asp)

Mr. Brown then asked Director of Library Experiences David Singleton to update the Board on the Goodwill Book Sale initiative. Mr. Singleton shared with the Board that this program trains and employs individuals in our community. In addition the Library has received proceeds from the book sale in the amount of \$15,000.

Chief Executive Officer Phillips stated that after his visits to every Library location/department and meeting with Library staff, the state of the Library is solid. Mr. Phillips continued by describing the staff as enthusiastic individuals and devoted to the Library. CEO Phillips commented that each location emphasizes the needs of the community in which they serve.

Chair Branstrom mentioned the book she is reading entitled "This Book is Overdue – How Librarians and Cybrarians Save Us All". The author Marilyn Johnson along with bloggers, radicals and visionaries express their feelings on the enduring value of the human touch "the librarians." Ms. Branstrom highly recommends the book to the Library Board members.

Ms. Branstrom also mentioned the Newsletter sent to the Trustees from ULC – Leadership Brief/Five Leadership Roles for Library Trustees as a topic item for the agenda at the Board retreat.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vick Phillips  
Secretary