

**NILES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
Special Board Meeting
February 26, 2011**

Call to Order

Morgan Dubiel called the meeting to order in the Club Room of The White Eagle Restaurant at 9:00 am. Also present were: Barbara Nakanishi, Chris Ball, Dennis O'Donovan, and Linda Ryan

Also present were: Ms. Linda Weiss, Director, Barb Kruser, Dave Dabrowski, Val Clark, Don Burkhart, Susan Lempke, Kathy Pricone, Sue Wilsey, Ann Pasnick, and Lon Frey.

Resolution No. 11-1

Barbara Nakanishi MOVED the Library Board of Trustees adopt Resolution No. 11-1, a Resolution of the Niles Public Library District, Cook County, Illinois, requesting the North Suburban Library System Board of Directors, Considers Returning Contributions from Member Public Libraries for Van Delivery. Mr. O'Donovan SECONDED.

RESOLUTION NO.11-1

**A RESOLUTION OF THE NILES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT,
COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, REQUESTING THE NORTH SUBURBAN LIBRARY
SYSTEM BOARD OF DIRECTORS CONSIDERS RETURNING CONTRIBUTIONS FROM
MEMBER PUBLIC LIBRARIES FOR VAN DELIVERY.**

WHEREAS, on May 14, 2010 Sarah Long, North Suburban Library System's Executive Director informed the public library directors that NSLS would be laying off employees and ceasing operations due to lack of funding from the State, and

WHEREAS, on a very short notice and in good faith, on May 24, 2010, the Niles Public Library District contributed \$13,000 to the North Suburban Library System in order to maintain van delivery services, and

WHEREAS, in May 2010 the Niles Public Library District along with the other 22 CCS public libraries took action to severely curtail interlibrary sharing of materials in order to reduce the load on NSLA van delivery and

WHEREAS, the North Suburban Library System has now received the balance of FY09/10 funding and more than \$700,000 of funding for FY10/11 from the State,

NOW THEREFORE, be resolved that the Board of Library Trustees of the Niles Public Library District requests that the North Suburban Library System Board of Directors consider returning those van delivery contributions to the member public libraries many of whom are now struggling with income losses in the face of increasing demands for services at the local level.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Dubiel, Nakanishi, Ball, O'Donovan, Ryan

Nays: None

Motion PASSED

Morgan Dubiel then turned the meeting over to Linda Weiss who started the Strategic Direction Planning portion of the meeting.

**Strategic Direction Setting Retreat
February 26, 2011
White Eagle Restaurant
with Consultant Dan Wiseman**

In attendance: Linda Weiss, Dave Dabrowski, Val Clark, Barb Kruser, Don Burkhart, Susan Lempke, Kathy Pricone, Sue Wilsey, Ann Pasnack, Linda Ryan, Chris Ball (until 2:30), Dennis O'Donovan, Barbara Nakanishi (until 3:30), Morgan Dubiel (until 12:30), Lonny Frey (architect)

INTRODUCTION

Linda Weiss opened the retreat by welcoming everyone to this first meeting for the staff and board to sit down together to plan the Library's future. It was exciting to draw ideas from the community through focus groups, in which one participant called the Library "the crown jewel of the community." Now it's time to move to the next level of strategic planning. Consultant Dan Wiseman has compiled focus group results and will lead the group in determining next steps in the process. Dan has learned a lot about the field from his librarian wife, with whom he often team teaches. In his work with many types of libraries, he has observed that long, tedious planning processes seem outmoded, as the information field changes much more rapidly than that through use of new technologies.

Our responsibility as a Board and upper level management is to develop an overall plan that considers funding, facilities, staff, critical policy decisions, and other resources in addressing how to maintain our viability in the community. We need to be focused on the 4 or 5 most important things. We will be using Scenario Planning to determine those 4 or 5 most important things.

- A written document records this plan.
- It becomes the overarching framework that guides the decisions of daily operation.
- It does not contain minutiae.
- It may take 4 to 6 weeks to develop.
- It needs to be flexible enough to allow for revision and re-ordering of projects that carry out the plan.
- It should be reviewed at least yearly, and possibly more often at the outset.
- Use a "sunset" checklist to discontinue obsolete priorities.

Ground rules for today:

1. Ask questions
2. Have fun
3. Be open
4. Listen
5. One conversation at a time
6. Share your wisdom
7. Suffering is optional

Attendees introduced themselves. Additional comments from some:

- Susan wide range of age needs, from early learning to tween issues
Lonn new ideas everywhere; it's complicated and exciting
Sue W. "Any path with no obstacles surely leads nowhere."
Linda many expectations for today
Barb teens also cover a wide range of interests, from study to gaming
Morgan complex—might need several meetings; our competition is all the things that are free now; what is success?

FOCUS GROUP REPORTS (Discussion in parentheses)

- ✓ Public really likes us; above the norm (set higher goals? reach more people? avoid burnout; avoid always having staff space be less important than public space; focus on staff needs; avoid workarounds—instead fix the problem)
- ✓ Family friendly; advertise national recognition that it's "a best place to raise kids" (banner on building? in flyers?; we need to quantify the digital divide; we have to be careful not to get ahead of the community – Niles is traditional and family oriented, we will not have the same goals as Park Ridge, Wilmette, etc.)
- ✓ Parking a big problem (some issues require long-term/more costly fixes; consider alternate ways to use cars in a restricted site—some just want to drop by; inside vs outside services; fluid, not static use of space; Village parking discussions; overhead footbridge; parking at Culver makes patrons happy, staff unhappy; can't solve individual problems in isolation—must consider whole)
- ✓ Morgan requested that we move past executive summary of focus groups to a discussion of physical space, staffing, services. Linda can direct policies regarding security/closing procedures. He's concerned that our revenue stream will be adversely affected by the drastic shift from retail (higher taxes) to commercial business (lower taxes); so we need to keep costs down.
- ✓ With the 3 top priorities of physical space/facilities, staffing, and services – Technology is involved in all 3 priorities.

SCENARIO PLANNING

Dan described a planning matrix with four quadrants that relate funding and facilities to collection and services. Finding it difficult to proceed with filling out the quadrants, Dan had us break into smaller groups to more clearly define our service priorities. Using the PLA list of 18 services for public libraries, we were each asked to rank our top five priorities. Number of votes for each:

- 10 visit a comfortable place
- 9 create young readers
- 8 connect to the online world
- 7 succeed in school
- 5 satisfy curiosity
- 5 stimulate imagination
- 5 understand how to find, evaluate, and use information
- 5 welcome to the United States
- 4 know your community
- 4 learn to read and write
- 4 make informed decisions
- 3 build successful enterprises
- 3 get facts fast

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- 2 celebrate diversity
- 1 be an informed citizen
- 1 express creativity
- 0 discover your roots
- 0 make career choices

The group thought these services could be combined into 6 categories, in the following order of importance:

1. destination
2. young readers
3. online services (information literacy)
4. school
5. creativity
6. literacy, diversity, citizenship

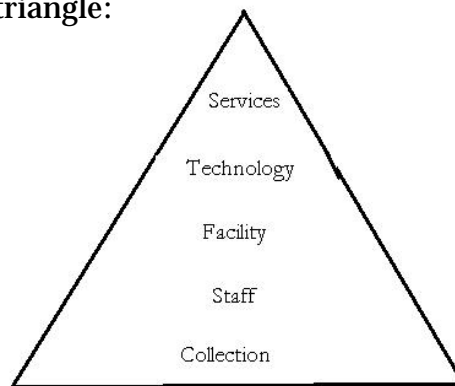
Ability to provide all these services requires an agile organization that can rearrange its

- technology
- facility
- staff, and
- collection

in response to many outside forces:

- dictatorial government
- altered systems and infrastructure
- changing tax base
- new/different expertise/no succession plan
- natural disaster
- community tragedy
- new delivery systems
- digital divide between poor and wealthy

Dan drew a diagram – the shape of a triangle:



SERVICE PRIORITIES

After a break for lunch, Dan helped us work on priority-setting. We should try to come out of today's meeting with 4 – 6 top priorities to be addressed in our plan. Later, we can determine what we need in staff, facility, collection, and technology to accomplish these priorities. Lonn thinks we need to discuss facility first.

Destination

- a. automated check-in

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- ✓ staffing levels needed for support
- ✓ hybrid systems on the way to 100% RFID
- ✓ new duties for staff
- ✓ training for staff and patrons
- b. front entrance/board room/circ area
 - ✓ chilly; need double set of doors
 - ✓ needs security, better sightlines
 - ✓ more welcoming, friendly, comfortable; café
 - ✓ better use of prime space
 - ✓ accommodate new self-checks, automated check-in, drive-up window
 - ✓ stand-up desk in entryway for directional and navigation questions
 - ✓ concierge desks, dispatch service
- c. parking
 - ✓ huge issue to address at another time
- d. study rooms/meeting spaces
 - ✓ quiet spaces/zones
 - ✓ places for projects
 - ✓ glass walls for monitoring in some areas
 - ✓ at least 15 rooms of varying sizes
 - ✓ rethink Reference area
 - ✓ consider air handling system and other existing infrastructure
 - ✓ repurpose fiche room, sale room, board room, periodical area, other spaces
 - ✓ multi-use according to time of day
 - ✓ smart screen
 - ✓ different lighting, stage size, height of spaces to accommodate programs
- e. teen space
 - ✓ north corner third floor
 - ✓ build above YS
 - ✓ cantilever
 - ✓ games area
 - ✓ recording area/create music
 - ✓ space for serious study, group study
 - ✓ place to hang out
 - ✓ place to create (crafts)
 - ✓ collection near hang-out space
 - ✓ computers/laptops
 - ✓ what ages allowed in? high school, jr high, younger siblings – possibly 2 separate spaces created?
 - ✓ time of day for use
 - ✓ to look at Gail Borden space – www.fgmarch.com
- f. AV/digital area
 - ✓ download stations
 - ✓ seating area
 - ✓ sight lines
 - ✓ signage
 - ✓ sale room?
 - ✓ include café in this area

g. misc

- ✓ laptops on carts
- ✓ staff and volunteer expertise
- ✓ Concierge desk to help people with computers, printers, and other
- ✓ As more technology added to library, will need more IT support
- ✓ experiment, even if it fails

Succeed in School – we already have excellent resources – need to make sure we retain service at high level

a. materials and resources and space

- Homework help such as Tutor.com and textbook collection to support curriculum
- Signage to promote
- Live volunteers and tutors? Can use small meeting rooms for one-on-one tutoring

Create Young Readers

a. spaces and materials

- ✓ early literacy room for classes/discussions, etc.
- ✓ storytime areas
- ✓ area for gross motor skills
- ✓ manipulation tables
- ✓ play areas
- ✓ additional use of spaces for early literacy throughout the library, such as numbering the stairs

b. programs

- ✓ something for parents during children's programs?
- ✓ help parents learn how to work with their children; interaction between parents and kids/Parent Resource Groups
- ✓ incorporate ESL
- ✓ more foreign language storytimes
- ✓ early literacy focus

c. staff to support the above

Express Creativity, Satisfy Curiosity, Stimulate Imagination, Get Facts Fast, Learn to Read and Write

a. spaces for

- ✓ labs for creativity for all ages
- ✓ battle of the bands
- ✓ story corps/oral history to use on projects such as Veteran's History Project, immigrants' stories, and peoples' everyday lives
- ✓ children's art
- ✓ art gallery for local exhibits and traveling exhibits – preferably on 1st floor so more visible
- ✓ traveling exhibits
- ✓ Computer classes at regular intervals more often for all levels
- ✓ Programs with need for larger stage and higher ceilings

b. program audit

- ✓ don't duplicate programs provided by park district, senior center, teen center
- ✓ do provide services that others don't provide
- ✓ include all ages, at appropriate times of day
- ✓ maintain collections to support programs/projects

Literacy, diversity, citizenship

- ✓ rooms for tutoring
- ✓ language collections in one space
- ✓ foreign language cataloging
- ✓ passport services
- ✓ other citizenship services; pathways to citizenship
- ✓ advertise that library is a neutral territory
- ✓ support Oakton College classes/programs
- ✓ coordinate spaces/times/programs: something for one to do while the other is in literacy program
- ✓ storage for literacy
- ✓ expand International Fest to a month, with more programs and services during that time
- ✓ staff and volunteers to speak different languages
- ✓ Library cards and applications in more languages (now English, Spanish, and Polish)

Online Services/ Information Literacy/Connect to the Online World

- ✓ rework website; use consultant; ask patrons how they use or react to various aspects of the website
- ✓ technology fair – do more often? And, more computer classes (staffing issues with expertise needed)
- ✓ catalog/flyers in other languages
- ✓ online staffing expertise
- ✓ staff training
- ✓ enough bandwidth
- ✓ technology audit of people who come to classes, fair, have expertise to share
- ✓ retrain staff to use other technology as their jobs change

Other

- ✓ additional sites
- ✓ more computers – laptops to replace computer labs?
- ✓ more hours—weekends, evenings
- ✓ staff implications of expanded services/computers/hours
- ✓ spaces for volunteers
- ✓ other staff needs?
- ✓ Off-site branch/presence?
- ✓ Open more hours?

Retreat participants requested more details about concerns expressed in the staff focus groups. Create a staff committee to provide more specifics and suggestions? Staff association? More staff meetings? What can department heads do to address the issues, and what is the responsibility of the rest of the

staff? To alleviate stress on staff during process – staff will get involved later in process – to give feedback, implement plan and communicate to patrons. Staff have a stake in the process – we need to let them know they are important in the process.

It was asked amongst staff members if they agreed to hold off on process. Board members did not agree. Susan did suggest we tread lightly until more census information is released.

NEXT STEPS

Proceed in an orderly manner.

- ✓ track census data
- ✓ write up priorities from today's retreat; review with participants, share with staff
- ✓ sign contract with architect
- ✓ do audit of mechanical, electrical, other systems
- ✓ determine whether to pursue LEED certification
- ✓ visit other libraries for ideas
- ✓ have architect design a program
- ✓ department heads review/revise program
- ✓ invite staff to review program and share observations
- ✓ study building envelope before getting creative
- ✓ have architect prepare drawings
- ✓ flesh out design/draft statement including big pictures and bullet points of specific projects; present it to the board
- ✓ finalize design; department heads review again
- ✓ share with staff and patrons – need to translate our priorities to language patrons can understand. Don't need to go into detail – but need to communicate that we heard your ideas and concerns and acted upon them.

QUESTIONS

Lon suggested that the front/Circulation area seems to be critical. Asked how to stage the project – what comes first?

Barb asked about the need for reworked staff space – doesn't fit into any of the listed priorities. Lon responded that it would come up at the stage of meeting with the architect when planning spaces in the library.

Idea came up to create Volunteer Space with computers, tables, supplies, lockers, etc. to allow staff space to remain staff space.

When architect is writing program for space needs – we can involve entire staff or reps in each department. It was brought up that to bring in the entire staff with architect would be good addition to upcoming staff day in August. Lon said that at Gail Borden Library – he worked with all 120 staff members and the process actually went quicker than working with reps because all got first-hand access instead of reps needing to go back and explain process to others. Also, the process was more visible for all because all worked with images instead of it being described to them.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:45pm

President

Secretary