

December 12, 2008

Meeting: Library Task Force for Revitalization
Thursday, December 11, 2008
Grand Forks Library Meeting Room

Members in

Attendance: Jim Hovey, Caprice Benoit, Doug Carpenter, Kenneth Dawes, Paul Holje, Dorette Kerian, Carol Lamberson, Kathy McFarlane, Brian Osowski, Ann Pederson, Brian Poykko, Lana Rakow, Jeff Regimbal, and Brian Schill

Also Present: Beth Postema, Deputy Director, Fargo Public Library
David Haney, GF Library Tri-Directory and head of Technology
Toni Vonasek, GF Library Tri-Director and head of Reference Department
Connie Wylot, GF Library Tri-Director and Administrative Assistant
Marilyn Hagerty, *Grand Forks Herald*

Members

Absent: Ginny Dullum, Rhonda Schwartz, and Susan Mickelson

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 by Chair Jim Hovey.
2. Meeting dates for January were discussed. It was decided the next meeting will be Thursday, January 8, at 7 p.m.
3. Jim introduced Beth Postema, Deputy Director of the Fargo Public Library. Beth has been on staff at the Fargo Public Library for 19 years. She has served as Interim Director twice and has been involved in the current planning and building process from its inception. The entire process has taken a total of five years for fundraising, planning, and construction. They are currently anticipating an April 25, 2009, grand opening celebration of the new facilities.

Following are specific items of interest mentioned during Beth's presentation:

- The Fargo Public Library was built in 1904, remodeled in 1939, and expanded in 1968. In 1999 – 2000 a planning process was funded by a grant from the Stern Family Foundation.

- In 2002 South Pointe branch was opened in an existing store front with 3500 sq. ft. The branch was very popular. Children's programs eventually had to be discontinued because of space issues; there were too many children attending the programs and not enough space was available.
- A facilities master plan was developed by Robert A. Rolf Associates. Throughout the process of developing the plan, interviews were conducted with library staff and citizens. The final plan included a north side store-front library, a main library in the downtown area, and another branch on the south side of Fargo.
- To help fund the new construction and to provide for the ongoing costs of operation, FPL went to the Fargo voters and asked for a half-cent increase in sales tax for a period of 18 months. The election results were successful, and city residents approved the funding process with a 61% "yes" vote. Almost \$13 million was raised through the half-cent, 18-month sales tax, and 10% of this amount was set aside for future operations.
- The Fargo Library chose to conduct fundraising before hiring an architect, so the buildings were designed with a specific budget in mind. Hodge Cramer was hired to assist with fundraising, and naming opportunities were used as part of the process.
- Beth stressed that each community is different. She strongly recommends hiring architects who specialize in library design and working with a local civil engineer who is familiar with specific local construction issues.
- It's critical to have staff involvement; be certain everyone is on the same page. Partnerships are key; work on relationship building!
- Always be aware of advancing technology and try to "future-proof" the buildings as much as possible. FPL construction features a limited number of walls, mobile furnishings, an abundance of open area, floor boxes for electrical access, and a power grid throughout the building.
- While planning and building, Beth noted three main considerations that were important to their process: **cost, quality, and size**. Beth is of the opinion that you can control two out of the three, but you can't have all three.

Duly submitted,

Toni Vonasek
Recording Secretary