

COUNTY LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

September-October 2012

October 17, 2012

Welcome and introductions: A fond farewell with great appreciation, admiration, gratitude and thanks to retiring Library Advisory Board member, Margaret Crawford, for 32 years of exemplary service representing District 1. A hearty welcome to Bill Campbell, West Sacramento resident, small business owner, veteran, West Sacramento Friends of the Library member and commensurate alcouve incoming Library Advisory Board member representing District 1 and Supervisor Mike McGowan.

Library Budget Update: A meeting with the County Administrator Patrick Blacklock and Deputy County Administrator Mindi Nunes regarding our diminishing fund balance brought home the need for some creative thinking in spending and conservative approaches to the work ahead and the need for some ongoing transparent intentionality and clarity as we move forward in our dynamic strategic planning process.

1. The first idea would be to be very clear with our partner advocates – our Friends of the Library and the staff - about the budget – how funds are received and the sources and what expenses look like and priorities in spending reflected in goals and objectives, most developed with staff and community input. Communication is key.
2. The second focus is to provide critical leadership opportunities for staff teams to examine the work we do and set SMART goals - Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely – that reflect our County and Library strategic directions and resonate with their priorities of exemplary customer service.
3. As we are evolving into an organization that is responsive to the changing needs of our growing and diverse community, developing key partnerships, we are exploring a broader and more comprehensive exploration of our MISSION and VISION. A leadership sub-team has been assembled to develop some preliminary words that will provide a refreshed look at our current and future work. The next steps will involve broad staff and customer review.
4. In the spirit of transparency, recent work with the staff and community has involved consultant experts in the area of **strategic development and planning** and **inclusion**. The Library had set aside funds more than five years ago, through savings, to use for the purposes of Strategic Planning

when the time was right. The last planning process concluded more than ten years ago in 2001 and focused on a facilities master plan. It was critical that we introduce additional planning at a time and place where staff and community readiness was optimal, FOLLOWING the larger initiatives of the three building programs and the staff position analysis. So while it may appear odd that the funding for the Strategic Planning and Inclusion has coincided with our need to reduce funding in key areas, the dollars were from a different savings structure set aside specifically for these efforts. All questions about the budget and library priorities are indeed welcome from the public and from our staff.

5. The budget is a flexible, dynamic tool that we use to gauge and guide our service development, priorities, and we need to sometimes shift based on economic stressors and other factors. There is indeed a cause and effect as expected revenues from a variety of resources can shift – libraries are known for being one of the most responsive community organizations. We can and will shift based on need and we try to make things work whenever possible. When our funding was reduced close to \$500,000 this past year, as an organization, we needed to look carefully at each contribution, each revenue source, where funds were coming and how we spent the money, judiciously and deliberately. With key leadership and guidance from staff we made careful decisions to cut back on materials allocation, planned delays on replacement of technology and unfortunately, reduction in part-time allocation. This has resulted in more staff time on public desks and also fewer resources to the public.

Recent stressors - less revenue from our property tax valuation, the impact of the languishing economy on our Friends' contributions, and the increased cost of operations, including providing much needed benefits for our hardworking staff – have indicated a need for creative measures to contain costs.

Creative Partner Contributions

We applaud our Winters Joint Unified School District partners who are providing several student interns to cover open library hours each weekday morning and all day on Fridays (one hour closed for lunch) to maximize our ability to remain open as a full service branch to both the public and the school.

As fund contributions are reduced in key areas throughout the County, we need to maintain that balance of providing as many open hours as possible, but also focusing on the service we provide virtually through the Internet. Broadband internet access is critical throughout the County – access to information is needed in all corners of Yolo County. The Library

is leveraging our partnerships and resources with many other entities, some nonprofit, some government, to enhance and broadcast our wifi capabilities and to provide robust, strengthened access to our communities that have the greatest need.

Strategic Plan Update:

Library Policy Team members are working with staff teams, committees and other groups to develop goals and objectives in the three key Strategic areas:

Chamber of Services: Yolo County Nonprofit Service Leadership

Library leaders *Dana Christy and Rachel Wolf* will lead the second meeting of the Yolo NonProfit Service Leadership on October 24, 2012, with a facilitated presentation by LAFCo Executive Director Christine Crawford on shared service models at Yolo County and in Orange County. The conversation may generate ideas of integrating collaborative actions at the nonprofit level. There are more than 600 nonprofits and service organizations throughout Yolo County. The group hopes to work with Yolo Community Foundation leadership to explore training and capacity building opportunities for all.

Workforce Development:

Library leaders *Sara Ferguson and Kim Sheppard* are working with several staff teams, including YoloReads – the Library’s Adult Literacy service, and our pilot virtual program, JobScout, to identify ways to enhance our customer experience in learning and enhancing skills in the areas of computer literacy, job hunting career and occupational employment and development.

Learning and Personal Development:

Library leaders *Chris Crist and Jay Johnstone* are shepherding this large effort with the capable assistance of staff to address development of service goals for Yolo County youth and adults.

This Strategic Direction has several components.

To Promote Reading as a beneficial activity, service will highlight:

- preparing children aged 0-5 for school
- offering K-12 students a supportive environment for homework completion and supplemental study
- promoting reading to the general public

Promoting Community Memory:

Archives Coordinator *Analu Josephides* is working with the team to address the focus on Community Memory

- Collect, preserve, curate and provide access to content created by Yolo County residents.

- Provide access to information about all things Yolo County

Improve Literacy:

Assistant County Librarian Elizabeth Gray and literacy lead Maria Sandoval are working with the team to strengthen adult community capacity for learning.

Provide an enriched environment for self-directed discovery, creativity and learning

Inclusion Report

The Library staff worked with Jody Alyn from Jody Alyn Consulting to discuss the sometimes difficult conversation about inclusion: what is it and why it matters and how it pertains to the work that we do and the communities we serve. Inclusion is part of the framework for the work we do together and permeates our Strategic Visioning. Several key documents were shared with staff and we hope to integrate conversations throughout the organization on a regular basis, to keep this at the forefront.

Friends of the Library Leadership Meeting

County Librarian Patty Wong and Assistant County Librarian Elizabeth Gray will be meeting with the Presidents (or their designees) of the Friends of the Library/County Archives organizations beginning October 26.

GRANTS Review

Current Grants:

First 5 Yolo – Enhanced Family Resource Centers – 3 years for a total of \$150,000

NEW – Kaiser Permanente Sustainability Grant - \$50,000 for 211 service

NEW – Youth Development Network Strength Based Initiative - \$10,000 value – training for the Library Management Team (8 individuals)

HR Update –

AFT Library Associate (in recruitment process)

211 Program Manager (with DESS, recruitment to follow conclusion of Library Associate conclusion)

LAB Board Development – Alan Smith conducted a complimentary CALTAC board development training. Topics included the Brown Act, Library Advisory Boards vs. Library Administrative Boards, Success Strategies for Boards, What Can We Do to Help Our Board Be Effective, Steps for Getting Elected Officials to

Write Letters of Support with impactful sample letters. The group work involved decision and priorities of engagement with all members developing a framework of annual activities to promote the library and the LAB role within the community. More planning to be formally agendized in future meetings.