

Lower Level Renovation Joint Fundraising Meeting
Library Trustees, Lower Level Renovation Committee, and Friends of the BFL
Wednesday, 3/27/13

Present: Lori Fisher (Library Director), Ingrid White (Trustee, LLRC), Tom Ives (Trustee, LLRC), Ann Hoey (Trustee), Eric Anderson (LLRC), Gary Nysten (LLRC), Mark Leven (Trustee), Paul Rizzi (LLRC), Rita Morrison (President, Friends of the BFL), Christine Carey (Friends of the BFL)

Also present: Leah Shuldiner, LCS Associates, fundraising consultant/campaign counsel

Meeting called to order: 5:05pm by Tom Ives.

Introduction by Tom Ives: This meeting was set up to order and organize the time line for the lower level renovation, which needs to move along now - there is a window of opportunity with potential donors and the town of Bow as the public safety project failed to pass, relieving some of the perceived pressure on the tax payers.

Feasibility study: Leah Shuldiner from LCS Associates reviewed the feasibility study performed by herself and her group. She noted that the low response from the original reach-out was concerning (Out of 30 people approached, only 10 agreed to the interview, and of those, only 2 would consider a gift of \$10,000). She noted that though everyone supported the library, the top gift possible seemed to be in the \$10-\$20,000 range. There was a perception that the fundraising possibilities for this project were limited, and that generally any fundraising from the community would be difficult. She noted that nobody offered to be one of the top level donors (\$60,000), and no one interviewed knew of someone who they thought would give a top level donation.

Discussion: Tom Ives brought up the concern that the sample size might have been too small for us to make decisions on our fundraising goals. Ingrid White noted that we included people who were known to be against the project, which may bias our findings negatively. Mark Leven noted that the opinions from the interviews still seemed valuable, and that we should consider changing our fundraising goal accordingly. Gary Nysten suggested that since the public safety building project did not pass, maybe now people will be more positive because they will not feel as much tax pressure. Ingrid White asked if we should go out and interview more people now after the town meeting.

Mark Leven stated there are two questions - when are we going to do the project, and how are we going to pay for it? He feels that we will not be able to raise the \$300,000.

Tom suggested that the businesses were very underrepresented in the feasibility study, and that the money will be able to be raised if we ask the right people.

Leah Shuldiner thinks our top gift will be \$30,000.

Mark Leven asked about the grass roots, smaller donation level, as exemplified by the Heritage Commission. Gary Nylan responded that it has worked well for smaller amounts of money - they have raised about \$7-10,000 over the course of a year.

Ingrid White stated that regardless, we have to move forward as we are not going to give up on the project - she questioned, do we go forward the same way or not? Should we offer naming rights? Should we give up on the big gift requests?

Leah Shuldiner said it is better to lower expectations than to fail to meet a goal - failure makes fundraising very difficult as people will not look at it as a good investment and it is disheartening for the fundraisers themselves. We also need to know what to say to donors who ask, what happens to my donation if the town does not meet your goal? We have to be able to say that we will be using that money for the renovations, even if the town does not meet our goal and that the project might take several years.

Lori Fisher asked if we should use the feasibility study results to explain to potential donors and the Town of Bow why we are scaling back on our private fundraising portion? Leah agreed, and that it is better to exceed our goals than fail to meet them.

Rita Morrison asked when do we have to decide how long the process should take? If we are clear about our time line, the town would probably be willing to support us.

No final amount to request from the town was finalized.

Draft Case Statement: Tom Ives moved the group on to our need for a concise message that everyone agrees on. The brochure/case statement was reviewed. The question was brought up, "What is the objective?" What does the community need from the library? Lori Fisher created a subcommittee to work on the message/brochure. (Members are listed below).

Questions/issues to be answered by FAQ page:

parking

foundation status

do we need more meeting space?

Does this conflict with town center project?

Will library have to increase staff?

Accessibility of new space?

Parking subcommittee: (see members, below). Tom reviewed where we stand. Still a work in progress. We need 28 spaces to proceed with the renovation, and we need a significant contract for long term with anybody we deal with, from a legal point of view.

Time line discussion: The group reviewed the tentative time line written up by Lori Fisher and Leah Shuldiner. (**See partial time line at end of notes). Any request money from the town at the 2014 town meeting has to be submitted by June 2013.

Ann Hoey asked if we should even ask for money from the town in 2014, or should we skip a year? Should we spread it out over multiple years? Ingrid White asked if we want a bond instead? Eric Anderson noted that if we bond we need a 2/3 majority vote rather than simple majority and a ballot vote as well so that makes it less appealing.

When asked about spreading the fundraising out over a year, Leah Shuldiner stated that we should run all of our major fundraising at the same time instead of piecemeal, and have it all done over the course of 3-6 months. She said we need more fundraisers to be able to solicit the large number of people we will need to ask to get our target. Leah then reviewed the process of solicitation, noting that we would go out in teams of two, that the meetings would take at least 20-30 minutes, and that we may need two to three meetings with a potential donor. We need to show donors that this is a good "investment."

Given these changes, construction should be in second half of 2015.

Donation pyramid: Mark Leven wondered if we need to restructure the ask/donation pyramid - the group agreed and below is the suggested pyramid:

1 donor- \$30,000
2 donors - \$15,000
4 donors - \$10,000
10 donors - \$5,000
50 donors - \$1,000
Total: \$200,000 plus many small donations

That means we have to get approximately 67 donors. Paul Rizzi asked, how many people do we have to solicit? Leah Shuldiner said that we need to talk to at least 3 people for the top gift, and we need to talk to 100-120 people/businesses in total. That means at least 25, if not 50 people doing the soliciting. More people need to be found to participate in either the Lower Level Committee or one of the subcommittees.

Fundraising events: Leah suggested that there are several types. One type that can happen early on is a small group meeting with several potential donors at one time, which makes it easier to reiterate the message and answer questions with more people at once, and easier to identify possible donors. One possibility is a series of early morning breakfast meetings with business owners. Big public events should come later in the campaign, once the big donations have come in.

BFL Foundation: Will the foundation be ready to accept donations in time? A bank account is available currently, but the foundation status should be ready by the end of the summer. The Foundation board will meet in early April.

Subcommittees:

Parking committee: Gary Nylén, Tom Ives, Ingrid White

Messaging committee: Lori Fisher, Gary Nylén, Christine Carey, Eric Anderson

Foundation board members: In process

Major gifts committee: PENDING

Special events committee: PENDING
Corporate campaign committee: PENDING

Issues for the next meeting:

report from subcommittee on parking
report on Foundation formation
report/document from the Case statement committee
 we need a simplified case statement, bullet points, eventually a 35 second
 elevator presentation, ad material for newspaper, a FAQ sheet
Time line will be again reviewed and revised.
More people will be asked to join the group.

Meeting concluded at 7:20pm

THE NEXT MEETING IS MONDAY, 4/15/13, 5:00PM AT THE LIBRARY.

****proposed BFL lower level campaign timeline for 2013/14**

3/27/13 - Lower Level Renovation Joint Fundraising Meeting

April 2013 - Finalize case statement at 4/15 meeting & review gaps in FAQ info

May 2013 – Solicitation training; finalize FAQ; begin presenting case to town organizations

June 2013 - by 6/1 CIP requests to CIP committee for 2014 town meeting: warrant article drafts to finance director; begin Major Gifts and Corporate Solicitations

July 2013 - Meet with CIP committee/planning board on CIP requests/warrant articles

Sept 2013 - Draft library budget to town manager by mid-Sept

Sept/Oct 2013 – Special event?

Oct/Nov 2013 - Joint BOS/budget committee meeting on warrant articles and budget

Dec 2013 - *Finish campaign solicitations*

Jan 2014 - Meeting with budget committee mid Jan

Feb 2014 - Public hearing early Feb

3/12/14 - Town meeting