

**Future of the Library Task Force  
Meeting Eight Minutes - Approved  
Morrison Regional Library  
January 18, 2011**

**ATTENDANCE**

<b>Task Force Members</b>			
<b>NAME</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>
Jim Woodward, Chair	YES	Leonora Kaufmann	YES
Jeff Armstrong	YES	Gloria Kelley	YES
Bob Bisanar	YES	Bill Millett	NO
Alan Blumenthal	YES	Bernie Simmons	YES
Pamela Davies	YES	Scott Stone	NO
Michael DeVaul	YES	Julie Szeker	YES
Geneal Gregory	YES	Connie Wessner	YES
Andy Heath	YES	Ed Williams	YES
Carol Hull	YES		
<b>Non-Task Force Members</b>			
Cyndee Patterson, The Lee Institute	YES	Barbara Moran, UNC Chapel Hill	NO
Alli Celebron-Brown, The Lee Institute	YES	Nancy Burnap, MarketWise	YES
Jeanne Kutrow, The Lee Institute	YES	Cordelia Anderson, Library	YES
Vance Yoshida, La Piana Consulting	YES	Danny Diehl, Mecklenburg County	YES

Dr. Woodward welcomed Task Force members to the eighth meeting of the Library Task Force and thanked them for their continuing service. Guests were welcomed to the meeting and Dr. Woodward extended a particular welcome to Carol Hickey, Management Analyst, Mecklenburg County, who will be the liaison from the County to the Task Force for the remainder of the process.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the January 4, 2011 meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved as written.

Dr. Woodward turned the meeting over to Vance Yoshida, La Piana Consulting. Mr. Yoshida reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Alli Celebron-Brown, The Lee Institute, reviewed the procedure for using the green, yellow and red cards that were introduced at the January 4, 2011 meeting. When an issue or question is proposed to the group, holding up a green card indicates that the Task Force member agrees with the proposal; a yellow card indicates that the Task Force member is comfortable with the proposal; and a red card indicates that the Task Force member doesn't agree with the proposal, but would like some additional information. Holding up a red card does not totally block progress, but allows time for questions and determining what is keeping the red card holder from a yellow or a green. The goal of the process is to come to the best possible decision based on the resources and information available.

Mr. Yoshida introduced Dr. Nancy Burnap, MarketWise Consulting, for an update on the survey.

Dr. Burnap said that the survey will come out of the field on Thursday, January 20, 2011 and she will spend the next week analyzing the data. Dr. Burnap will give a full report on the results at the February 1, 2011 Task Force meeting.

Dr. Burnap explained that the telephone survey provides a random sampling of the population. The web survey, which is in the process of being finalized, uses an opt-in process, so is not considered a random sampling and is not as representative as the telephone survey. There is not a method for doing a random survey via the web. The online survey will give other people in the community a chance to participate in the process, especially those who might have heard about the phone survey, but were not called.

Dr. Burnap said that the online survey should be live Wednesday, January 19, 2011 or Thursday, January 20, 2011. The survey will be short, less than five minutes. The survey will be available on the Library's home page, the County's home page and the County will send out a press release about survey. Dr. Burnap stated that the survey would be left open for about a month. MarketWise has agreed to conduct short, feedback surveys for the Library for the remainder of the year on whatever topic the Library would like to address.

The meeting was turned over to Dr. Woodward. Dr. Woodward stated that several Task Force members have suggested that subcommittees be formed to address particular issues. Dr. Woodward proposed that five subcommittees be formed, each to address a specific topic. Each subcommittee would be composed of three Task Force members, with one subcommittee having four members. Dr. Woodward commented that serving on a subcommittee was not a requirement, that some Task Force members may already be overburdened with commitments.

Each subcommittee will address a specific topic and will have the latitude of expanding the topic as it has been presented by Dr. Woodward and the consultant staff. All subcommittee reports will come back to the entire Task Force for consideration and action.

Dr. Woodward reported that two subcommittees have already been formed:

1. What are the pros and cons, as viewed from the perspective of the Library and from the perspective of the County, to the Library becoming a unit of Mecklenburg County?

Bob Bisanar has agreed to serve as chair of the subcommittee and Ed Williams and Michael DeVaul have agreed to serve on the subcommittee.

2. What criteria should guide the decision to implement a program and what internal approval process should be followed?

Pamela Davies has agreed to serve as chair of the subcommittee. Leonora Kaufmann and Scott Stone have agreed to serve on the subcommittee.

Dr. Woodward presented four additional topics as possibilities for subcommittees to address:

3. What should be done to improve the interaction between the Library and the County on operational matters and on strategic topics?
4. What are the funding alternatives for the Library in the future?
5. What key characteristics should define the Library of the future?
6. What are the alternatives for the use of facilities that might close?

Dr. Woodward asked the Task Force to think about which of the subcommittees they would like to serve on. Task Force member will be asked to turn in their first and second choices. The staff will gather the information and make subcommittee assignments.

A Task Force member commented that there was a discussion around the Library of the Future on the agenda for meeting, so that a subcommittee addressing this topic may not be necessary.

Question: The discussion around alternative uses for Library facilities that may close, is there a better group, rather than the Task Force to determine those alternatives and options.

Dr. Woodward responded that the Task Force needs to speak to that issue and address it in some manner.

A Task Force member commented that maybe the Task Force doesn't need to look at alternative uses, but does need to look at the question more closely than they have to date.

Question: Should the County look at this issue?

Dr. Woodward responded that the people of Mecklenburg County own the Library buildings.

A Task Force member commented that this questions feels different that the other questions. It feels operationally different, like putting the cart before the horse. If there is a subcommittee looking at alternative uses of closed facilities, it puts a position out there that the Task Force may not want to take just yet.

Dr. Woodward stated that what he heard the Task Force members expressing was questions #3 and #4 should definitely be addressed by committees and there was hesitation around questions #5 and #6, although this issue had been raised during the discussion around the Main Library and ImaginOn.

A Task Force member commented that looking at question #6 seemed premature until a decision has been made about which branches are going to close - unless the alternative use is part of the decision making process.

Dr. Woodward suggested that the question could be rephrased to read, "*What are some of the alternatives for usage of the facilities, particularly the Main Library and ImaginOn?*"

Dr. Woodward asked the subcommittees to report on their work to date.

Dr. Davies reported that the subcommittee addressing criteria and approval process for programming had met. They started with a discussion around the mission of the Library and programming in general. The subcommittee will meet again and will be ready to report at the next Task Force meeting.

Mr. Bisanar reported that the subcommittee addressing the pros and cons of the Library becoming a unit of Mecklenburg County had met and created an initial list of pros and cons. The subcommittee decided to tweak the question slightly and members have follow-up work to do. The subcommittee will be ready to report at the next Task Force meeting.

Dr. Woodward explained that the reports of the subcommittees will come back to the entire Task Force. The subcommittees will develop proposed recommendations, but will not be establishing final recommendations.

Mr. Yoshida commented that preliminary recommendations from the two subcommittees already formed will be presented at the next Task Force meeting. The consulting staff will put together the remaining subcommittees as soon as possible so they can begin their work.

Dr. Woodward gave a presentation on the key questions to be answered by the Task Force, using PowerPoint as a framework for his presentation. Copies were given to Task Force members and are available on <http://charmeck.org/libraryfuture>.

Dr. Woodward stated that two questions arose early on in the Task Force process related to the status of Library before budget reductions. Mecklenburg County has been generous in funding the Library and it has been recognized as one of the best Libraries in the country. But, with the budget reductions, the Library was forced to make cuts and that's why the Task Force exists.

The two questions that arose were:

- Relative to peer libraries, was the Library overfunded prior to the recent budget reductions?
- Relative to peer libraries, was the Library overbuilt prior to the recent budget reductions?

Dr. Woodward explained that he conducted research using the Public Library Data Service Statistical Report 2010. Libraries are polled and the data is aggregated by the size of the population that the libraries serve. The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library falls in the 500,000 to 999,999 category. There are 59 libraries in the United States and six in Canada that fall into this group. Of the 59 libraries in the United States, 50 responded to the survey and all six in Canada responded. Dr. Woodward commented that this creates a legitimate peer group to use for comparison purposes. Another legitimate peer group is the 13 communities identified using the Chamber's and the County's lists.

Dr. Woodward reminded the group that the data collected was for FY 2008-2009.

Dr. Woodward presented data and statistics (see PowerPoint for specifics) that shows that the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library funding is very close to average

for per capita funding for the survey peer group. When looking at the 13 comparable communities, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is well above some of the smaller communities, but not far off from some of the larger communities.

Dr. Woodward stated that the data presented was the best data the Task Force can use to consider whether the Library was overfunded prior to the budget reductions.

Dr. Woodward asked the Task Force if they had any questions.

A Task Force member commented that there were the usual concerns when dealing with numbers that were not tailored specifically for your use. For example, we do not know who pays for what out of the budget.

Dr. Woodward stated that the instructions to those submitting information in response to the survey was to not include capital costs.

Question: Are we looking at total funding, even if it from multiple sources?

Dr. Woodward responded that yes, the figures presented represented total funding and, overwhelmingly, it's local money. Charlotte Mecklenburg Library getting 90% of its budget from Mecklenburg County is not out of sync with these communities.

Dr. Woodward commented that the Task Force may need to qualify its statement on the issue of overfunding. When compared to the national group of peer communities, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is at the median and when compared to the 13 comparable communities, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is in the top quartile. If the Task Force can, it needs to make a statement on the overfunding and get past the issue.

Dr. Woodward then addressed the space issue. Dr. Woodward presented the square footage of the Library during 2008-2009, breaking out the Main Library and ImaginOn. During this time, the Library had 22 branches. Dr. Woodward commented that his initial reaction when coming onto the Task Force was that the Library had too many branches. But, how do you determine if the Library had too many? Dr. Woodward commented that the only way to make this determination is to look at the group of 55 peer communities.

Dr. Woodward presented that statistics (see PowerPoint for specific numbers) and commented that 16 of the 55 communities do not have a main or central library. In the bigger metropolitan areas, there is usually a main library. The median number of branches from the peer communities is 20; Charlotte Mecklenburg is currently operating 19 branches and if you count ImaginOn, there are 20 branches.

The statistics presented show that Charlotte is at the midpoint for the number of branches and you can't conclude that Charlotte Mecklenburg has too many branches.

Dr. Woodward then presented data on the total square footage of the libraries in the peer communities. If you look at total square footage for 2008-2009, the numbers show that Charlotte Mecklenburg was slightly on the high side. If you

exclude the square footage that is used for Library space at ImaginOn, the numbers drop somewhat. In either case, the square footage for Charlotte Mecklenburg is right in the middle of the list. Dr. Woodward commented that ImaginOn is a special asset for this community and can be considered as a special Library branch.

Question: Did the Library ever have reason to feel that of the 22 branches, certain branches were underutilized?

Dr. Woodward responded that an analysis looked at the relative usage of branches and that information influenced the decision about which branches to close.

Charles Brown, Director, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, stated that the Library Board identified four locations as underutilized. Belmont Center was small and had low usage, but meant a lot to the children and the community. Freedom Regional Library, in terms of the community list, is the most underutilized regional library location and that's why the Board made the decision to designate Beatties Ford as the regional library. No other locations would be considered to be underutilized.

Dr. Woodward asked the Task Force if they wanted to express their views on this question in the final report.

A Task Force member asked, "Do we want to include conclusions based on the data or the data itself?" The data was surprising. Now knowing this information, the Task Force member commented that it would be important to include it in the report.

Dr. Woodward commented that recommendations going forward have to be influenced by where the Library was before the budget reductions.

A Task Force member commented that if he were a County Commissioner, he would want a citizen's group to examine this issue and report back to the Commission. He felt that the County Commissioners would want the Task Force to report back on this.

Dr. Woodward commented that the data is not intended to imply any criticism. Elected officials want to make the best decisions going forward using the limited resources available.

A Task Force member commented that the data shows that Charlotte Mecklenburg was in the middle of the pack – it wasn't overfunded and it wasn't overbuilt. We were serving our population in a wise way, relative to our peer group.

A Task Force member asked, "Does this data suggest or confirm that libraries are inherently a local constituency?" Whether it's wise or not, it must be acknowledged that it is a local endeavor, to serve the population.

Dr. Woodward commented that the decisions were made by a group of people who were doing their best to serve a community. It's surprising that it came out to be so similar.

A Task Force member commented that it doesn't appear as if Charlotte Mecklenburg was overfunded or overbuilt, but it does appear that the cuts were more draconian.

Dr. Woodward commented that the third issue (the budget reductions) would be addressed when the full benchmarking study is available.

A Task Force member commented that the numbers presented were pre-reduction numbers and asked about the post-reduction numbers.

Cyndee Patterson, The Lee Institute, responded that those numbers are not yet available.

A Task Force member commented that nothing seems to be atypical. The only thing that seems different is that Charlotte Mecklenburg is taking a Main Library and spreading it across two locations.

A Task Force member commented that it's not a case of the County having the same pool of money over two years and changing the funding priorities. The County had a smaller pool of money and had to make decisions.

Dr. Woodward commented that the County made the best decision they could and the Task Force will address the cuts later.

A Task Force member commented, the question becomes, what's the new normal? We don't know what that is.

A Task Force member commented that the funding was appropriate at the time the decisions were made, but going forward, what are the right decisions?

A Task Force member commented that based on 2008-2009 data, Charlotte Mecklenburg was in the middle of the pack, but the Task Force needs to put the appropriate qualifier on it and then figure out the new normal.

Dr. Woodward explained that Robin Branstrom, Chair, Library Board, will make a report to the County Commissioners on Wednesday, January 19, 2011, and begin to request funding for the next fiscal year. In addition, Dr. Woodward has been asked to make a report. Dr. Woodward explained that he would like to report that the Task Force is making progress and that he will not express any statements that do not reflect the opinions of the body of the Task Force. Whatever Dr. Woodward says at the County Commission meeting needs to reflect the decision of the Task Force. He stated that he thought it would be helpful to the County Commission if he could express an opinion on this topic at the meeting.

Dr. Woodward asked Task Force members if there was a statement that they would feel comfortable about formally voting on that could be reported to the County Commissioners.

After discussion, the Task Force agreed that Dr. Woodward would prepare a final statement addressing this issue that includes language noting that prior to the recent budget reductions, based on 2008-2009 data from 55 peer libraries, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library was at the median related to funding and the

number of facilities and that the Library was slightly above average for square footage when including ImaginOn. The statement will be presented at the next Task Force meeting for a final vote. In addition, a version of the statement would be presented to the County Commission.

Dr. Woodward asked Task Force members to read the report he prepared and distributed in the packets, "Status of the Library before Funding Reductions." The report will be voted on at the next Task Force meeting. This study and vote will position the Task Force to formally act at the next meeting.

Dr. Woodward turned the meeting over to Mr. Yoshida.

Mr. Yoshida referred the Task Force to the "Examples of Questions to be Answered by the Task Force" in their packets. The 36 questions submitted by Task Force members were divided into categories according to subject. Mr. Yoshida suggested that the consultants assign each of the questions to one of the subcommittees. The subcommittees would address the questions and determine if they are relevant and if the Task Force should be addressing them. If they are relevant, then the subcommittee will address them specifically.

At the next Task Force meeting, there will be a report on the questions assigned to the subcommittees and a discussion around how to address those that weren't assigned to a subcommittee.

The Task Force agreed to the proposed process for addressing the questions.

Mr. Yoshida referred the Task Force to the "Major Decision Points" document in their packets. Mr. Yoshida proposed that the consultants assign the major decision points and questions to the subcommittees. If there are decision points that are not assigned to subcommittees, the Task Force will be advised on how those decision points will be addressed.

Mr. Yoshida asked Task Force members to keep in mind that the subcommittees will need to complete their work quickly. By the next Task Force meeting, or the following at the latest, each subcommittee will need to have preliminary recommendations to present to the Task Force for discussion. If the recommendations are ready for action, there can be approval. If they aren't, the subcommittee can revise the recommendations and present at the next meeting.

The Task Force took a 15 minute break.

Mr. Yoshida referred Task Force members to the draft Volunteer Recommendation found in their packets. Task Force members were asked to read the complete recommendation and rationale and background information.

Dr. Woodward commented that the intention of the recommendation is for the Library to use volunteers for 5% of the staffing required for basic Library services. The Library would pursue additional volunteers for programming.

A Task Force member suggested that the recommendation be rephrased: The Library should set a target of volunteer hours equating to 5% of its core Library services, with additional volunteers for programming.



Question: We don't think 9% is sustainable because of the demands on the paid staff or because interest will fall away?

Karen Beach, Director of Community Engagement, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, responded that the Library is not certain that it can sustain the 9% level of volunteers once the Library gets past the "crisis" situation.

Discussion was held around clarifying the recommendation and rationale. Suggested language included: We do not think that the Library can attract and retain enough volunteers to continue to meet the 9% level. It's about recruiting and retaining volunteers and concern about the strain on the Library staff of managing a large number of volunteers.

A Task Force member commented that the members of the community think that volunteers can play a large role in the operations of the Library. Is the Task Force managing that expectation well enough in this recommendation? It needs to be explicit that volunteers can be used to supplement the staff, but can't be used as a substitute.

A Task Force member commented that the 9% level is not sustainable or advisable.

Ms. Beach suggested that clarification be given around stating that the 5% is a target number. If there are means, the Library always wants to use additional volunteers.

A Task Force member commented that volunteers shouldn't be seen as substitutes for paid professional staff, but if there is another crisis situation, the Library will want flexibility. Don't want to convey that 5% is the absolute upper limit for volunteers.

After additional discussion and by a show of green cards, the Task Force agreed to the essence of the recommendation. The consultants will edit the document and bring the final document to the next Task Force meeting

Mr. Yoshida referred Task Force members to the draft Fundraising Recommendation found in their packets. Task Force members were asked to read the complete recommendation.

A Task Force member commented that this becomes the same discussion as the Volunteer recommendation – this is a supplement, but not a substitute. Is that clear enough in the recommendation? The recommendation needs to make it clear that this will supplement, but will never replace public funding.

Dr. Woodward stated that the recommendation includes a goal of \$200,000 for basic Library operations. It is the expectation of elected officials that the Library pursue additional fundraising. Dr. Woodward recommends that the \$200,000 be the target number.

Question: Do we think there should be a target of annual fundraising to offset basic Library operating costs?

Question: Do you mount an entire annual fund campaign for \$200,000? This is only 1% of the Library's budget. Does this warrant staff time, costs for mailing, etc.?

Ms. Beach commented that traditionally, the annual fundraising has resulted in \$200,000. This is pure annual fund dollars, primarily raised through a direct mail effort.

A Task Force member suggested that a good model for the Library could be one similar to the YMCA's model, doing fundraising at each of the branches.

Ms. Beach commented that the Library's fundraising is very staff driven and is not volunteer driven.

A Task Force member commented that moving toward a volunteer driven annual appeal might be a good direction.

Ms. Beach commented that the Library knows the priorities for fundraising and doesn't go out chasing money. Other money is raised that is restricted for specific programs or specific uses. Ms. Beach commented that the Library has not included the money raised for the collections in the counting on annual monies. This year, the Library has gone after funding for the collections and that is really a basic service of the Library. If these dollars are included, the dollar amount of money raised is much higher.

Question: How big is the Development Department?

Ms. Beach responded that there is one full-time person and about half of her own time for development. Up until the budget cuts, there were two full-time positions in development.

Question: Is the meaning of development fundraising?

Ms. Beach responded that development includes fundraising, relationship building and in-kind services.

Dr. Woodard commented that \$200,000 is a good sustainable figure with a longer term focus on a volunteer drive effort and an endowment.

Ms. Beach commented that she interprets the recommendation as stating the goal for fundraising is \$1,000,000 with \$200,000 going toward basic services. A Task Force member commented that he was worried that people will think this number is too low, but it's not realistic to think that the number will be much more than \$200,000.

A Task Force member commented that she liked the way the volunteer recommendation was presented – this is the recommendation and this is the rationale. The Task Force member suggested including what the Library is doing now and what the aspirational goal might be, 2% or 4% of the budget, for the future.

A Task Force member commented that she was concerned that the recommended goals are lower than what the Library is already doing with regard to volunteers and fundraising.

Dr. Woodward commented that the problem is how you count the money and if you set a goal that is too high (for example, \$2,000,000), that would take the Library's focus off of what they need to be doing and would consume them.

A Task Force member commented that if you don't have goals that seem to stretch you, people will question the goals. Need to make it clear that you recognize it is a new situation – need to be stretching. The Task Force member suggested that the recommendation set a fundraising goal and a long term goal of an endowment.

A Task Force member commented that we need to be careful about stretching ourselves too far given the political situation and the economic situation. We don't want to set-up expectations that we can find a lot more money immediately.

A Task Force member suggested that the recommendations stress that we have greater ambitions for the Library for the future. They should be crafted to call on the community and call on the Task Force.

A Task Force member proposed that the document be revised to bring the recommendation to the top and then present the rationale.

Question: Should we be setting goals for the Library or should it be a recommendation around recommending that the Library set a fundraising goal?

Dr. Woodward commented that the recommendation was crafted the way it was to protect the Library around fundraising expectations and to set the parameters.

A Task Force member commented that there is a feeling that you can go out and raise a bunch of money and maintain the system. The Task Force knows this can't be done and needs to be specific in the recommendation.

Question: The topic of whether the Library should consider establishing a Foundation is not mentioned? Should this be considered or included in the recommendation?

Dr. Woodward commented that this topic is on the agenda for the Board of Trustees meeting on January 19, 2011. Dr. Woodward will bring the Board's discussion and thoughts back to the Task Force. Dr. Woodward commented that he felt it was appropriate to consider a Foundation.

Ms. Patterson commented that the Library would need to establish a Foundation in order to conduct an endowment campaign.

Mr. Brown commented that he was not sure if it's absolutely necessary to set up a Foundation. In addition, Mr. Brown stated that the New York Public Library and some of the libraries supported by private dollars have very large development staffs, up to 100 people.

Dr. Woodward commented that \$1,000,000 is what the Library is currently raising, but that may be a stretch going forward. It is important to specifically address how much of that goes to basic services, in order to protect the Library.

It is critical for the long term viability and sustainability of the Library to establish an endowment.

Dr. Woodward continued by commenting that whether the Library needs a Foundation or not, is a legitimate thing for the Task Force to consider. Do they need a Foundation to properly organize for an endowment campaign? The current Board of Trustees is a small board to begin with that was appointed and not selected with an expectation of philanthropy.

A Task Force member commented that the Library might to create a larger Foundation Board that is charged with raising money.

A Task Force member commented that the recommendation needs to encourage the Library to think creatively about defining annual giving, their strategic priorities and the establishment of a Foundation.

After additional discussion and by a show of green cards, the Task Force agreed to the essence of the recommendation. The consultants will edit the document and bring the final document to the next Task Force meeting

Mr. Yoshida referred Task Force members to the “Characteristics of the Library of the Future – Recap of Task Force Input” document found in their packets. Mr. Yoshida explained that Task Force members were asked to submit key characteristics. Similar thoughts were consolidated. These characteristics will be used to address questions such as: What types of criteria would you use for determining types and locations of branches? Whether you would continue to have a branch at a particular location? Or would you close or consolidate some?

Question: Did the consultants pull together the information that was submitted and then add their input?

Mr. Yoshida answered that the questions were submitted directly by Task Force members and then organized and synthesized by the consultant team.

Question: Should we put together the framework and then pull in library professionals for additional guidance? This list seems a bit all over the place. This was one of the criticisms of the Library when they made their decisions about closings.

Mr. Yoshida suggested that the list of characteristics be given to a subcommittee. The subcommittee can gather as much information as possible and put together recommendations as to what the Library should be looking at for the future.

Ms. Patterson commented that the Task Force could ask Barbara Moran, Louis Round Wilson Distinguished Professor, School of Information and Library Science, UNC Chapel Hill, to work with the subcommittee in order to get key characteristics from her expertise. She could help address things you need to think about now in order to get to the future.

Dr. Woodward commented that the Task Force can't disengage from the reality of today. How do you accept some constraint, but not so much that you aren't really being visionary 10 years out? There isn't a single answer or a single outcome for a subcommittee.

Question: What is the purpose of looking at the Library of the Future? What is the purpose of determining the future of the Library?

Dr. Woodward responded that you must determine the future in order for the short term recommendations to be appropriate. For example, you make the decision to expand hours at two branches in fragile neighborhoods. Then the Library's funding is reduced, do you close additional branches in order to maintain the expanded hours at the two branches?

A Task Force member commented that she is worried about the investment in brick and mortar and the impact of technology. How is technology going to impact the Library?

Mr. Yoshida commented that a lot of the new nonprofits coming into existence are virtual – no bricks and mortar. They have employees all over the country and all over the world – but have no bricks and mortar.

A Task Force member commented that there is a dollar amount attached to everything that comes to a library, these things are free to users, but not to libraries. Libraries must pay for internet, databases, etc. We shouldn't think that we can sit here now and say what the library will look like in 10 years. We are dealing with the user of the library, we are dealing with the funding agency and we are dealing with more expensive products as you continue to add technology (subscriptions, fees, etc.).

A Task Force member commented that the fees and expenses for a library increase each year by 10 to 20% -- copyright fees, licensing fees, subscriptions, etc.

A Task Force member commented that it is more useful to talk about values and principles directing the Library. What we really care about is that every kid in the community has free access to Library. I'm more comfortable with that, rather predicting technology.

A Task Force member commented that the Task Force needs to remember two criteria – technology and being evolving and forward looking – helping to lead.

Dr. Woodward commented that certain trends can't be argued with. Electronic based information will continue to grow and become of increasing importance. Print materials will continue to grow, but at slower rate and will be of lesser importance. But, how they play out is almost impossible to predict.

Mr. Yoshida suggested that the Task Force could consider stating that these are trends that you see that are going on, we don't know how you should be responding, but you need to pay attention to them.

A Task Force member suggested that the Library could do environmental scans to determine what's out there.

Question: Is there competition for libraries?

Dr. Woodard commented that ancestry.com was a competitor for something that was once thought could only be done at a library.

A Task Force member commented that there is the possibility of exploring community partnerships that would use the library as the base of operation.

A Task Force member commented that the library serves an important community function as a gathering place, a common place, a different place.

A Task Force member commented that he agreed with the previous statement, but the library of today has two types of customers. One comes to a particular branch to use one or more of the services offered, the other is a customer who sits at a computer to use the services remotely.

Question: Can we put the raw statements about the Characteristics of the Library of the Future on Basecamp?

Mr. Yoshida responded that this would be done.

Mr. Yoshida asked Task Force members what they wanted to say about the Future of the Library.

A Task Force member stated, "Access to information is being impacted by environmental trends. The Library needs to be alert to those trends and how the public is accessing and using information."

Mr. Yoshida stated that the Task Force could say, "These are the trends we see going on. The Library needs to be aware of the trends and how they impact the use of the Library, bricks and mortar, etc."

Question: Do we have any better information about the Library's financial status for FY12? We know the Library is down \$500,000, do we know any more?

Dr. Woodward commented that the schools are projecting, but they don't have hard figures yet.

Mr. Yoshida asked the Task Force where they would like to go regarding the Library of the Future. Do you want to go with key trends that will affect the Library in the future?

A Task Force member stated that this was correct - these are the trends that we see that will impact the Library in the future and it needs to be mindful of.

A Task Force member commented that the Task Force should make a statement about the framework that should be used to analyze these trends. Here are some trends we've talked about as a citizens group. This is our vision and these are our values for how you interpret those trends. Establish a value statement that defines the chief characteristics of the Library. Every decision you make going forward should be compared to this. This is how we want you to look at it -- these are the functions we want you to address.

A Task Force member commented that the Task Force needs to address the short term, middle term, and long term.

Ms. Patterson commented that what the Task Force is describing is similar to what the Library and Board of Trustees developed -- the values that are going to guide the decisions.

A Task Force member commented that it's the fundamental pieces of this Library -- this is what this Library is -- this is what we'll cling to.

Dr. Woodward commented that the Task Force really needs to comment on the trends -- technological as well as societal. The disadvantaged folks in the community, those that don't have home access to the internet -- that group will grow in this society. There will be increasing demand for limited revenues -- that is a trend that will affect us. The Library of the Future will have to address place, printed material, and electronically based material. You can have a site that only does one of those. We have sites now that do all three at reduced hours. We could certainly differentiate in the future and have sites that only provide some or one of the services. That will probably be electronic access. Maybe place will grow in importance, too.

A Task Force member commented that it feels like if you can lay out a framework like that, the Library could be more nimble based on the needs of the community. The Task Force members would add access to information to information to the list -- that's implied when stating electronic and print information, but feels like it needs to be more specific.

A Task Force member commented that he would like to look at the possibility of partnerships, the Library could provide the place if an organization provides the services or vice versa.

Mr. Yoshida suggested that a subcommittee be established to address the list of trends that the Task Force feels would impact the Library as well as the criteria for the Library to use when looking at those trends.

Dr. Woodward commented that the Task Force needs to differentiate between strategic trends and operational trends.

A Task Force member commented that either one in isolation doesn't fulfill the Task Force's charge -- agree with both -- here are the trends and here is a vision.

The consultants asked the Task Force members to write down their first and second choices for subcommittees.

Mr. Yoshida asked the Task Force to think about the criteria for the branches. This will be one of the major recommendations from the Task Force -- where branches should be and how that should be determined. The Task Force will need to have a discussion around that.

Dr. Woodward commented that the survey results will be presented at the next Task Force meeting. The Task Force will need that data before beginning discussion around branches.

It was suggested that the subcommittees present recommendations in the style of the volunteer recommendation -- recommendation first and then rationale.

The revised volunteer and fundraising recommendations will be prepared based on the discussion of the group. Dr. Woodward commented that it is important to have formal statements that reflect the feeling of the Task Force.

Dr. Woodward thanked the Task Force members for their time and commitment.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be February 1, 2011 at 3:00 p.m. at the Morrison Regional Library.