**ATTENDANCE**

| Task Force Members | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **NAME** | **PRESENT** | | **NAME** | **PRESENT** |
| Jim Woodward, Chair | YES | | Leonora Kaufmann | YES |
| Jeff Armstrong | YES | | Gloria Kelley | YES |
| Bob Bisanar | YES | | Bill Millett | YES |
| Alan Blumenthal | YES | | Bernie Simmons | YES |
| Pamela Davies | YES | | Scott Stone | YES |
| Michael DeVaul | YES | | Julie Szeker | YES |
| Geneal Gregory | NO | | Connie Wessner | YES |
| Andy Heath | YES | | Ed Williams | YES |
| Carol Hull | YES | | | |
| Non-Task Force Members | | | | |
| 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. Jim Woodward welcomed all to the ninth meeting of the Task Force.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the January 18, 2011 meeting.  The minutes were unanimously approved as written.

Dr. Woodward introduced and welcomed Vick Phillips, Interim Chief Executive Officer of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.

Vance Yoshida, La Piana Consulting, reviewed the meeting agenda.  Mr. Yoshida commented that there was a substantial amount of information to cover during the meeting and he would push members to move through the material and to make decisions.

Mr. Yoshida turned the meeting over to Dr. Nancy Burnap, MarketWise Consulting.  Dr. Burnap gave a presentation on the Key Findings from the Mecklenburg County Community Survey and the Community & Library User Survey using PowerPoint as a framework for her presentation.  Copies were given to Task Force members and are available on http://charmeck.org/libraryfuture.

Dr. Burnap presented key findings from a survey conducted by MarketWise in December 2010 for Mecklenburg County addressing the community's priorities for funding and key findings from the survey conducted in January 2011 for the Library Task Force. Specific details from both surveys, including methodology, demographic statistics and results can be found in the PowerPoint.

Dr. Woodward asked if the survey conducted for Mecklenburg County had been conducted before. Dr. Burnap responded that the survey was created for this particular situation and is the first one she has conducted for Mecklenburg County.

Dr. Burnap reported that the results for the question "If library funding is reduced further, which of the following options do you think is best for this community?" showed that the two responses "Do not close more library branches, keep the current branches which are within 3 miles of most residents and reduce operating hours even more" and "Close more branches as long as the remaining branches are within 5 miles of most residents and have operating hours that are increased" are in a "dead heat" for the Total Community respondents.

Dr. Woodward asked why Dr. Burnap concluded that the responses were a dead heat.

Dr. Burnap responded that the sampling error for the survey is 4.9 percentage points. This means that if you did the survey over and over and over, the results would come within 4.9 percentage points from the number that is reported. When you look at the responses for the Total Community for this question, there is no statistical difference between the two responses since they are within 4 percentage points of one another.

A Task Force member asked if alternatives other than closing branches were offered to the question "If library funding is reduced further, which of the following options do you think is best for this community?"

Dr. Burnap stated no additional options were offered.

Dr. Burnap reported that a web survey is currently being offered on the Library's website and the Task Force's website. It is open to anyone to respond, so it will not represent random sampling of the population. There have been 1,600 respondents to date, primarily library users. One of the questions asked in the online survey is, "In your opinion, is it acceptable to have a library branch within 5 miles of most households or should they be closer?" To date, 65% of respondents have said it would be acceptable to have libraries within 5 miles of households.

A Task Force Member asked if in the statistics on how people use the Library, is there was any way to determine if people are doing more than one thing when they go to the Library – picking up a hold and using a computer, for example.

Dr. Burnap responded that it was not possible to determine that from these responses.

Dr. Woodward commented that he would welcome comments from the Task Force regarding the results of the survey. What strikes Task Force members as particularly interesting or out of sync?

Task Force members responded:

- More people go to the Library to use the computers than I thought they did
- There was a strong finding that people would protect the Libraries in fragile neighborhoods
- The core services differ along racial, economic and geographic lines
- There is fundraising potential

Dr. Burnap responded that the full data tables would be posted on Basecamp should Task Force members want to study the data even further.

Dr. Woodward introduced Jeff Michael, Director, UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, who gave a presentation on the final report comparing the FY08-FY11 Budget of Charlotte Mecklenburg Library with 13 peer communities. Mr. Michael used PowerPoint as a framework for his presentation. Copies of the presentation as well as the final report were distributed to Task Force members and are available on http://charmeck.org/libraryfuture.

Mr. Michael stated that the report included an explanation of the methodology used to gather the information and extensive footnotes. In each chart presented, Mecklenburg County has been placed at the top and is shaded grey. At the bottom of each chart, the 14 community average for the data presented is reported. In addition, there is a descriptive narrative with each table, which includes information on where the Charlotte Mecklenburg ranks compared to the other communities.

Mr. Michael stated that he and Eric Caratao, Social Research Specialist, UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, who conducted much of the research for the report, will be available to answer any questions the Task Force has.

Dr. Woodward stated that Mr. Michael and Mr. Caratao will be at the February 15, 2011 Task Force meeting to go into more detail about the report and to answer any questions the Task Force has.

Mr. Michael commented that there is a lot of nuance in the statistics and numbers presented. The Urban Institute attempted to explain the nuances in the appendices of the report. Mr. Michael encouraged Task Force members to let the Urban Institute know if they have any questions and they will get the answers.

Dr. Woodward commented that it is difficult to look at absolute funding in a given year. What is important is the change that occurred over a given year. In addition, the fact that the County has picked up building maintenance and security for the Library needs to be incorporated as a plus in this information.

Mr. Michael explained that the Urban Institute decided that the detailed tables containing data for each peer community contained too much information and will not be distributed to each Task Force member. These will be given to the Task Force consultants and will be available to anyone who would like the information.

Dr. Woodward commented that it is important for the Task Force to draw some observations about the report and the information presented. He asked Task Force members to look at the report in as much detail as they can and asked Mr. Michael and Mr. Caratao to plan to attend the February 15, 2011 Task Force meeting to answer questions.

Dr. Woodward turned the meeting over to Mr. Yoshida and Cyndee Patterson, The Lee Institute, to lead a discussion on the criteria the Task Force will use for making decisions.

Ms. Patterson explained that the Guiding Principles presented to the Task Force were developed by abbreviating the Guiding Principles developed by the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's Board of Trustees for making budget decisions. The Guiding Principles were presented to Task Force members via PowerPoint and copies were included in the material distributed.

A Task Force member asked of the existing Library branches, which are considered to be in fragile neighborhoods?

Charles Brown, Director, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library responded that the branches in fragile neighborhoods are West Boulevard, Freedom Regional/Beatties Ford Road, Sugar Creek and Scaleybark.

Mr. Yoshida asked how the Library determines if a branch is in a fragile neighborhood.

David Singleton, Director of Library Experiences, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, responded that the Library looks at household income within a three-mile radius of a branch to determine fragile neighborhoods. The Library has found that educational attainment is very closely allied with income levels, so the Library has used household income as a measure.

Dr. Woodward stated that if you look at the map that was provided by the County that showed fragile neighborhoods, two of the branches are on the edge of the neighborhoods defined as fragile by the County (Sugar Creek and Scaleybark) and two are within fragile neighborhoods (West Boulevard and Freedom Regional).

Sean Hogue, Vertere Capital Advisors, stated that the Library looked at the percentage of households with a household income of less than $50,000 per year within one mile of a branch as a percentage of all households to define fragile neighborhoods.

A Task Force member commented that in the Operational Priorities, the Task Force is saying that they need to define Library services based on the community the branch serves.  If we're going to have different kinds of libraries, how do we get at that?  What are the operational priorities that guide this type of decision?

A Task Force member asked if when looking at computer usage, is there any way to determine whether the type of use – recreational vs. learning?

Mr. Brown responded that the Library doesn't monitor the type of use of the computers.

The Task Force member asked if the Library had a general sense of the type of use.

Mr. Brown responded that he and Mr. Phillips have been traveling around the County visiting Libraries and have seen that some locations have to have computers available just for work development functions, in other locations it's a broad range of uses.

Mr. Singleton commented that some branches do have computers dedicated to specific uses, for example, early literacy or resources for students.  There are a range of computers within most facilities and most are open access and can be used for any type of use.

Ms. Patterson asked the Task Force if the principles presented are the right ones for the making the decisions that need to be made. Is the language right?  Are they tight enough?  Does the Task Force want the principles to be more specific?  Ms. Patterson explained that the principles presented were given as a starting point.  The Task Force's Principles do not have to mirror the Library Board's Principles.

A Task Force member commented that in the Guiding Principle that states "sensitive and responsive to community we serve" – is there one community that we're serving?  Or is there a variety of communities we're serving and we need to be sensitive and responsive to each of those?

Ms. Patterson responded, "Is it sensitive and responsive to fragile neighborhoods?"

Mr. Brown commented that the survey statistics around Latino use were staggering to him that 84% of Latinos use the lending materials.  Does the Library need to expand its Spanish language collection?  The Library tries to be responsive to the community – they have certainly added computers where there is a need.  But kids and adults still need print materials.

Dr. Woodward asked, "What does community mean in that statement."  His sense is that it is a composite community.  The Task Force member is saying that it needs to be approached at a more nuanced, individual level.

Ms. Patterson asked whether it is sensitive and responsive to fragile neighborhoods. She then asked the Task Force how they would like to reword the statement.

A Task Force member proposed, "Sensitive and responsive to the communities we serve."

A Task Force member asked if some sort of efficiency concept should be added to the statement "provide best service with available resources."

After discussion, the Task Force agreed to reword the statement to read: Effective and efficient service with available resources.

A Task Force member asked if the statement "Special consideration for fragile neighborhoods" a Guiding Principle rather than an Operational Priority?

The Task Force agreed that this statement should be a Guiding Principle.

A Task Force member commented that there was nothing in the principles or priorities that pertained to governance and that a number of the Task Force subcommittees have spent a lot of time on governance issues.

The Task Force agreed to add "Full and consistent communication with the County and other stakeholders" to the Guiding Principles.

A Task Force member commented that the principles and priorities are immediate and asked whether the Task Force looking at a Library system that's adaptable ten years from now.

Task Force members agreed to add "Ensuring that the Library is flexible and positioned for the future" as a Guiding Principle.

A Task Force member asked whether the Guiding Principle "Make decisions based on objective data while being open to non-quantifiable data" was needed.

Mr. Hogue responded that during the decision making process in spring 2010, there were tough decisions that needed to be made.  Using quantifiable data to make the decisions, allowed the emotional aspect to be removed from the decision making process.

A Task Force member asked if having the branches within 15 minutes/5 miles of homes in Mecklenburg County is "doable" within the budget constraints.  Can this be done at a reasonable cost?

A Task Force member asked if there were currently branches within 15 minutes/5 miles of all homes.

Mr. Hogue responded that there are branches within 15 minutes/5 miles of 79% of the homes in Mecklenburg County.

Alli Celebron-Brown, Director, The Lee Institute, commented that the language the Library uses is within "most" homes.

A Task Force member commented that rather than locking into a specific distance, he would prefer using something like a reasonable distance.

The Task Force agreed to state the operational principle as "Facilities within a reasonable distance of most homes."

A Task Force member asked whether the operational principle should address staffing based on mission rather than staffing based on resources.

A Task Force member commented that he wanted staffing driven by some purpose and proposed staffing based on core services.

Mr. Hogue commented that staffing and resources are essentially interchangeable.

Dr. Woodward commented that this was a good point. The decision needs to be made as to what want to accomplish at a particular point, and then determine staffing based on that decision.

A Task Force member commented that the priorities were missing any collaborative possibility.

Task Force members agreed to add "Seek strategic collaborations (universities, other organizations, nonprofits, public sector, for profit, etc.)" to the Operational Principles.

A Task Force member asked whether the Operational Priorities should include something addressing long-term adaptability or added flexibility to ensure the Library is positioned for the future.

The Task Force agreed to add "Flexible service delivery model" to the Operational Principles.

A Task Force member asked if the priorities should include anything about volunteers.

Task Force member agreed to add "Develop and fully utilize volunteer and fundraising programs" to the Operational Principles.

A Task Force member commented that she was not sure that the Task Force had reached agreement around the phrase core services.

Dr. Woodward responded that he felt that the Task Force had had extensive discussion around this topic and that a final decision around core services had been made.

Ms. Patterson responded that the consultants would find the definition for core services as agree on by the Task Force and will have the definition as well as the Guiding Principles and Operational Priorities at each Task Force meeting.

Dr. Woodward asked the subcommittees to give their reports.

Dr. Pamela Davies, Chair, Programming Subcommittee reported that her committee had been asked to look at "What criteria should be used to implement a program and what internal process should be used?"

Copies of the Draft Programming Recommendations were given to Task Force members. Dr. Davies pointed Task Force members to the rationale and background information presented in the draft recommendation.  Dr. Davies commented that Mr. Singleton had given a great presentation at an earlier Task Force meeting that indicated that there was a trend toward more programming in the Library.  The Task Force has had discussion around mission creep and the subcommittee proposes that programming be thought about as what is mission critical.

Dr. Davies presented the draft recommendation in a handout to Task Force members.

A Task Force member asked if the subcommittee had looked at ImaginOn programming as fitting within the Library as a whole.  The Task Force member commented that some of the programming is unique to ImaginOn.

Lois Kilkka, Library Manager, ImaginOn, commented that ImaginOn's focus is the development of young people and teaching creativity. It is developing literacy beyond reading literacy.

The Task Force member asked if there is collaborative programming at ImaginOn with Children's Theater.

Ms. Kilkka responded that there is collaborative programming with Children's Theater and with others.  The mission of ImaginOn is mostly programmatic.

An ImaginOn employee commented that in young children, the focus is on literacy and for school-aged children the focus is on literacy and information literacy.  Teen programming is a little different.  Literacy has been redefined in the 21st century with the digital age.  ImaginOn has tried to create programming to address that.

Leonora Kauffman, Task Force member, commented that literacy is not just reading literacy or computers, it is language development, poetry, puppetry – it encompasses everything.

A Task Force member commented that some of the programming at ImaginOn is focused on drawing in families.

A Task Force member questioned the civic engagement focus of ImaginOn.

Ms. Kilkka commented that these things are all mission inclusive, ImaginOn is a place of community.

Dr. Woodward commented that there is a conversation around what ImaginOn and the Library are doing and another conversation around what the Task Force thinks about what ImaginOn and the Library are doing. The Task Force needs to focus on the recommendation. That, by definition, is likely to be a subset of what the Library has been doing. If it's not, there is no consensus on the Library's programming being too broad. Given the current funding, the Task Force must identify the most important thing to do.

Mr. Yoshida commented that the purpose of this discussion is not to determine if you are going to keep ImaginOn or if you are going to keep these specific programs. This is about establishing the criteria for determining the programs and services going forward.  Mr. Yoshida asked the Task Force to consider whether there was anything that needed to be changed about the recommendation as presented or anything that the subcommittee needs to be thinking about.

A Task Force member asked if ImaginOn needed to be part of the recommendation or does it fit into another box.

A Task Force member commented that when you're looking at ImaginOn, it's one of the most expensive Libraries and also the most expensive based on usage. The Task Force member stated that he understood that it is unique facility and provides unique programs, but it is a Library, it should fit within the conditions of a Library.

A Task Force member asked, "Should ImaginOn be an outlier or a part of the recommendation and/or the Library system?"

Dr. Davies commented that the subcommittee would be willing to talk with the Library staff about that issues and come back to the Task Force with recommendations.

A Task Force member commented that the Task Force had talked briefly about ImaginOn being a prototype, an experimental part of the Library system.  At some point, the Task Force needs to address what is ImaginOn and is it a part of the Library system.  That needs to be addressed fairly quickly. ImaginOn is expensive, but it contributes exponentially to what the Library is doing.

Dr. Woodward commented that this is an important issue that needs to be put on the table for the Task Force to address.  There needs to be a section in the final report addressing ImaginOn.

Ms. Patterson suggested that the Task Force is close to approving the recommendation presented and reminded the Task Force that the recommendation can be modified if necessary.

A Task Force member asked if using the language budget neutral for programs was appropriate.

The Task Force agreed to change the recommendation to read "Generally programs should be budget neutral."

The Task Force agreed that additional specific should be included around literacy.

By a show of cards (13 green, 3 yellow) the Task Force approved the recommendation in principle.  The subcommittee will prepare the final version of the recommendation and provide it to Task Force members.

Mr. Bob Bisanar, Chair of the subcommittee that addressed the pros and cons of maintaining the Library as an independent entity rather than making it a department of county government gave a report on the work of the subcommittee.

Task Force members were given a list of the pros of cons of remaining an independent board as identified by the subcommittee.

Mr. Bisanar explained that the fact that there are more cons than pros listed does not indicate anything and that the items are presented in no particular order.  Mr. Bisanar commented that subcommittee member, Ed Williams, met with Harry Jones, County Manager, and John McGillicuddy, Assistant County Manager, to get their opinions on the issue.

Mr. Bisanar stated that the subcommittee reviewed the rationale for the pros and cons of an independent board and acknowledges that there is less flexibility due to the state statute that created the Library system.  Mr. Bisanar commented that the subcommittee kept coming back to the perception that there is currently a disconnect between the County and the Library system.

A Task Force member asked if the subcommittee was planning to draw a conclusion in the recommendation.

Mr. Bisanar commented that the subcommittee would like some discussion before developing a recommendation.

Mr. Williams stated that he had contacted the State library folks who had provided a breakdown of libraries across the state.  Most libraries are a department of city or county government. The arrangement of authority, if the library is an agency of city or county government, is defined by local agreement. The statute states that if a library is a county department, a Board can have all of the authority the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Board currently has or it can be less.

Mr. Bisanar commented that there is a spectrum of libraries across the state that range from the current system in Charlotte Mecklenburg to libraries that are part of the county and report directly to the county manager. The working relationship and Board authority and responsibility is defined by local agreements.

Mr. Yoshida asked Dr. Woodward if the subcommittee was being asked to come to some type of decision.

Dr. Woodward commented that he sees the final report as both observations and recommendations. Dr. Woodward commented that he saw the pros and cons and a collection of important observations. If the Task Force decides that it wants to make a recommendation, then it can. Dr. Woodward saw addressing this question as a way for getting a collection of thoughtful observations, not necessarily leading to a recommendation.

A Task Force member commented that on this particular recommendation he felt that the Task Force should make a recommendation. The current situation is unique and, if managed properly, could lead to greater flexibility. That's a really strong argument for keeping things the way they are.

A Task Force member commented that whether the Board is independent or not, there's potential for political manipulation.

A Task Force member commented that it is a situation that could be a real asset in the future.

Mr. Bisanar commented that private funding access needs to be considered. When ImaginOn was built, the funding came in $3M short. The shortfall was raised through private sources. The County didn't have anything to do with raising the money and Mr. Bisanar doesn't think the fundraising would have happened if the Library was a part of the County. In the current system, the communication is not the best; the alignment of priorities is not the best. Looking at the joint use of resources hasn't always worked well. There may need to be recommendations that address changing that. Mr. Bisanar stated that these were general observations, based on his experience as a former Library Trustee. Mr. Bisanar stated that he has not yet come to a conclusion around the issue. He is not sure it should be an "either/or", maybe it should be in the middle.

Dr. Woodward commented that clearly, it is not working now and this speaks to the pros and cons. Bill Millett's committee is looking at why it isn't working and what can be done to correct the situation. Dr. Woodward commented that the Task Force needs to look at making the relationship work whether it's in the current structure or in a new structure. He commented that he is not quite ready to give up on the current situation, but if it can't be made to work, he will give it up in a heartbeat. Dr. Woodward suggested that the Task Force return to this topic at a future meeting for future discussion.

Mr. Yoshida stated that the consultants will get with the subcommittee and help them determine where they want to go with this and whether they want to make a recommendation.

Connie Wessner, Chair of the Key Characteristics of the Library of the Future subcommittee, reported that the members of her subcommittee (Andy Heath and Gloria Kelley) have met twice and have sketched out a broad outline of where they want to go.  They will have a report for the Task Force at the February 15, 2011 meeting.

Bill Millett, Chair of the Library – County Relationship subcommittee, reported that he and Alan Blumenthal have addressed many of the same issues that Mr. Bisanar's subcommittee has addressed.  He proposed that their subcommittee meet with Mr. Bisanar's subcommittee and present one report.

Mr. Millett reported that one of the issues his subcommittee had addressed was outsourcing the Library's management to a third party, which is done in other large cities experiencing financial troubles.  Mr. Millett's subcommittee does not think that outsourcing is appropriate for Charlotte Mecklenburg, but believes it needs to be explored.

Mr. Millett commented that his subcommittee did conclude that communication is not what it should be and that there is an issue with structural communication vs. personality driven communication.  Whatever is recommended in terms of structure could at least be partially undone by personalities.  The driving principles should be transparency and accountability around results.  The prime focus should be a return on investment for the public.

Mr. Bisanar agreed to have Mr. Millett's subcommittee join his subcommittee and jointly address the issues.

The Task Force took a ten minute break.

Carol Hull, Chair of the Funding Alternatives subcommittee, reported that the subcommittee has had weighty discussion, but they would like the Task Force to discuss the issue before developing any recommendations.  In addition, the survey data will help inform the subcommittee as they develop a recommendation.

Ms. Hull used PowerPoint as a framework for her presentation.  Copies were given to Task Force members.

The subcommittee presented concepts for discussion, which included a proposal for a new approach to the County's budgeting process that involves addressing Quality of Life Assets (Library, parks, museums, cultural) separately from mandated services.

Dr. Woodward commented that it appeared that the subcommittee felt that in the constrained revenue environment, Quality of Life assets would experience

continued cuts. The subcommittee was proposing two budget systems so that Quality of Life assets were looked at separately by the County.

Julie Szeker, member of the Funding Alternatives subcommittee, commented that the group had talked about it a lot and felt that increases in funding were unlikely, but that sustaining or maintaining the current level of funding is important. Looking at the Quality of Life assets as group could be a way of leveling things out.

Bernie Simmons, member of the Funding Alternatives subcommittee, commented that bundling together the Quality of Life assets will make people in the community feel good. They can become a separate entity that can be funded by the County. The mandated services can't be touched; the others can go into a Quality of Life bundle. This will garner additional community support because there's something in it for everyone and it will cover everyone in the community.

A Task Force member commented that Mecklenburg County's track record in bundling things is not good – for example, the bundling around the arena. He commented that he personally agreed with the concept, but the question was whether the citizens as whole would go for it.

Ms. Simmons commented that someone would have to decide what goes into the bundle.

A Task Force member commented that he liked the thinking of the proposal, but that he was wrestling with the issue as it felt like the Task Force was overreaching its scope.

A Task Force member commented that conceptually it makes a lot of sense, dividing the mandated services and the quality of life services.

A Task Force member asked about the experience of other communities with a dedicated tax.

A subcommittee member stated that a dedicated tax has worked in other communities. For example, Pittsburgh has one, but now the city is having financial problems and subsequently the Library is facing financial issues.

Ms. Simmons commented that a dedicated tax seems like low hanging fruit, but everything needs to be funded, so does everything have a dedicated tax?

A Task Force member commented that one of the issues is that the County funds some things and the City funds others. The City actually funds the majority of the quality of life assets.

A Task Force member asked if there was a model for a funding floor. For example, each year there is a minimum amount for basic operations, above that is subject to fluctuation.

Ms. Celebron-Brown responded that this model did not turn up in the basic research.

Mr. Yoshida asked if the group as whole had any thoughts or suggestions.

A Task Force member commented that he liked the idea, but didn't think it was appropriate, as it was overreaching on the part of the Task Force.

Dr. Woodward suggested that the Task Force think in terms of the final report – observations, short term recommendations and long term recommendations. The concept presented is a long term concept and might need further qualification.  The Quality of Life concept is an interesting one.  But in the short term, are there some things the Task Force can recommend?  In the long term, this community has got to find a way to fund schools and other things.

Dr. Woodward commented that he is deeply concerned about further budget cuts and would like to make sure that's stabilized and then look to the future. He would like to have something adopted that gives you a trend line going forward, rather than having to back and defend the base each year.  Let's stabilize what we have and set a trend line going forward that gives us a great place to start each year so that we don't have to start at zero each year.

Mr. Yoshida introduced information to guide the Task Force in a discussion around Library Funding Scenarios and the Structure for the Future.  Copies of the information were given to Task Force members and are available on http://charmeck.org/libraryfuture.  Mr. Yoshida commented that this is a topic that the Task Force has not addressed in the last few weeks and that the Task Force needs to make some major decisions in the next couple of meetings.

Andy Heath, Characteristics of the Library of the Future subcommittee, stated that the issues presented by Mr. Yoshida are the issues his subcommittee has been addressing.  Mr. Heath proposed that the Programming subcommittee join his subcommittee and they can address these issues along with the Main Library/ImaginOn issue, both the in the short term and the long term.  Mr. Heath stated that the subcommittee would come back with a pretty specific map of what the Library looks like, including locations, services, etc., and would bring it back to the Task Force for their reaction.

Ms. Patterson suggested that the subcommittee ask Mr. Hogue to attend their meetings as he can provide information useful to the subcommittee using the financial model he developed.

A Task Force member commented that in terms of location selection criteria, geography is a very important consideration.  If you close either the Steele Creek or Mountain Island locations, it's a long way to another Library.  If you closed the Steele Creek location, you're closing access to a whole section of the County.  The Task Force member suggested that he would rank Operating Priority #2 as Operating Priority #1.

A Task Force member commented that the survey shows that the community is split evenly with regard to closing branches vs. operating at reduced hours.  Is that something the Task Force wants to discuss?

Mr. Heath commented that the Task Force may want to discuss this, but one way the group may be heading is providing different services in different branches.  There would be different characteristics in different branches and locations without taking branches away completely.

Dr. Woodward commented that the scenarios presented are not proposals; they are examples in order to get the Task Force to begin a discussion.  Dr. Woodward suggested that the subcommittee use the simple model developed by Dr. Woodward and Mr. Hogue that looks at decisions in terms of FTEs.  Before specific decisions are made, the financial affect needs to be looked at, but if that is looked at too early, it gets too complicated.

Dr. Woodward commented that the Library of the Future subcommittee looking at this issue is a good thing to do.  Mr. Hogue needs to be a part of any discussion the subcommittee has.

Dr. Woodward suggested that the Task Force will most likely recommend that different branches of the Library will provide different core services and that the subcommittee should not get into those specifics in their recommendations.  Differentiating core services will not have a huge effect on the FTEs required.  The subcommittee should assume that the current FTE is what there is to work with and those FTEs could be redistributed.

Dr. Woodward commented that if the Task Force recommends closing branches, they should also recommend giving the community the opportunity to keep branches open under certain circumstances.  For example, if the recommendation was to close Davidson, the community would most likely be offered the option of operating the branch.  The Task Force should include that as an opportunity and a way for independent branches to be part of the system.

A Task Force member asked if it is possible to close a service point at a location.

Mr. Singleton & Mr. Hogue responded that service points are about volume, square footage, the safety of customers and the architecture of a building.  The Library has done a lot of work around collapsing service points over the past few years and Mr. Singleton commented that there is probably not any further reductions that can be done.

Dr. Woodward commented that it is a good assumption that the current number of service points is fixed.

Mr. Yoshida commented that by the next meeting the Characteristics of the Library of the Future subcommittee will have a set of recommendations for the Task Force to grapple with.  Those recommendations will need to include short, medium and long term issues.  Mr. Yoshida suggested that the subcommittee

include Mr. Hogue as well as someone from the Library to answer any questions that arise.

Dr. Woodward stated that the consultants will attempt to present the outline of the final report at the February 15, 2011 meeting. The report must flow – it should not just be a collection of subcommittee reports, although the subcommittee reports will be included. Everyone on the Task Force will see everything proposed for the final report.

Dr. Woodward commented that the County Manager is anxious to see the final report and present it to the County Commission. It is important to present the report and recommendations prior to any decisions being made.

The Task Force meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be February 15, 2011 at 3:00 pm at the Morrison Regional Library.