

Mount Vernon Library Foundation Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2014 5:30 p.m.
PUD Aqua Room, Mount Vernon, WA

Board Members Present: Marija Anderson, Peter Goldfarb, Sara Holahan, Troy Kunz, Harold Page, Sara Patton, Kelly Reep, Chuck Smith, and Staff Liaison Brian Soneda

Board Members Absent: Kathy Combs

Guests: Mayor Jill Boudreau, Scott Correa, Nancy Talbot Doty, Angelica Guillen, Roger Ragusa, and Craig Romano.

I. Call to Order and Summary of Foundation Progress: President Harold Page called the meeting to order at 5:50. Guests were welcomed and introductions were made. Harold then gave a summary of the accomplishments of the Foundation over the past year. He specifically highlighted a very successful “Leave a Legacy Event” at Max Dales in March, which introduced the Mount Vernon Library Foundation to community leaders and announced our goals for a new library for Mount Vernon. He also noted Foundation support for an evaluation of the “Higgins” parcel, which is city-owned property under consideration as a possible location for the new library. The large amount of wetlands on the property adversely affected the amount of buildable land available and would require substantial and costly mitigation. Other Foundation achievements included the mailing of a letter to Financial Managers encouraging them to discuss the library as a gifting possibility with their clients, the development of a new logo and brochure, and efforts to build membership in the Foundation, both at the general membership and Board levels. He noted that we need to continue to build public support for the new library, especially as a way to leave a wonderful legacy to our city and our region. He then introduced Mayor Jill Boudreau, guest speaker.

II. MAYOR JILL BOUDREAU: Mayor Boudreau presented an overview of City Government, its priorities and challenges. She noted that the City is committed to providing effective and efficient services to the community. While the overall budget is smaller than last year, sales tax revenue is up by 10% and, for the first time since 2006, reserve funds have met the goal. Mayor Boudreau explained the POD system of interdepartmental collaboration that she has put in place so that department heads can work together in small groups to accomplish City goals more effectively.

Based on an on-line survey, the community identified several important short term goals including public safety, economic development and infrastructure issues. Long term goals focused on zoning, land use and a new library. Major projects during the past year included continued work on the water front project and the 1-5 bridge collapse. Construction of the flood wall and widening of College Way under the 1-5 overpass are two of the largest capital projects in the near future.

Focusing specifically on efforts for a new library, the Mayor supports an open, community-involved process. To that end, the City is hiring an architectural consulting firm to do public surveys, gauge public support, and gather community input to determine what should be included in a new library, where it should be located, how it can better serve the community, etc. This process will take several months to complete. Additional considerations will address financial needs, land use, staffing and operations, collections, organizational structure and possible partnership with other agencies, and so on. She hoped that the Library Foundation would take an active role in the process and help with fund raising for it.

III. GUEST SPEAKER CRAIG ROMANO: Local author and hiking guru, Craig Romano presented a delightful slide show focusing various hiking trails in the Skagit County region from Anacortes to the crest of the North Cascade mountains. The hikes varied from easy to the more challenging. He encouraged all of us to take advantage of the beauty the region has to offer by hiking some of the wonderful trails available. Craig also generously donated two of his books to the group through a drawing.

IV. BUSINESS MEETING

A. MINUTES: Marija moved to approve the December minutes as submitted, and Kelly seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

B. TREASURER'S REPORT and 2014 BUDGET: Treasurer Chuck Smith reported that 54 cents was added to our account as interest, and outgoing payments were made for the design and printing of new brochures, logo stickers and stamps, leaving a balance \$5554.38 in the Foundation's account. He also reported that, as a result of the recent membership mailing, approximately \$1750 was received in donations and membership fees, including over \$1000 from Ginny Darvill. In the absence of Kathy Combs, the Membership Chairperson, Sara Patton agreed to send out thank you letters to the donors, under Harold's signature.

Chuck then presented a proposed budget for 2014 based on last year's income and expenditures. After brief discussion, Sara Patton made a motion to approve the budget which was seconded by Peter Goldfarb and passed unanimously.

C. BY-LAW CHANGES: Sara Holahan proposed a change to the By-Laws to include a membership chair among the Officers of the corporation. She also submitted wording of a job description for the membership chair and suggested that in the future, all officers should have written job descriptions. After discussion, the consensus was to add a new section 6 worded as follows: "The membership chair shall be responsible for keeping membership records and for contacting members to acknowledge their contributions. The membership chair will recruit new members and perform other duties to enhance member involvement." Subsequent sections would be renumbered accordingly. Chuck Smith made a motion to change the By-Laws as worded and Sara Patton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

D. Mount Vernon Library Foundation Board Elections: Harold explained that the term of office for Board Members was three years, and the terms staggered so that there would be some continuity on the Board. A brief discussion over the terms followed but the consensus was to keep the terms as is.

Harold presented the following slate of nominations to the Board of Directors: Carmen Bruner, Scott Correa, Peter Goldfarb, Angelica Guillen, Roger Ragusa, and Chuck Smith. He then asked for nominations from the floor. There being none, Marija Anderson made a motion to approve the nominations to the Board. Kelly Reep seconded, the motion passing unanimously. The total number of Board Directors is now 12.

Sara Holahan announced that she would no longer be an active member of the Board but would continue to manage the Foundation web page and assist with the newsletter. Many thanks go out to Sara for her great ideas, her organizational skills and her willingness to pitch in and do the hard work.

E. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Brian Soneda reported that the City had chosen a Seattle architectural firm, SHKS, to do an eight month study for a new Mount Vernon Library. At this point, the City is still working on the language of the agreement. Harold reiterated that the City Council supports the idea and encourage Library Foundation members to attend City Council meetings when library issues are to be discussed.

F. NEW BUSINESS:

Sara Patton announced that Washington State Division of Corporations and Charities will be sponsoring an all-day educational workshop for current and prospective Nonprofit Board members in Bellingham on Jan. 31. Anyone interested in attending should contact her and she will make reservations.

E. Public Comments and Questions:

1. Angelica Guillen asked if other community organizations, such as the United Way or the Skagit Community Foundation, ever funded projects like ours. Harold noted that the Skagit Community Foundation manages the Beard funds for us for which we pay a fee. If donors to the United Way specify funds for the library, their donation will go to the library. Sara Patton reported that Kathy Combs has been focusing on getting support from service clubs, noting that Burlington was very successful in recruiting Board members from service clubs. Nancy Doty also noted that those organizations will respond better when they can actually see something concrete. Roger agreed that the time to approach service clubs for funds will be after the consultant study is done and an official report is written. Architectural concepts or plans will also be useful in helping people visualize a new facility.

2. Roger Ragusa expressed the hope that the vision for the library be seriously considered. Angelica agreed, noting her experience with the Mexican library system. She was especially impressed with the open spaces, the use of technology, collections that were both digital and physical, and that the facilities reflected the multicultural base of their constituency. Many of the staff were multilingual. Peter also noted that libraries are community gathering places, especially in times of disaster.

The next Foundation meeting will be held Monday, February 10th at 5:30 at the Skagit Community Foundation offices at 711 S 1st St., kitty corner from the Library.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Patton, Secretary