

This workshop summary was written by Vanessa AvRuskin & Nicole Swerhun, Workshop Facilitators, and was subject to the review of participants at the workshop. If you have any questions about this summary, please contact Maggie McFalls, Community Engagement Coordinator, Office of External and Government Relations, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (feedback@carnegielibrary.org or 412-622-8877).

I. WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

Debby Dodds, CLP Board Member and Barbara Mistick, Director of the Library welcomed participants. Nicole Swerhun, Facilitator, reviewed the proposed agenda (Attachment 1) and asked participants to introduce themselves (16 people attended, including community members as well as Library staff and Board members – see Attachment 2 for the Participant List). Mary Frances Cooper, Deputy Director, then delivered a four part presentation that briefed participants on:

- What happened in Part 1 of the Community Conversation;
- The work completed to date by the Public-Private Task Force on Sustainable Funding;
- The five areas of service delivered by the Library; and
- Opportunities to strengthen the culture of Library support.

The presentation will be available shortly online at <http://www.clpgh.org/about/future/conversation.htm>. Participants had an opportunity to ask questions of clarification, before moving into a working session that sought feedback on the following questions:

1. For each potential funding scenario (funding increase, no change, or funding decrease), what changes in service, if any, would you suggest the Library consider?
2. What factors did you consider when responding to Question 1?
3. What kind of partnerships could the Library consider creating or strengthening with other service delivery organizations and agencies?
4. Do you have any other advice for the Library team to consider as it works to refine these ideas for the future?

The working session took place as an informal discussion drawing on individual views and opinions. This workshop report is intended to reflect the key messages delivered, and is not a verbatim transcript. It includes both the verbal and written feedback received at the workshop.

II. FEEDBACK RECEIVED

1. **For each potential funding scenario (funding increase, no change, or funding decrease), what changes in service, if any, would you suggest the Library consider? What factors did you consider when responding to Question 1?**

The following points reflect highlights from the discussion.

COLLECTIONS:

- One participant suggested she'd be willing to put a hold on collections should the funding decrease but, should funding increase, it's important to get more material because there's always a need.

DIGITAL EXPERIENCE:

- While a few people indicated that they see the value of remaining up to date with computers and related software, one person suggested the Library consider decreasing the Digital Experience should funds decrease.

LOCATIONS:

- A participant expressed a desire to keep the locations because kids need a safe environment to go. There must be a physical space to provide this.
- Another participant said that even if funding decreased she would like locations to remain the same.
- There was a suggestion that one way to keep libraries open could involve merging some of their services.

HOURS:

- One participant suggested that hours be extended if additional funds are received because they help make the library accessible for students and working people and enable access to computers for children who don't have them.
- Another participant suggested keeping hours the same in quantity but potentially switching when the hours are offered.

PROGRAMMING & OUTREACH:

- One woman suggested increase to Programs and Outreach. She suggested Outreach is important because it gets to a lot of kids who don't get to libraries.

2. **Do you have any other advice for the Library team to consider as it works to refine these ideas for the future?**

The workshop included discussion of a number of overarching points that put context to the discussion of services. Observations and comments for the Library team to consider as they begin shaping a path forward for the future included:

- *It was suggested that transparency is an absolute before anything can be accomplished.* If libraries know what individual costs are then the community can fundraise for specific goals. Before you do anything think about reducing utilities with solar energy. Identify costs specifically such as gas, lights, rent and labour at any [Knoxville] library before you can make any decisions.

- *Another participant suggested looking at the strength and weakness of each library and build on these.* He suggested that if you're looking branch by branch you look at what would make sense on a case by case basis. Then you're not wasting money on things you can't take advantage of. Focus on things that are in demand and not on things that aren't.
- *Another participant stated that it's very difficult to get people in areas of lower income to represent their libraries however noted that those are the very places that need the most rallying.* He commented that it lends itself to showing the gravity of the situation. The Knoxville Library is a very important part of the community, yet it's very difficult to get people to rally about it.
- *Ideas regarding new ways of reaching people were discussed.* For example, consider locating kiosks in areas that needs a library (rather than having a whole building).
- *Ideas regarding new ways to fund-raise were also discussed.* For example, a) partner with companies who have an interest in Pittsburgh; b) create a box on a tax form to donate money; c) energy saving options through electricity and gas.
- *One participant suggested that libraries should be specifically maintained through public funding alone.* His view was that the CPL currently receives only 13 cents per capita where other counties' libraries receive \$5 per capita. He believes the City of Pittsburgh could raise this money by taking it from other places.
- *A participant expressed his concern regarding the quality for staff.* Are people going to be leaving? People become attached to their staff, once you get to the point where you cut too far, and staff start leaving, it can become very damaging.
- *Other people suggested building on The Library's relationship with schools.* Schools are going to become more important. There may be ways to work more closely with them.
- *It was suggested that the Library not incur anymore capital debt.* One participant indicated that the financing of capital projects has an impact on the operating budget. It was also suggested that any savings that realized from refinancing should be invested in services, not put toward additional capital investments.

III. NEXT STEPS

Nicole Swerhun wrapped up the meeting by asking participants to please encourage the general public and Library users to participate in the process. She let participants know that the draft workshop report would be distributed to them for review prior to being finalized. She also encouraged everyone to continue to participate in the Community Conversation process – and hoped to see them during Part 3 in the Fall of 2010.

ATTACHMENT 1 – Workshop Agenda

A Community Conversation

PART 2 WORKSHOP

Saturday, July 17, 2 – 4 pm

Warrington Recreation Center, Beltzhoover/Allentown

- 2:00 pm **Welcome**
Barbara Mistick, Director, CLP
- 2:02 **Introductions & Agenda Review & Introductions**
Nicole Swerhun, Facilitator
- 2:10 **Community Briefing**
Mary Frances Cooper, Deputy Director, CLP
- Questions of clarification*
- 2:45 **Discussion**
1. For each funding scenario (funding increases, decreases, or stays the same), what changes in service, if any, you suggest the library consider?
 2. What factors did you consider when responding to Question 1?
 3. What kind of partnerships could the Library consider creating or strengthening with other service delivery organizations and agencies?
 4. Do you have any other advice for the Library team to consider as it works to refine these ideas for the future?
- Any other feedback?*
- 3:55 **Next Steps and Wrap Up**
- 4:00 **Adjourn**

ATTACHMENT 2 – Participant List

The following people signed in at the meeting (alphabetical by last name):

Jamie Glasser, Senator Jay Costa's Office
Stephanie Hawkins
Steve Hutter, Elder-Ado, Inc.
Tina La Mark
Tony Mosesso, Senator Fontana's Office
Joey Saler

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Bruce Kraus, Councilman and CLP Board Member
Debby Dodds, CLP Board Member

Barbara Mistick, Director
Mary Frances Cooper, Deputy Director
Sheila Jackson, Assistant Director, Main Library Services
Maggie McFalls, Community Engagement
Karen Meharra, Manager, Volunteer Services
Mary Monaghan, Assistant Director, Neighborhood Libraries
Karlyn Voss, Director, External and Government Relations
Suzanne Thinnes, Communications Manager
Trina Walker, Director, Communications and Creative Services

Facilitation Team

Nicole Swerhun, Facilitator
Vanessa AvRuskin, Facilitation team