

**Minutes of the James River Valley Library System Board of Directors
Library Board Retreat
First floor conference room #129, Unruh and Sheldon Center, University of Jamestown campus
Thursday, August 4, 2022**

Board members present were Pam Phillips, Robert Hoekstra, Char Freeberg, Emaline Roorda, Joan Morris, Gail Martin, and Jackie Barnes. Absent was City Ex-Officio David Schloegel. Also present were Library Director Joe Rector, Assistant Director Jill Pfaff, and Facilitator Debora Denny.

Debora called the meeting to order at 9:33 am.

Discussion occurred regarding the following topics:
Please see attached notes from Debora for major discussion points.

Char Freeburg left at 2:00 pm.

Follow up discussion:

- Library board members asked Joe to work on obtaining a new realtor
- Library board members requested Joe contact another architectural firm
- Library board members asked Joe to talk to Mayor Heinrich about a particular property

No votes were taken during the retreat.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next board meeting is Wednesday, August 10, 2022, 3:30 pm, ADPL.

ADJOURNMENT

Debora adjourned the meeting at 3:15 pm.

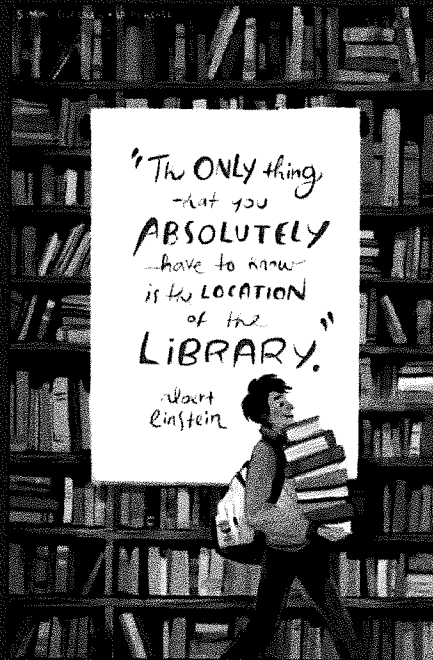
Respectfully submitted,

Jill Pfaff

DEBORA DENNY  FACILITATION AND MEDIATION RESOURCES

Summary of Board Retreat and Final Report, August 4, 2022
James River Valley Library System

Submitted August 8, 2022



Debora Denny
319 7th Avenue NE, Jamestown, ND 58401
402.802.7856
debora.s.denny@gmail.com

Summary of Board/Director Retreat – James River Valley Library System

Overview: The James River Valley Library System (JRVL) Board, Director and Assistant Director attended the scheduled planning retreat on Thursday, August 4, 2022. The retreat was held at University of Jamestown's Unruh-Sheldon Conference Center from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The primary goals of the retreat were to (a) review current best practices in public library design, (b) engage in visioning the JRVL; (c) assess potential space and building options for the library; and (d) come to consensus on a timeline and next steps to move the building initiative forward, as described in Goal 6 of the JRVL's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

Participants: JRVL Board Members: Pam Phillips, Chair; Robert Hoekstra, Vice Chair; Emmy Roorda, Treasurer; Char Freeberg, Secretary; Joan Morris, Gail Martin, and Jackie Barnes. JRVL Staff: Joe Rector, Director and Jill Pfaff, Assistant Director. Facilitator: Debora Denny

Agenda and Opening: After an introductory exercise in which each participant made brief remarks about his or her name and symbol, the video clip "Beyond Books: The 21st Century Public Library" was shown. The participants engaged in the decision-making exercise "Compass Points."

Current Conditions: Joe Rector provided information to the group on PowerPoint slides regarding the JRVL organizational chart; a Library Timeline; Library Data, including service population, registered patrons, patron visits to libraries, circulation trends, bookmobile service comparison, and assets.

Best Practices in Public Library Design: The facilitator had given a reading/observation assignment regarding public libraries to each of the participants a week prior to the retreat. Following are brief notes of each person's report back based upon their Observation Worksheet.

1. Joe: *Step-by-Step Checklist to Plan a Successful Capital Campaign*, (capitalcampaignmaster.com). Joe stated it was very educational. Some of the key points included that a "Case for Support" should be developed to guide public comments during a campaign; that a unified board is "make or break" for a successful campaign; there is a need to build relationships over the long term for potential donors; and that a successful campaign takes significant time and focus and can be launched in phases.
2. Pam: *The New Medford Public Library* – YouTube. This was a 5 minute video launched by the New Medford, MA Public Library at the outset of its capital campaign to build a new library building. Pam said that the video helped to spread the word to anyone curious about what the proposal was for the new library, and *why* it was needed. It emphasized community space and was a public "home" for those who needed access to the internet and after school space.
3. Jackie: *Public Library Revenue, Expenditures, and Funding Sources* | American Academy of Arts and Sciences (amacad.org). Jackie shared the data showing that of the 50 states, North Dakota's per library patron average expenditure was \$29.68. This compares to \$84 in Washington DC and \$16 in Mississippi. She said that State dollars were shrinking and local dollars were increasing, with 89% from local government.
4. Emmy: *40+ New Revenue Sources for Libraries and Nonprofits* | ALA Store. Emmy viewed a 6 minute video interviewing Edmund Rossman III, a library financing consultant. Some of what she reported was that libraries were increasing the number of local events to raise dollars to replace shrinking government dollars. Mr. Rossman wrote a book with this title and it is available on the American Library Association website for \$65.

5. Joan: *Public Library* | *WBDG – Whole Building Design Guide*. (<https://www.wbdg.org/building-types/libraries/public-library>.) Joan reported that “public” libraries are different from campus and school libraries as their populations are not as diverse. Some of the elements included access to internet service, RFID technology (book scanning to check out), a formula for how many library “seats” are needed for the number of library patrons in the community, and a need to be aware of local population demographics (such as the trend toward more elderly in Stutsman County and Jamestown over the next ten years).
6. Char: *How to Build a Library* | *American Libraries Magazine* (<https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2019/09/03/how-to-build-a-library/>). Char said that three libraries were highlighted in this article: Austin TX, Aberdeen SD, and King County WA. The key elements included a recognition that many of our nation’s libraries are out of date. That to build a new library there needs to be civic buy-in, education to let people know the needs of the 21st century public library. Consultants who have prior library experience, such as architects are highly advised. The new buildings have lots of light, room, and outdoor space.
7. Gail: *From Design to Dedication* | *American Libraries Magazine*. (<https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/from-design-to-dedication/>). Gail stated that this article reviewed several public libraries’ long term efforts to achieve their goal of a new library. One of the libraries was the Dover Delaware public library building effort. It took a long time, nearly 14 years for it to come to being. It experienced a failed referendum during this effort. One of the quotes that stood out to her was one library advocate’s statement that “The future is happening during the life of the project.”
8. Robert: *Human-Centered Spaces* | *American Libraries Magazine*. (<https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/pla-2020-human-centered-spaces/>) Robert said this article was more “existential” than pragmatic. A key point is whether the library space is “what the architect thinks is cool? Or what the public needs?” Architecture is about people, not buildings. Some of the other points mentioned included that library branches can take in ethnic or special populations (elderly); that libraries need to have creative spaces – for music, sewing, 3-D printers, art, etc. A library director stated that in planning facilities, communities should take risks. One of the quotes shared was that “The library thrives on a culture of creation rather than consumption.”
9. Jill: *Tiny but Mighty* | *American Libraries Magazine*. (<https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2019/09/03/tiny-library-but-mighty/>). Jill stated that her article focused on the Meridian Idaho Library District that didn’t have the money for a new building. Meridian converted a 320 square foot shipping container into a “Tiny Library.” It partnered with the YMCA, Parks and Recreation, the School District, and a Medical Center. They used an architect to assist with planning. About 500 people per month come for storytime and checking out books. The neighboring YMCA provides bathrooms for library patrons. One question would be how to staff?

Vision: The facilitator led the participants through a visioning exercise, in which each participant drew a picture in response to the question: “Imagine you leave Jamestown and Stutsman County for 10 years. You return in 2032. When you ask to see the James River Public Library System, what do you see?” After drawing their pictures, each person described their vision.

Retreat Goal: The focus of the board retreat was to identify next steps to address Goal 6 of the 2019-2023 JRVLS Strategic Plan, which states: “By December 31, 2022, the JRVLS will become expansion ready to build, renovate, or otherwise expand its programming outside of currently available space.”

Objectives:

Building Selection: Three options were proposed as listed below. The participants were assigned to analyze one each of the options in groups of three. A worksheet was provided for each participant with guiding questions for analysis. The three groups went into separate rooms and were given 45 minutes to discuss the options and to prepare for reporting out to the large group.

Option A: Retain Alfred Dickey Building and Expand into the Maranatha Building. Persons in this group were Joe, Joan, and Char. Joe presented his handouts of drawings of possible designs for this option. The architectural drawings for this option in 2014 came to an estimated \$9 million. Discussion regarding earlier negotiations with the current building owner indicated that he wanted \$1 million for the Maranatha Building. It was reported that the current owner bought the building for \$120K in 2014 and that in 2015 he offered it for \$250K. One of the concerns were that remodeling may not be feasible and that demolition might be required. There were concerns that there may be asbestos in the building and that the floors between the Alfred Dickey Building and the Maranatha Building were not contiguous. The retreat group's consensus was that \$1 million asking price was exorbitant. The only terms that the Library Board was interested in would be a significantly lower purchase price; that the entire building would be purchased; and that the Library would manage all the reconstruction.

Option B: Retain Alfred Dickey Library (ADL) Building as a Children's & Historical Library and Add 1 or More Specialized Branches to Serve the Public. Persons in this group were Emmy, Jackie, and Robert. The small group liked the idea of reconfiguring ADL as a Children's Library and Historical Library. ADL's renovation might include moving shelving, opening up walls, redoing the main floor space for children and middle school students; for children and their families; include study nooks, modular furniture.

The idea of accessing UJ Place's first floor wasn't favored because of concerns that there wouldn't be enough square footage. The group noted that the positives included all the technological wiring was in place, it was handicap accessible, had nice landscaping and plenty of parking, and appeared to have possible bookmobile space. It was noted that the space would need to be leased for a minimum of five years but no knowledge of price. The group discussed the Stutsman Library building and did not advise it for a future "branch" space. Also discussed were the options of downtown bank buildings. At that point, the discussion went to the third group and their analysis of Option C.

Option C: Close Alfred Dickey Library Building and Buy & Remodel One of the Downtown Banks / Credit Union – or – Buy a Vacant Lot and Build. Persons in this group were Gail, Jill, and Pam. This group considered several existing buildings, of which none are known as being currently available for sale. Buildings included: Wells Fargo (40K square feet), Lloyd's Motors (it was mentioned that this might already be purchased), Vacant Lots. Some discussion was had on how the ADL Building could be repurposed such as an event center. It was noted that if ADL was not used as a library, that the City would have to repay the USDA loan/grant of \$75,000 for the refurbishing of the ADL foundation a few years ago.

Consensus Points, Next Steps and Timeline:

1. The Board agreed that the Building Committee should be thanked for its work and temporarily put on hold until such time the Board needs to assign it tasks to accomplish. Joe will contact the committee to let it know.
2. The Board agreed that it wanted to retain a new realtor to search out potential building sites and gave the names of two different realty companies for Joe to contact. Joe will double check the status of the realtor agreement with the former realtor. He will contact the two different realtors to inquire whether either would be willing to work for the Board in contacting potential sellers and what their terms would be. If possible, the Board would like to decide which realtor to enter into agreement at the August Board meeting.
3. The Board would like to aim for its September meeting to have the new realtor give a report regarding potential library building sites (buildings and/or vacant lots) available for negotiation and purchase.
4. The Board recommended that prior to the October board meeting, that the new realtor and Joe schedule a meeting with the Mayor and the owner of the Maranatha Building to discuss whether the entire building was available for purchase and what the terms would be.
5. The Board recognized that it would need to enter into a contract with an architectural firm to conduct site assessments of potential library sites identified by the realtor and the Board. Two architectural firms were noted: JLG which has been working with JRVLS for the past several years and the new Aberdeen SD Library's architectural firm. Joe will contact each of these firms to request that they submit a proposal to JRVLS for conducting site assessments. The Board would like to review these proposals at its October Board meeting.
6. Once the Board and the Director enter into an agreement with the selected architectural firm, it anticipates that the firm will conduct its site assessments and provide its analysis to the Board by February 2023.

Follow Up:

- A. Once the Board and the Director reviews the site assessments and architectural analysis, they will determine their next steps and timeline to begin purchase negotiations with the selected site owner.
- B. The Board and the Director acknowledge that they will keep in regular communication with the City and the County as to progress on the building project.
- C. The Board and the Director acknowledge that they desire to form a Capital Campaign Leadership Team to carry forward the fund raising for the selected building/ site within a reasonable time period in coordination with the objective to select a library building or library site.

Respectfully submitted,

Debora Denny

Facilitator