

SAN JUAN ISLAND LIBRARY DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Hybrid & via Zoom, San Juan Island Library
(access information provided at www.sjlib.org)

Special Meeting for the Purposes of Building Project Review and Planning
December 5, 2022

1) Call to Order: President Karen Vedder called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

Members Present: Barbara Sharp, Becki Day, Karen Vedder, Boyd Pratt, Mark Madsen

Staff Present: Laurie Orton, Heather Dima, Heidi Kuheim

FOL Present: none

2) Visitors: none

3) Public Access: none

4) Agenda Approval:

MSC Boyd Pratt moved and Barbara Sharp seconded to accept the agenda as submitted. Carried.

5) NEW BUSINESS

a) Review and Planning for Library Building Project

- The Board asked the question: In light of the failure of the bond measure on November 8th, do we move forward with the building project. All agreed that we go forward.
- The Board discussed how they might change the funding mix for the project. It had been \$12 million for the bond, \$6 million for philanthropy, and \$2 million for grants. The board discussed raising the philanthropy portion for a corresponding decrease in the bond amount. Several people in the philanthropic community have said that we should be asking for more than \$6 million, that this community could support more. A change to the fundraising goal would need to be worked out with the San Juan Island Community Foundation.
- Another option going forward might be to reduce the size of the projected building. Reducing the size too much would lead to building a new library without enough increase in size to make any difference to current space inadequacies.
- The board also discussed the possibility of paying off the property purchase loan early to reduce the amount of the next proposed bond levy. Laurie will see where we are with an estimate from our insurance company to pay actual cash value for a hypothetical rebuild of the damaged Spring Street property.
- It was suggested that we hire a firm to analyze this recent capital campaign and determine why the community voted no on the bond. This

might involve surveys, focus groups, and more. We know many of the reasons why some voted no, including the overall project cost of \$20 million, misinformation about the actual project cost estimate, a desire by some to have affordable housing built on the Spring Street property instead of a library, false information spread about the likely interest rate, the October notices to residents about a steep increase in their assessed property values, another levy on the ballot for County roads, misinformation from a feasibility study conducted three years ago, the public wanted more detailed information about the bond and the interest rates, and more.

- The board discussed the affordable housing issue that is on many people's minds. They identified circumstances, projects, and organizations that already exist to work on this issue in our community—the REET tax, the project at Malcolm & Argyle, Homes for Islanders, and the Home Trust.
- In order to consider a joint use project for a library *and* affordable housing on the Spring Street property, a developer would need to present to the board a real business plan with secure funding and site plans that would allow the library adequate space for a 15K square foot building, parking for the library only, and open public space.
- The board concluded that the Library needs to redo the public process that was done back in 2019. It's been too long since then for people to remember what took place then. The board discussed retaining an architectural firm to work with the public (focus groups, design charrettes, polls, Q&A sessions, an advisory group, etc.) to develop more detailed conceptual plans to show the public what would be possible in the new library. The board suggested seeking input from all demographics on the island: multi-generational rural families, old island families, retirees, young families, business owners, schools, etc.
- Some trustees suggested using "community center" in the new library's name.
- Boyd suggested that they form three trustee committees (of two trustees each) to look into different paths for moving forward: One to look into the private fundraising goal, one to research ways to pay off the property loan, and one to consider how to reboot the public engagement before the next vote.
- Mark Madsen is finishing his term as a library trustee this month, but offered to volunteer his personal time to continue working on the library building project. Mark was thanked with much appreciation.
- There will be discussion at the regular December board meeting to discuss Mark's continuing roles, and who will need to take over his discontinuing roles.

ADJOURNMENT

MSC Barbara Sharp moved and Boyd Pratt seconded to adjourn the meeting at 2:52 pm. Carried.

Respectfully submitted:

DocuSigned by:
Barbara Sharp
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Board Secretary

Approved:

DocuSigned by:
Karen Vedder
53E682F558A4C8
Board President