

DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Board Meeting Minutes

January 16, 2008

Library Administration

ATTENDEES

Present were Board Members Beth Pearl-Gent (President), Pat Lawrence, Ray Miao, Ann Malkin, and George Riser.

CALL TO ORDER

President Beth Pearl-Gent called the meeting to order at noon.

MINUTES

The minutes from the December 19th meeting were amended by consensus to correct the list of officers, and to correct a typographical error.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

RESULTS POLICIES

Results Policies Monitoring Report

Library Director Michael Gaston provided an overview of the Results Monitoring Report.

Deschutes Public Library compares favorably with the leading public libraries in Oregon, and ranks in the top quartile nationally in many areas. The Library District is achieving the Board's Results policies at a good to excellent level.

- Per capita visits are high in comparison with other public libraries, comparable even to public libraries such as Multnomah County Library that serve more densely populated urban areas.
- Per capita circulation is very healthy for a public library serving a combination of urban/rural areas. Library usage ranks in the top quartile of public libraries nationally, and at the median when compared to larger public libraries serving high density populations.
- The Library collection of books and AV titles is well maintained. The annual investment per capita would rank in the top quartile of public libraries nationally, though it is less than the top three library programs in Oregon.
- The level of adult programming is exemplary, both in the quantity and quality of library programs. Per capita attendance is near the top of public library programs.

- Reference stations throughout the District are staffed by either professional librarians or well trained library assistants that are supported by professional librarians. Staffing levels for reference stations compare favorably with similar sized public libraries in Oregon.
- The Youth Services program is one of the leading programs in the region. The number of librarians with expertise in youth services compares favorably with any program in the region. Deschutes is a leader in children's and teen programming.
- Deschutes is a leader in technological innovation. The library's automation system is state-of-the-art. The District has pioneered the use of podcasts, tagging, and downloadable audio books. The number and quality of online reference tools are the equivalent of the top public library programs in Oregon.
- Deschutes provides a modest level of outreach services to care facilities, correctional institutions, and homebound patrons.

Gaston cautioned that measurements indicate that the population is outgrowing the Library District's infrastructure.

- The number of active library cards and the number of library visits have remained relatively constant over the last two years as the population has increased.
- Recent measurements indicate that the rate of increase in library circulation is slower than the rate of population increase.
- Overcrowding during peak periods is creating competition for public access computers, has increased the frequency of behavior problems, and has had a negative impact upon the ability of the branch libraries to provide a quiet space for study and reading.
- The La Pine Branch library is working with other community organizations to address a behavior problems associated with heavy teen usage in the afternoon. The Library is one of the few places where teens can congregate after school.
- Expansion of the library collection conflicts with the need to provide additional seating.
- New population centers have developed that are not served by conveniently located branch libraries. Convenience is one of the primary factors that determine the percentage of the population that will routinely utilize public library service.
- Facilities will be a critical factor in future library development.

The percent of the population that utilizes public library service is one measure of a successful public library program. The formula for higher library usage rates would include: convenient locations; well-stocked collections; adequately sized facilities; and great customer service. Without these features, marketing will have limited effectiveness.

Board members and managers held an extended discussion of adult programming. Community Relations Manager Chantal Strobel reported that all programs sponsored by her department incorporate a discussion component. Programs are also organized at the branch library level, notably by Bend Reference. A number of programs focusing upon the Latino community were sponsored by the Outreach Department, funded by a Library Services and Technology Act grant. Adult program attendance increased by 50% over the prior year.

Youth Services Manager Heather McNeil reported that a major focus has been placed upon supporting early childhood literacy by providing offsite training for parents, guardians, and care-givers. Off-site programs are designed to reach populations that are less likely to visit one of the branch libraries.

President Beth Pearl-Gent noted that the Board will consider the Results Monitoring Report at the January 18th work session. The Board will assign priorities at the work session.

The Board agreed by consensus that the District is in compliance with District Results Policies.

EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS POLICIES

Monitoring Report: Financial Planning & Budgeting

The Board reviewed the written monitoring report. Ray Miao moved that the Board finds the District is in compliance with the Financial Planning & Budgeting Executive Limitations Policy. George Riser seconded which passed unanimously.

Monitoring Report: Financial Conditions and Activities

The Board reviewed the written monitoring report. George Riser asked for clarification regarding the usage of parenthesis in the financial report. George Riser moved that the Board finds the District is in compliance with the Financial Conditions and Activities Executive Limitations Policy. Ann Malkin seconded which passed unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Library Director Michael Gaston discussed his plans for retirement, noting that he will have completed thirty years as a library director in April, 2008. Gaston praised the District Board and library staff, noting the many accomplishments during his 11 year tenure as Deschutes Library Director. He stated his intention to retire on January 2, 2009.

Beth Pearl-Gent - Director Gaston helped with the formation of the independent District that has developed into a valued resource for our communities. Under Michael's direction, the library has thrived and continues to thrive even in the face of booming and diverse population challenges. It's obvious that without Gaston's leadership, vision, and effort put forth, the District would not have come as far as it has today. We all recognize Gaston's accomplishments over the past 10 years.

George Riser - Gaston was the right person in charge to achieve, and go beyond, the high expectations we had when we started the District.

Pat Lawrence – During the selection process for a Director, it was clear that Gaston was the person for the job. The independent funding that was needed was secured due to a brilliant and energetic campaign. Additionally, one of Gaston's greatest achievements has been the recruitment and hiring of such a fantastic staff.

Ann Malkin - Appreciate Gaston's forward thinking, analyses of situations, and seeing problem areas and working toward solutions and encouraging the staff to do the same. Resources have been maximized because of Gaston's creativity.

Ray Miao – Under Gaston’s extraordinary leadership, we took an entity and made it a central element within the community.

President Beth Pearl-Gent appointed Ann Malkin to chair a committee to recommend a design for the executive search process. Ray Miao and George Riser were also appointed to the committee. Library Director Michael Gaston will provide staff support.

SELF-REVIEW OF MEETING BY BOARD

The Board commended Director Gaston on the structure of the Results Monitoring Report.

As there was no additional business, the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Michael K. Gaston
Library Director