

City of Springfield
Work Session Meeting

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD
MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2008

The City of Springfield Council met in a work session in the Jesse Maine Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, March 10, 2008 at 6:35 p.m., with Mayor Leiken presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mayor Leiken and Councilors Lundberg, Wylie (via conference phone), Ballew, Ralston, Woodrow and Pishioneri. Also present were City Manager Gino Grimaldi, Assistant City Manager Jeff Towery, City Attorney Bill Van Vactor, City Recorder Amy Sowa and members of the staff.

1. Update on Appropriate Levels of Library Services.

Interim Library Director Debbie Steinman presented the staff report on this item. The Library has been unable to meet most of the Oregon Library Association's Standards for Oregon Public Libraries. The Library is not keeping pace with similar sized libraries in our State.

The two major areas in which Springfield Library is not able to provide an adequate service level, for a community our size, are hours of operation and the second is acquisition of new materials. The hours of operation go hand in hand with adequate staffing levels to keep the library open.

The Oregon Library Association Standards specify that a Library serving a city with a population greater than 50,000 citizens should have .33 FTE employees for each 1,000 people served in order to meet the minimum "Threshold" standard. To reach an "Adequate" standard, Springfield should have .40 FTE per 1,000 citizens. Our Library is currently operating below the "Threshold" standard, at .24 FTE per 1,000 citizens.

The Springfield Library is currently open 42 hours per week. Using the same Standards as above, we should be open 50 hours per week to meet the "Threshold" standard. To reach this level, in our current building, the Library would need an additional 5.0 FTE to staff the public service desks. Please see attachment 1 for comparisons of like sized Oregon public libraries.

Based on Council discussion and direction, information will be compiled and compared for the new Library Director. The new Library Director will prepare and present a work plan to Council and other stakeholders at a future date to be determined by the Council.

Ms. Steinman said she was here to determine level of interest and direction regarding how the Library should try to address the level of service deficiency and a timeline for a work plan to address that issue. She referred to Attachment 2 in the agenda packet, which included the following talking points for tonight's discussion:

- What kind of information does the Council need to make decisions concerning Library funding, service levels, and facilities
- How to access the communities wants and needs
- Assessment of current programs and services the Library has with Willamalane Park District and the Springfield School District
- Assessment of Library facilities as a means to deliver services to the community
- What are the next steps to help the Council determine appropriate levels of Library services

Mayor Leiken referred to Attachment 1, which showed a chart of different cities. He asked about the population served figures. Tigard and Klamath Falls served twice their population and he asked if they had a district.

Mr. Steinman said she didn't believe Klamath Falls was a district. She said she could find out why they were able to service that many people.

Councilor Ballew asked if there could be a City special district.

Mr. Grimaldi said there could be a district that corresponded with the City boundaries.

Councilor Ballew said she was wondering if they could have a special district with the City Council as the Board of Directors within the bounds of the City, with their own tax base.

Mr. Grimaldi said that could be a possibility.

Councilor Ballew said that way they could keep the Springfield name on the library.

Mr. Grimaldi said a district could be formed or an agreement with the district and the City.

Councilor Ballew said something similar to the urban renewal district. It would insulate the Library from the financial ups and downs of the City. She could be supportive of something like that, but didn't want to see it separate from the City. The Library was part of the City's personality.

Councilor Ralston said the Library was a nice thing to have, but citizens needed to be willing to pay for it. To have a Library District, the citizens needed to indicate they were willing to pay for it.

Councilor Lundberg said she had circled the options she liked on Attachment 2. The concept of a special district was capitalizing resources from a broader base. Cooperative arrangements could be considered with other public agencies such as Willamalane and the School District. She would like to talk to focus groups to find out what it would take to expand the services to more people. One option could be a bookmobile. A cooperative arrangement with schools since they already have libraries could include sharing of systems and books.

Councilor Wylie said she and Councilor Ralston had talked last year about possibly charging for a Library card on a sliding scale based on income levels. She gave an example. That could be a

source of income. She hadn't run any numbers so she wasn't sure if it would be best as a per visit fee or an annual fee. It might generate enough revenue.

Councilor Woodrow asked how many cards were issued.

Ms. Steinman said about 17,000. About 7000 of those were new cards this year.

Councilor Ralston asked if everyone in the City got one.

Ms. Steinman said they could get one if they wanted to. They just needed to come in and ask and provide proof of residency in Springfield.

Councilor Woodrow asked if we had the demographics on who had cards.

Ms. Steinman said she could get that for them.

Councilor Lundberg asked for information on the Library Board, Friends of the Library, and the Library Foundation, such as their status, how active they were, their functions and what they were doing. She suggested having these groups work together on an annual fund raising project for materials, etc.

Councilor Pishioneri said in order to meet the state threshold, the Library would need to increase by eight hours per week. During those eight hours, how many patrons would be served and how much would it cost the City?

Ms. Steinman said they averaged 600-1000+ people per day.

Councilor Pishioneri said it would depend on which hours of the day were added. He would like to know how much it would cost the Library to service those patrons during those extended hours.

Councilor Ralston referred to the talking point "Cooperative services and programs with other library providers". He asked what other library providers were out there besides schools.

Ms. Steinman said there was an independent library provider that contracted to take over operations, such as with the Jackson County libraries. It was a private provider and she believed their name was LCIS. There were companies that did that sort of thing.

Councilor Ralston said it sounded like outsourcing. That was correct. Providing the service was important and if it could be accomplished at a lower cost with an outside provider, he would like to consider that option. He would like information on those costs. He referred to the talking point "Merge with another agency". He asked what other agency the City could merge with. He asked if it could include such cities as Lowell, Mohawk and other smaller nearby cities.

Ms. Steinman said they could look at forming a district.

Councilor Ralston said it wouldn't work without the buy-in from the citizens. He said he did not like the idea of a levy.

Mr. Towery said through intergovernmental agreements (IGA), the City could choose to provide or receive services from other Library directors. He gave the example of Springfield's Fire and Life Safety Department as the billing agency for other agencies. As an example, Springfield could provide reference services to other cities. This would not be a merger or a district, but there would be money and services going between agencies.

Councilor Woodrow asked Mr. Grimaldi about allocation costs paid by the Library. He asked if they paid by the square foot or by FTE.

Budget Officer Bob Brew said they didn't pay any internal charges because they were a General Fund operation.

Councilor Woodrow asked how many FTE the Library was currently using for the elementary outreach vs. the number of volunteer hours.

Ms. Steinman said the Library had one .2 position that was grant funded by the State that did outreach services. There was a Children's Manager and Librarian I in the Youth Services division. They spent about five hours per week doing tours and storytelling.

Councilor Woodrow asked if there were more volunteer hours.

Ms. Steinman said the volunteers didn't do tours or preschool outreach, but rather helped with shelving books.

Mayor Leiken asked about the number of FTE and Library hours prior to BM47 and 50.

Mr. Grimaldi said the number of hours in the Library had never been very high. There had been some reduction in staff and reallocation of staff. It had always been low. The circulation had varied. As the collection aged, the circulation went down, and that was not a good sign for a Library.

Ms. Steinman said with the addition of technology, computer and internet use had increased.

Mayor Leiken said it was easy to ask for supplies rather than to expand hours and staffing. Councilor Ralston was right that it was a question for the citizens how important the Library was. The City hadn't asked that question nearly enough. He felt it was worth spending some money on focus groups and reaching out to find out what Springfield citizens wanted.

Councilor Wylie said one thousand people a day used the services, and that said it was important. The City could still do some focus groups and a survey. There were broader issues at hand.

Councilor Ralston said the City couldn't afford an excellent rating. Even bringing the standard to adequate was significant. The next thing to do would be to get some kind of financial plan before he could make any decision.

Councilor Woodrow said he agreed with the Mayor about asking the public, but they needed to be careful how they asked. Less than a third of our population had Library cards. If it went out

for a vote, many that used the Library would be youth that couldn't vote. If surveying, the City would need to be very clear what we were asking.

Councilor Ballew noted that they hadn't talk about a new Library building.

Councilor Ralston said he couldn't even see if we could keep the Library, so he was not interested in discussing a new building.

Councilor Woodrow said that question could be part of a survey.

Councilor Lundberg recapped the Council's direction. She said the Council wanted to ask citizen before any decisions were made. There were a lot of possibilities. The Library was an important cultural part of the City and it should be noted that the Library was important. There needed to be a way to maintain that service. If it was important to all, the City needed to figure out how to raise the bar enough.

Councilor Ballew said if we wanted to be attractive to people coming to Springfield, we needed a Library.

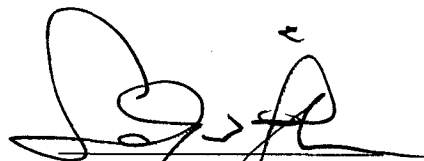
Mayor Leiken said regarding a new facility, the Library and City needed to reach out to those that might be able to help, such as private entities. He gave some examples.

Mr. Grimaldi noted that staff was also looking at space needs in City Hall. It was clear that we were running out of space for City employees. He noted an example. The discussion regarding Library services fit into that conversation.

ADJOURNMENT

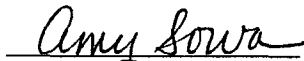
The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 pm.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa



Sidney W. Leiken
Mayor

Attest:



Amy Sowa
City Recorder