Malone, Maureen

From: joni teter <joniteter@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 8, 2018 9:25 AM
To: BPL-COM
Subject: Comments on January packet

See you all on Wednesday - Joni

P. 5. Great job on the "discussion on library funding" memo.
My suggestions on "Needs for a recommendation on funding:"

1. One or two scenarios outlining potential district boundaries, with associated mill levies, in a plain English style. The scenarios should very clearly lay out the process for formation of a district, and how decision-making within a district occurs following approval – with special emphasis on how voters in general, and non-city residents in particular, have a voice.

2. The paragraph below from the Jan packet provides an excellent summary of staffing and operational funding needs for new branches. Can we get a similar summary breakout (including FTE) for the rest of the system (the portion of this paragraph beginning with "optimally.")

   The library's ongoing operating budget has been flat for the past 4 years and shows a significant decline over the past 15 years. At minimum, the library's operational needs range from $1.8 to $2 million to operate new facilities in North Boulder and Gunbarrel. Most of these funds are to staff (approximately 6-8 Full Time Equivalent positions) these locations and for facilities maintenance and utilities costs, estimated at $548,000.

   Optimally, the library needs approximately a $3.2 million total annual increase to operate the new locations and implement all of the other Master Plan goals. This includes increased funding to improve security and janitorial services, expand the collections, upgrade and expand technology, implement consistent open hours at all locations, implement the Canyon Theater pilot program, etc.

3. A proposal (with one or more options) to develop a communication, outreach and marketing plan for a districting campaign, including order of magnitude costs and human resource/skills needed. Ideally, this would be developed with the BLF board.

4. An order of magnitude summary of costs (i.e., staffing, PERA, facilities - see paragraph below form the Jan packet) that the library district would be assuming – see paragraph below from the January packet. It might be helpful to see some other comparable library district budgets.

   The Library would immediately assume costs for: finance, legal counsel, personnel management, employee benefits (accrued retirement PERA), board insurance, public information, investments, etc. The district could initially contract with the City for buildings and grounds maintenance, and IT management and maintenance, until a transition seemed appropriate or a long-term contract with the City could be negotiated.

5. Discussion with city leadership about the future of the north side of the library in the district scenario. If the city no longer controls Main, how is planning for the "west bookend" affected? Would the library district be responsible to come up with capital funding for renovation/re-purposing of the north building?

6. Summary of changes needed to the city charter regarding responsibilities of the library commission. (This may just mean digging out the background materials we developed for discussions about advisory versus governing bodies as part the charter amendment discussions 3-4 years ago.)

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Packet text:

The current estimate is that the mill rate would be between 3 to 4 mills per household which translates to approximately $200 to $250 annual increase in property taxes per household with an average home value of $680,000.

Comment: We also need to get our arms around with this increase means for businesses. I doubt there is a pro per household equivalent, unless it’s cost per square foot?
Part Two: Trends and Community Needs

We need some discussion in this section about how library trends are affecting and being addressed within the Boulder library system. This includes making, STEAM, 21st-century literacy, growth in media forms, etc., so it may just be a question of how we connect the "people, place and platform" discussion in part one with this more local view in part two.

P. 19 - Master calendar

*The list below is a proposed, tentative schedule for matters that staff will bring for the Library Commission's consideration in 2018*

What are the plans for community engagement around expansion, siting and programming for NoBo? Seems like this should be started concurrently with finishing up the master plan – but do we have the staff resources to support both processes?

Similar question with respect to the Gunbarrel corner library?

Commissioner Handbook

P. 35 - Library Department Funding Structure diagram:

We should add BLF funding for programming to this diagram.

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Should we add the summary paragraphs from January packet on library funding deficiencies to the “library department budget basics” memo in the commissioner handbook?

*At minimum, the capital costs needed in the first 5 years of implementing the new Master Plan are roughly $8 million. Five million dollars of this total will be provided by the voter-approved renewal of the capital improvement tax in November 2017 to fund the design and construction of a North Boulder Branch Library and its opening day collection. Later in January, staff will learn when the project funds will be available to begin site investigation, design and construction. The City has collected roughly $2.5 million in Development Excise Tax (DET) and Impact Fees for the library over the past several years. Those one-time funds may be used for capital expenses that are attributable to growth. Capital costs for a North Boulder Branch Library and a Gunbarrel Corner Library would be eligible for use of DET and Impact Fees. DET and Impact Fees can also be used to purchase library materials.*

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Overview of the Boulder Library Foundation

Add language along these lines to the overview of BLF:

*The BLF is in its 43rd year of supporting the Boulder Public Library, a testament to the hard work and dedication of the 13-member volunteer board and many community members who believe in the value of their public library.*

In the past four years [2013-2017?], the BLF contributed approximately $1.2 million to BPL to increase program offerings. The foundation’s investment was vital in launching STEAM programs, the Jaipur Literature Festival, sensory concerts for families with children on the autism spectrum, the continuation of free films and concerts, as well as all the upfront costs to build and equip the BLDG 61 Makerspace. BLF’s generosity and leadership has been vital in introducing a whole new generation of people to the library. BPL has used the funds from the BLF to leverage another $300,000 in grants and community support.

The BLF has committed to awarding the library up to $250,000 in grant funding each year for the next three years, and shaped its fundraising and investment strategies around meeting that goal.
Fake News or Sloppy Social Science?
Did USA Today do a follow up? Other media?
 Commission Memo

**Meeting Date: January 10, 2017 – Main, Canyon Meeting Room**

**Upcoming Special meetings:**

**Interesting Upcoming Dates (from [ALA Website](http://ala.org))**

**ALA Youth Media Awards - January at the ALA Midwinter Meeting**

Each year the American Library Association (ALA) honors books and media for children and teens. Recognized worldwide for the high quality they represent, the ALA Youth Media Awards (YMA), which include the prestigious Newbery, Caldecott, Printz, and Coretta Scott King Book Awards, do guide parents, educators, librarians and others in selecting the best materials for youth. Selected by committees composed of librarians and other literature and media experts, the awards encourage original and creative work in the field of children's and young adult literature and media. The award announcements are made as part of the ALA Midwinter Meeting, usually on the Monday morning of the ALA Midwinter Meeting. Award presentations will be made at the ALA Annual Conference. See the [ALA YMA Press Kit for reporter contacts](http://www.ala.org/presskit) on the YMA announcement.

**ALA Midwinter Meeting, Denver, CO: February 9-13, 2018**

1. **Items from Commission**

   A. Final Draft of Letter to City Council included

   B. Review Library Commission Handbook [Link]

   The library commission handbook is reviewed annually. The commission reviews the document for clarity through the lens of incoming commissioners and relevance to the current commission. Please come prepared with any edits or suggestions.

   C. Discuss recruitment of Library Commissioners

2. **BLF Update – No Update - No December Meeting**

3. **Updates from Commissioners Representing the Commission in other Venues (verbal)**

   A. EcoDistricts
Hi Laura,
Thank you for reaching out. We are very excited that funding was approved in the ballot initiative and eager to engage with the North Boulder community. We have a Library Commission meeting coming up this Wed. at 6pm at the Main Library branch, Canyon room. We allow public comment (3-4 minutes per person) at the beginning of our meeting if you'd like to attend.

There is no committee for the North Branch, but we will have public engagement periods and we will put you on a list to be notified of when those are. You'll get notifications from Antonia Gaona, the Public Services Manager. The library will also provide regular updates once the project is underway to the commission, and commission meetings are public if you'd like to attend and listen in.
Our library is in midst of a Master Planning Process. It’s been ten years since the last master plan; results from this current planning process will set the Library’s course for for the next ten years. The Library Commission’s responsibilities in this process include review of Library operations, long range planning and associated budgets.

The Boulder Public Library is one of the busiest public locations in the city of Boulder. With nearly a million annual visits, the Library serves Boulderites at five times the Chautauqua theater, four times the Farmers Market, and three times more than the Recreation Centers combined. In 2017, the BLDG61 makerspace engaged 29,000 people through 700 programs, and fostered the development of nearly 40 businesses and ten patent applications. In so many ways, the Library is a keystone of our democratic society.

The draft Master Plan balances an expansion of services to meet documented demand while maintaining our exemplary programing and quality. This fall’s voter approval of funding for a long requested North Boulder branch library is tempered by the reality that long standing deficiences in the City’s funding of staff limit the Library’s ability to not only maintain the quality of service our community members have come to expect, but also hamstring the growth and expansion of services needed to meet demand in our neighborhoods to the North and East.

In the past 10 years the library has seen a 28% growth in circulation, 85% growth in children’s material, 500% growth in children's program attendance, and 100% growth in overall program attendance. Yet the library’s overall budget has declined, both in real terms and relative to growth in the overall City budget. Staff positions have declined by 15%. Boulder’s population uses the library heavily and we need a budget to reflect that use.

How the Library is funded

City funding for our Library comes through a 0.33 mill dedicated property tax and annual allocations from the City’s “General Fund.” Revenues for the General Fund derive from the City of Boulder Sales and Use tax. City funds pay for the library’s facilities, staffing, equipment and collections.

Library programs and events are funded principally through grants from the Boulder Library Foundation. BLF is in its 43rd year of providing financial support to our community library system. The Boulder Library Foundation is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization led by a volunteer board of directors and supported by individual donors and community partners in Boulder. http://boulderlibraryfoundation.org. With the lack of funding for programs, the public must rely on
BLF to continue the library’s programs. Without BLF, the library would be void of the majority of programs it runs.

**The Library budget’s 15 year decline in staffing levels**

In 2002, the City of Boulder experienced the first of several years of declining sales tax revenues. All City departments cut their budgets in response. In 2002, the Library employed just over 92 FTE. By 2005, this number had declined to just under 79 FTE (a loss of 13 positions). In 2017, Library FTE stood at 77.5 - representing an additional loss of 1.5 FTE relative to 2002 levels. Overall, the library has seen a decline of almost 15% in staffing levels since 2002.

In 2002, the City employed about 1305 full time equivalents (FTE). By 2005, staffing numbers had dropped to about 1212 FTE (a loss of 87 positions). By 2017, City staffing overall had grown to about 1447 FTE (an increase of 142 positions). While the City as a whole has rebuilt from the 2002 budget cuts, the Library has not been part of that rebuilding.

**How does Boulder compare to other library systems in terms of dollars per user?**

Librarians love metrics. The Colorado State Library (a Division of the Department of Education) maintains reams of statistics on library usage, including lots of comparative data about library systems. [https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/statistics](https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/statistics) Two metrics frequently used to compare library systems are expenditures per capita, and expenditures per registered borrower. The per capita and registered borrowers number differ as libraries tend to serve more people than are in
their city limits, which is a fundamental part of libraries being a democratic space for all. Today, about 108,000 people are resident in the City of Boulder (“per capita”), while about 133,000 people hold active library cards (“registered borrowers”). The following chart shows how Boulder stacks up.

Boulder’s library expenditure is well below average on both a per registered borrowers basis. Communities with similar demographics spend 50-60% more per registered borrower than Boulder does.

What options are available to help ensure financial sustainability for our Library system?

As part of the Master Planning process, the Library Commission identified three options to explore in addressing the Library’s funding needs. (These options were described in detail in the memo prepared for our November 28 study session with Council. https://boulder.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/DisplayAgendaPDF.ashx?MeetingID=90) The options are purely to get sustainable funding for the library and do not have other motivations.

Option 1: Increase revenue allocations to the Library from the City operating budget.
The City’s operating budget has two primary components: Restricted Funds and the General Fund. Most of Boulder’s restricted funds were created by citizen action: we voted to raise our taxes, then “dedicate” moneys raised through the tax increase to a specific program or purpose. Utility restricted funds were created by statute. Restricted fund moneys may only be used to meet the program objectives outlined in the authorizing ballot measure or statute.

The General Fund (sales and use taxes) finances basic city services, including police, fire, library, arts, human services, parks and recreation, plus all of the city’s internal administration (planning, housing, sustainability, human resources and general governance). The General Fund also serves as a catchall for anything that isn't funded through a dedicated or restricted fund - including the new priorities and initiatives that every newly elected Council decides to undertake. The General Fund is chronically underfunded relative to demand. (See 2018 Budget in Brief https://www-static.bouldercolordo.gov/docs/Budget_in_Brief_DRAFT_v.2-1-201801021234.pdf?ga=2.201139822.1126488464.1515093448-1359242582.1515093448)

Option 2: Create a Library District
A library district is a local entity (other than a county, municipality, township or school district) that is authorized by state law to establish and operate a public library system. The residents within the boundaries of the district must vote in favor of being included in the district, and must
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approve any new or increased library taxes within the district boundaries. Library districts are funded through property taxes.

Today, most library patrons in Colorado are served by library districts rather than municipal library systems - a trend that has increased over the last ten years. Districting allows libraries to address the “fairness” question by drawing funding boundaries that more closely match the patron base.

This option is not easy and takes resources – resources which the library does not currently have. Note that annexation is not required to form a library district.

Option 3: Create a Regional Library Authority
A regional library authority is created through an agreement between two or more governmental units (cities or counties), which is then approved by voters within the proposed library authority’s boundaries. Library authorities can be funded through a combination of property and sales taxes. Although authority to form regional library authorities has existed for several years, there are none in Colorado.

The Library’s Financial Sustainability in a nutshell
We must be very clear: with new facilities being funded and no additional staffing, the Commission believes that the Library will need to explore cutting services to balance its budget. Adding books and materials is easy, but staff are needed to manage these resources - a key part of serving our community.

The library’s ongoing operating budget has been flat for the past 4 years and shows a significant decline over the past 15 years. At minimum, the library’s operational needs range from $1.8 to $2 million to operate new facilities in North Boulder and Gunbarrel. Most of these funds are to staff these locations (approximately 6-8 Full Time Equivalent positions) and for facilities maintenance and utilities costs, estimated at $548,000. Optimally, the library needs approximately a $3.2 million total annual increase to operate the new locations and implement all of the other Master Plan goals. This includes increased funding to improve security and janitorial services, expand the collections, upgrade and expand technology, implement consistent open hours at all locations, and implement the Canyon Theater pilot.

The leadership of the library has been able to use the current budget creatively and perform on a shoe string budget – even winning the Library of the Year award in 2016 – but the library is stretched as far as it can go. Boulderites have told us with their votes that the library is a priority. Now the public needs City Council to take action and make it a priority by increasing the library budget and setting goals to correcting the budgetary path it is on. The library commissioners
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have worked to communicate our concerns to council members in various forms, but our budget concerns are still overlooked. We need your help to remind council of the importance the library plays in your life.