

SAUCON VALLEY LIBRARY TASK FORCE MEETING

Date: Thursday, March 10, 2011
Time: 5:08 PM
Location: Lower Saucon Township

Present: Lower Saucon Township: Mike Karabin, Lynn Koehler, Kim LaBrake, Tom Maxfield, Cathy Gorman, Jack Cahalan
Hellertown Borough: Lamar Handwerk, Joseph Pampanin, Gail Nolf, Cathy Kichline, Tina Krasnansky
Hellertown Area Library: Jessica Goedtel, Alison Finkbeiner, Robin Rotherham, Mike Evangelista

Committees:

Demographic/Statistics:

Alison Finkbeiner
Lynn Koehler
Jessica Goedtel

Building:

Kim LaBrake
Joe Pampanin
Mike Evangelista

Technology:

Gail Nolf
Mike Karabin
Jack Cahalan

Finance:

Reverend Lamar Handwerk
Tom Maxfield
Cathy Gorman
Tina Krasnansky

1. Approval of Minutes from February 10th meeting – Kim asked if anyone had any comments or revisions? No one raised their hand. Motion by Tom, second by Jessica. All in favor.
2. Advertisement of 2011 Meeting Schedule; SV Library Task Force Webpage – Jack said they put an advertisement in The Valley Voice for the meeting schedule and also posted it on the Township website. The webpage lists the mission of the Task Force; the members who have been appointed; the meeting schedule; and they also created an email address that people can click on if they have questions or comments for the Task Force. He will print them out and bring them to the meetings. He has not received any so far. Kim said are the minutes on the website from the previous meetings? Jack said the January ones are on already and the February minutes will be put on tomorrow.
3. Committee Reports – Kim said hopefully everyone got time to meet with their committee over the past month.

Kim asked the Demographic Statistics committee if they met? The committee consists of Alison, Lynn and Jessica. Alison said they did not get to meet, although she and Jessica did meet. She sent out emails to Lynn. They just were brainstorming the kind of information they wanted to gather. They want to wait for the new census statistics to come out. They also wanted to wait for the 2010 Annual Report from the Hellertown Area Library (HAL) which will be coming out and for the state report to come out. She is wondering what kind of statistics and numbers they will be able to get from the Bethlehem Area Public Library (BAPL). Lynn said whatever is available. It's not as detailed as Hellertown's. Mike E. said they have some of their things are on line for 2008 like the annual reports. Alison asked when the state reports come out? Robin said they are due to the state by May 1st and the district by April 1st. They want to hold off until they get numbers. Someone said Allentown was already in the Morning Call. Alison said the budgets have come out, so they can break down the budgets. They can compile what they got and go from there and see what other data they need to get. Kim said for the other committees, if you know what you need, she and Joe may be able to help. Robin said they will get any information for anyone who needs it. Joe said he already got information from Robin about the PA ACCESS checkouts and Hellertown checkouts. So independently, to get what square footage the buildings will need, they are going to try to back out some of that data. They'll see if they are coming up with the same numbers, the same estimates.

Kim the next committee is the Technology Committee, Gail, Mike K. and Jack. Jack said they put together a list of questions that they thought would identify areas where they would like to get data on technology. The first thing was whether there are any minimum standards that are in place in the State of PA for library technology. The answer to that is no, there are no technology standards for public libraries in the State of PA. Lynn said she's not sure of that. Robin said there is nothing in the library code that sets standards. Lynn said what about the 21st Century libraries? Robin said that's not a code. They are recommendations. Jack said so there are no minimum standards for library technology which is kind of surprising because if you go on Google, almost 40 states popped up with state minimum standards for their public libraries. The other thing they wanted to look at was a technology plan for the HAL and Robin did bring that for them tonight. Robin said generally, she always makes technology plans every three years because the life of a PC in a library is three to four years as they are used very hard. When they lost their funding, she didn't know how to make a plan as they didn't have any money anyway to replace the PCs. Basically, how she approached that after 2006 was she would write grants and as the grants came in, she used \$10,000.00 of grants to buy a new server, buy four work stations or however that shook out. They have about \$35,000.00 in technology money for 2011. Jack said Lynn is going to help them for the BAPL. Lynn said she would have the same questions for BAPL. She would also like to know the same thing from the SV School District. She said as a comparison, pick a library like Southern Lehigh or Allentown. Mike K. said in relation to your question on school district plans, is there anything specific you might be thinking there is to offer? Lynn said yes. She was on the Strategic Planning Committee, so she knows there are some plans. It would be useful to find out what's happening there. It means something.

Jack said we had put down some general questions:

- In what specific library areas/functions is technology being used, e.g., administrative, technical services, public service and to what extent?
- How is the technology used in daily functions of the library?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the library's current technology?
- What problems or issues does technology help solve and what problems or issues does it cause?
- What is the level of staff expertise and use of the technology?
- What information resources do patrons use via technology?
- What information resources that use technology are available to people with disabilities? How much of the library's budget is allocated to technology?
- What is the library replacement cycle for technology?

Jack said some specific questions were:

- Does the library have a dedicated internet connection and adequate bandwidth?
- Does it have an adequate public internet work stations?
- Does it have a designated staff member with computer skills? Does it have an automated circulation system and public access catalog?
- Does it have a library website?
- Does it have active phone lines?
- Does it have a public access photo copier?
- Does it have a dedicated fax line?
- Does it have an acceptable use policy that addresses access by minors?
- Does it have anti-virus protection installed on the servers and work stations and checks regularly for virus updates?
- Does it monitor and protect its network with appropriate security measures such as firewalls and authentication processes?
- Do workstations receive regular maintenance including removal of unauthorized software, cookies and temporary files?
- Are operating systems and application software regularly kept up-to-date with critical updates and patches?
- Are back-ups conducted on a regular basis?

- Are back-up copies stored in fireproof location on site?
- Is the library network and server housed in a non-public secured area?

Gail had some additional questions:

- How does the library access the internet? Is it DSL, is it cable?
- Does it have reliability and speed?
- Does it have wireless access for people who bring in their own wireless laptops, I Pods, I Pads etc.
- Does technology at the library interface with the SV School District in terms if a child is given an assignment at school, can HAL accommodate that need if the child's technical resource is the library meaning if that child has no access at home.
- What filters are placed on library searches and is there access by library minors and by adults also?
- Are there user-friendly research platforms?

Lynn had some questions:

- Is training provided for the staff?
- Is training provided for users?
- What databases are offered through the internet that the patrons can access?

All these questions she would like answered now and then five years from now. Mike K. said another thing he added, he is asking our committee to visit both libraries for the technology and how it works and how it is used and do an interview with the technology person. Lynn said when she was on the Strategic Planning Commission; they totally revised the Mission Statement. So much of it was community oriented.

Kim said the Building Committee is herself, Joe and Mike E. They did some emailing back and forth. She and Joe actually met at the HAL. They were looking to document the existing building and all the uses in each of the areas. If they can get a set of the plans, that would be great. As a committee, they would like to sit down and get the input of the staff of the library to understand where they feel there are good and bad things going on like not enough space, too much space, anything they see as an issue and anything they see that is good that is working for the library and they don't want to see it destroyed. They will be documenting the wants of the Task Force to be able to compare where we are on the scale of is there more or less things we need to do. Then it comes down to really trying to balance a program for the new library and to get to that, we'll have to know some of the demographics. By that time, to figure out the architectural program, the space that is required for those amount of people in each specific use and there's a breakdown from the Catsauqua Library she has. It is listing all the space, how much space they have for an existing program, and then the program needs as determined by the committee. Basically, it's going to come down to what you have, what you need, and a square footage number. You can understand that they may need another 1,000 square feet or another 10,000 square feet. It gives you some way to capture, something to look at numbers and cost against. Then with that, we will start and based on what we find at the library and work on those for the next month. They will present it to the committee and let them know what they think we would need based on demographics. We can look at the broad concepts for understanding or diagramming, where we need to fit everything based on where the building sits and the parking. We can do some diagrams based on the square footage numbers so we understand if expansion is needed, where it can happen most efficiently and with flexibility. Joe said they came up with some ideas of sharing these opportunities and looking for ways to reduce total cost in the area. Are there any library services that the school is using if we combined it with this task, will it have any additional savings to what we are looking at here. On the library trends, as everybody is moving on line and the ability to digitize this information, how does that affect libraries, not just our libraries, but in general? This will affect building sizes. How many books do you have? What's the trend? Is it more digital access? She made copies of an article on digital access and "will the books go away?", and as a community we need to think about this when we decide what the program is for the expansion. It is actually a pretty big buzz word in the architectural community as to what to do with expansion of technology or expansion of book space. There's a pretty clear message and history of libraries. The message is the libraries are just not libraries anymore, they are just community spaces. That is sort of where she and Joe were looking at where do they cross what's available in the community already and if there are ways to make that work. Joe said in terms

of building space, it's not necessary the case that if you reduce the amount of physical books and move towards digitalization that you get rid of floor space. Many of the libraries are turning that over into the book store approach where you would have the couches or the sitting areas. It just redefines what a library is. That's an article for everyone to look at. Joe said it's going to be difficult, if not impossible, to get down to this detail. They were looking at the concept of time use. He talked to Robin a little about this. How much detail can we get from the library records as to the number of people who are there during peak hours of library usage? If we are involved with the school district and we look at this in terms of a community center type approach of how do you hold events so you use the time essentially that is underutilized without having to build out more space to do that? They will explore that more and get more examples. Kim said they will try to get numbers and times when programs are scheduled and meshing in the school district times. It will change from season to season as in the summer the children aren't in school and there are peak times. They will try to mesh that in as it does relate to the expansion of a building and looking at how to rearrange the time usage to make the best we have and not build a lot of space that isn't going to be used.

Lynn said they should explore other libraries. Joe said they could do that as some of those libraries are urban and not completely out of sync with what we are here. They have the numbers of Hellertown and Lower Saucon PA ACCESS users, and both check-out histories. He already has numbers of what's being checked out and in what percentages; Lower Saucon users and how to back out with Lower Saucon population what that means in terms of who is using the BAPL. Kim said we won't know that until we see their numbers. BAPL can say they know what the population of Lower Saucon is and how many cards they use. It says 44% of Lower Saucon has a library card at BAPL, but it doesn't mean they are all going to BAPL. How many of those are active? Mike E. said you can get the number of checkouts, but you can't get the number of people at BAPL. Kim said they know how many Lower Saucon Township residents have library cards, but it's going to be tough to get numbers and we will have to make assumptions. Jack said could we gather information at the HAL asking people do you have a BAPL card and are you coming here? Kim said that's the plan. Joe said a sampling would be who only typically uses HAL. Robin said she doesn't know why BAPL can't give the committee numbers on how many Lower Saucon residents check out books at the BAPL. Lynn said they can. Robin said they spent so much money on their circulation software, and it's a little frustrating. Lynn said they can get that data now. Kim said the report says how many people hold a library card, but it doesn't say how many use the BAPL. Joe said we need all that information. The best thing is going to be doing it from both sides. We need from the Finance Committee, the yearly maintenance and utilities costs.

Kim said based on the building now, what are your basic maintenance and utility costs on that square footage and come up with a cost per square foot. If we are looking of an expansion of 100 or 1,000 square feet, we can use that factor in there so you're not seeing the cost, but looking at your future ongoing operational costs. The last two items are there any lease or building restrictions on the property. Joe said he talked to Charlie Luthar and he said currently there are no restrictions. At one point, half of that property was going to be used for the community center, and that was so long ago, they signed away any intent to use that. Gail said the Post Office is not going there. Kim said there's nothing in writing and there is room to expand? Lynn said what about a parking lot at some point? Gail said there's no plan for a parking lot at this time. Joe said that may be part of the building plan for the HAL. Their question on the lease was does the center still have any intention to still build there and the answer to that is no. For the library, it seems it's open for us.

Kim said the last item is looking at the building as it is now, and obviously, there are no code issues, but anything that may stand in the way of expanding the building in the sense of the new codes, increasing the size of the building, which would increase the need for a sprinkler system or things like that. She'll look into those maximum expansions that can happen. Obviously, we don't want to go above them if we can help it. Lynn said you may want to see what grants and tax breaks are available. Joe said the other question we put under code was the second floor and what are the requirements of the library to have staff on each floor. Right now there's an opening at the library and the staff can pretty much keep everything upstairs, but if we expand, an option would be to close that off, and then do you need staff on the second floor. Kim said there are benefits about changing the lighting and there's Federal Act 179D that helps people, clients, owners, developers green their buildings and supposedly there are tax benefits. She's not

sure if it would help HAL as they are not a tax entity. Mike E. said they can change some things around, and they may give some funding towards it. They didn't look into it that far yet. Kim said she can get information on that. One of the school districts she works with, when they did the elementary or middle school, they did receive \$30,000.00 back for changing all their lights in the building. Granted it's a large building, but those things do exist through PPL.

Tom asked how big is the lot that the library currently sits on? When you were talking about a maximum sort of things, we have to deal with setbacks and zoning issues that might limit how big you really could go. Kim said if there are no leasehold restrictions and looking at how far you would want to go out on that property, they could look at the site plan and lay out the maximum building area based on the zoning code. Mike E. said the one side of that lot is huge. Kim said there's room in the back. Mike E. said you can put more than 100 cars the grass. Kim said there is a building coverage maximum and a parking coverage maximum so you have to look at them separately. Her guess is they have more than enough room to expand. They really want to look at the front yard and back yard setbacks and how much parking they can utilize based on a number of square footage increased, which she thinks is probably 200 square feet for a library, and that's one more car you would need to add. You can look at that on the zoning side too. That's everything they have for the building.

Kim said the Finance Committee is next. Tina said they researched the budgets for both libraries. Cathy G. said she also went into the budgets to see how much they made for each year since 2002. There are no budgets for this year. She can find their actual for next year. Kim said the actual will be good so we can find out how much it cost each building to heat and things like that. Lynn said in the revenue part, they are grants that were applied for. It's different for the month-by-month and you will see money coming in, but it won't match the income. The State Aid also shows things like district funding and district library gets broken out.

Kim asked if there were any other questions on the finance? Jack said he wanted to know what their next step would be? Cathy G. said she will try to get the last three years so they have a better comparison.

Tom asked how many full time employees and part time employees at the BAPL? Jack said he has the correct figures for the staffing reduction. There were 17 staff members that opted for the retirement package. The staff at the library in 2010 is 59. With the retirements, they were reduced to 43. Some of those vacancies will be filled with part-time people. As a result of that, they were operating 65 hours a week, but that's been reduced to 62 hours a week in 2010. Lynn said during Musikfest they used to close, but they will be open this year as there is no America Platz anymore. It will be moved over to the new Steel Stacks on the Southside. Tom said are they attempting to fill some of the 43 with part-time? Lynn said Jack said it's 43, but some of those are part-time. Lynn said there are always coordinators and they limited a lot of their positions. There are also department heads.

4. Assignments for next meeting.

Kim said we've all heard what everyone else is doing. Are there any overall assignments that we need to look at for next meeting and everyone will keep plugging along with what their scope is of this. Mike K. said he heard it a number of times tonight, school district, school district technology, what are we looking for from the school district? He would be the one to go and request whatever we are looking at? Are we sure the school district would even want to be involved? Someone said are we sure the HAL wants to be involved with our hands tied with money from the school district? That can come and go also. Are we looking for money or for sharing data bases, their time or whatever? Mike K. said that's what he was trying to figure out. Lynn said technology questions would give you a good guide. Right now we're just gathering information, so there are no assumptions. The type of things you are talking about are things like databases. Mike K. said so when someone comes in and asks for something, she knows what they are sort of looking for, and who to send them to, and expedite their time; or just say, hey, we're not doing anything like that. Lynn said anything that is of public record can be easily provided.

Tom said you are talking about the PA ACCESS card, is there any sort of in-service of that in the high school library? Mike K. said not that he's not aware of anything. Lynn said they have to be part of the PA

State Library system to be able to use that. It doesn't mean that there aren't any school districts that are part of the PA ACCESS program. Tom said he's trying to figure out if the HAL were to get going with this type of thing, something that could be offered from the school district, something that up front the school district could do. We were talking earlier about duplication of services. We don't want to do that. Besides, the school district isn't open until 9:00 PM with those types of things. Kim asked what the library hours are at the school district and what is their policy on public use of that library? When her children were there, she could go in and help them with things. The public does have access to the weight room and the pool, but is there access or a program similar to that now for the library?

Lynn said we talked before about this potential access. Joe said with the duplication, it's not just limited to library services. If we're able to provide something at HAL, the school district didn't need to provide the school and they could use that space for something else. Lynn said at the BAPL South Side Branch, the school district pays for some programs there. They don't have to have the local school buildings open, but they have a place for the students to go for certain types of programs. Kim said Catasauqua has a program for the school district for a summer reading program that's administered at the Catasauqua library. Lynn said is it just for Catasauqua School District? Kim said they are very fortunate that they are very small. There's not a library they can get too. Just like the school district supports the park, which is down below the road from the Middle School. They are looking at ways to utilize existing services. The summer reading program had part-time staffing. They allowed people to be there and service the children, more like a group thing. The school district was part of that. Someone said she doesn't think that's something we should look into right away because regardless of whether Lower Saucon switches to Hellertown, that's something the HAL should look into.

Joe said during the budget deliberations for the Saucon Valley School District for last year's budget, they were presented with three options and they were different levels of severity. Option 1 had some cuts and some savings; Option 2 had more cuts; and Option 3 had more. He doesn't remember the details, but he does remember that in Option 2 there was an item of about \$5,000.00 savings on library services. Details about what was already discussed in previous budgets would be nice to have. Kim said yes, what they are going to cut. If there's something they need to give up on their budget, are we already looking at providing this? Someone said it would be a two-way thing, is there something we could offer and vice-versa, something they could offer.

Kim said assignments for the next meeting; each committee looks like they have a selection they are following. If we just go one more step, and get more information, we could at least have a little more with the amount of information we gathered. If everyone can put together a one-page synopsis of their plan, what they figured out and what they still need, it could be distributed to everyone. Anyone who has a need, hopefully another committee can help them find that need, but we all know in writing what we've gotten to at this point and what the next road block will be that we all need to figure how to get over. Joe said the other thing that building and finance will need, if each committee comes up with a "wish list". Kim said one of the biggest expenses we're looking at here, beyond services, is expansion and construction costs are a lot. The way to look at it is, what would be the optimum that you need to make that plan work. That plan may be something that you are going to have for 25 years and work your way towards it. You don't want to say, right now, we need x and y, and in ten years, oh, we need more but now we can't do z because x and y are in the way. We really need to look at that so the services fall into that, as to provide service, and you may need a specialized place to do it. The only way we can look at that is with a wish list or a total package, and we need to be very clear. It's not that we're looking to build this all together. It's just a master plan to get you to where we would be as a single HAL or a HAL-Lower Saucon Phase I through Phase 10 or however that works. We need to look at the services that are required because that's your upfront dollars as Robin showed us in her Power Point that the biggest dollars are up front of what you are spending on the building, so we need to really capture what services are going into it as you don't want to build more than you need, but you also don't want to build less than you need. Joe said we already talked about phases with the building itself. You build what you need, but you also plan that maybe you'll need more so don't block yourself in the process. Mike K. said are you looking into, if you do expand the library, what type of building, whether it be a wood building, block, etc. Kim said we should be doing costing and look at whether it's made out of block or made out of wood as it's a different cost per square foot, so we have a range. Depending on the size of the building, some codes require a certain building

material. Mike K. said what made him think of the question was when they were looking at space at the high school, they really got serious about some modular installations that were a cost savings, but they didn't get that far. Kim said there are ways to do modular installations. They just did a building in Northampton and there are some cost savings. You lose some flexibility, but there's a way to look at that as a plan based on how the plan lays out. Things are done in a modular way. That's a great point.

Lynn said do you have plans on what this area is going to look at in five, ten, fifteen years from now? Jack said the multi-municipal comprehensive plan has those projections. We have that available and we can bring that in. Tom said he's on the Planning Commission, and what is projected in the future, is not going to be in the future. Those are just statistics, and maybe we shouldn't use them. Kim said think about them with that caution. The only way you can apply for grants to get roads and highways upgraded is to show that maximum use. That's why they do it in this form.

5. Open Public Discussion – Kim asked if there was anyone in the public who wanted to ask questions or voice their opinion?
 - Allan Johnson asked if the emails from the public would the identity of the sender be disclosed?. Kim said if an email comes in and has a question about overall costs and numbers, the information will be put on the table for all of us to look at and discuss, there's no way on the website that anyone can view opinions, so it's truly a "voice your opinion" confidentially so we get honest opinions. Jack said you could bring the question and not mention the name or put it on the record. Kim asked Mr. Johnson if that would work? Mr. Johnson said it would. Kim said the only other option is to run it in blog form, which works to a point. The monitoring, we don't have the capability to do as a blog. Dealing with it at the meeting and putting it in the minutes would be greater access. Tom said he remembers asking our Solicitor about that particular thing and he thinks it's any information, according to the MPC, that goes into making a decision or recommendation. If it has a bearing on the recommendation, it has to be public. Kim said it would be good to read everything that comes in, and as a committee, say it has bearing or it does not have bearing. Someone said there may be people who don't want their name mentioned. Jack said we don't even have to mention names. Kim said it will be just a resident and where your residency is from. Tom said we should have a policy to block out everyone's name. Kim said we could put a note when they send an email in saying that their name will not be published. We will possibly discuss it at the meeting. Just so people know where that parameter will go. Someone said it may be a question about technology or financing, so it would be good to bring it up at the meeting to the committees.
6. Next Meeting Date – Kim said the next meeting date is Thursday, April 14th at 5:00 PM at Lower Saucon Township Town Hall.
7. Motion to Adjourn: Mike K. moved for adjournment, second by Tom. All in favor. The time was 6:15 PM.