

SERVICES COMMITTEE

November 12, 2008

PRESENT: Brian Hartson, Mary Muller, Richard Naylor, Lois Prenovost, LouAnne Lundgren, Philip Ritter, Heidi Fuge

EXCUSED: Erin Apostol

M. Muller convened the meeting at 3:30 PM.

I. VARIANCE REQUEST FORM

P. Ritter presented the Variance Request Form submitted by the Brunswick Community Library.

B. Hartson reminded the Committee members that last year when their Request was approved, the Committee told the Library that they would not pass another Variance.

R. Naylor noted that the Committee just recommended substantial funding under the Construction Grant program and it wouldn't make sense to not approve the Variance.

M. Muller noted that the Library has been making progress: they have purchased a new building and are working toward meeting the Minimum Standards.

B. Hartson suggested pushing the process along by setting a target date for compliance with the Minimum Standards.

MOTION: R. Naylor moved that, in light of the Construction Grant and in light of the progress made so far, the Committee should recommend that the Board approve the Variance Request for one more year. L. Lundgren seconded. Unanimous.

II. CONSTRUCTION GRANT REPORT

P. Ritter reported that Grace Kelly at the Division of Library Development contacted him to say that there is some extra money and she will be allocating it to some of the UHLS libraries that were not fully funded. P. Ritter asked if her suggestions could be modified and was told that it is basically a "take it or leave it" situation: either UHLS accepts her allocations or the money will be given to another System.

B. Hartson suggested sending a letter to G. Kelly or her Supervisor noting that UHLS is not pleased with her proposed allocations, especially in light of the fact that we are working on creating guidelines for distribution of the funds.

M. Muller noted that G. Kelly might see giving these additional funds to UHLS libraries as an "award" for good use of the construction funds in the past.

P. Ritter pointed out that for three years in a row, DLD has come back to UHLS with additional

construction funds for some of the libraries; also, DLD has accepted all of the Committee's original Construction grant recommendations. If UHLS wants to accept G. Kelly's allocations, no further contact with her is necessary, she only needs to be contacted if UHLS wants to reject the additional funds.

MOTION: L. Prenovost moved to recommend that the Board accept the additional funds and the allocations as per Grace Kelly. R. Naylor seconded. Unanimous.

III. GUIDELINES FOR CONSTRUCTION GRANT APPLICATIONS REVIEW

R. Naylor presented his Survey of the Library Directors regarding the grant allocation process and criteria. He submitted the following:

Out of the 29 libraries we have survey responses from 25, although four respondents abstained from answering. Reasons for abstaining included: that is the Board's decision, not enough time to think about it, and too complicated for a quick answer.

The responses indicate a strong preference for a 50% grant allocation. With 13 of 21 who prioritized the three grant options choosing 50%.

When it came to suggestion criteria for prioritizing, the top five suggestions are concrete and could easily serve as guidance in awarding grants. In fact each of the top five received different rankings that could be used for actual awards.

Additional Comments:

In all communications to Directors I mentioned the need for a grant application cap based on available funds but this was not part of the survey. Cap however are common tools that allow Granters the ability to make sure that two or more organizations get funding.

In conversations with Directors I also put forth the idea that a grant percentage of 35% or more might be acceptable to Directors as this has been a common alternative in various grant processes, including New York State grants.

P. Ritter noted that there is no guarantee that the \$14 million Construction Grant will be available in the future.

M. Muller asked whether the Directors had indicated if they would accept a 35% grant allocation, or a range of 35% to 50%? R. Naylor responded that they had not rejected that as a possibility. M. Muller noted the advantages of having the flexibility of using a range of awards and this would also mean that UHLS libraries would still be eligible for additional funds if they became available as they have for several years now.

P. Ritter thanked R. Naylor for all of his work in conducting the survey and analyzing the answers. This gives the Committee the information that it needs to consider in developing Guidelines.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING: Wednesday, December 10th at 3:30 PM

Heidi A. Fuge
11/14/08