

LRAC Meeting Notes: 2/3/22

Attendance

Eugenia Schatoff, Library Director

Brian Cresenzi

Jeannine Clark

Tommy Warren

Kathleen Kelley

Tom DePrisco

Jim Murphy

Bob Gabalski, resident and Partner Lothrop Associates LLP

Stephen Marmon

Francis Brooke

Bob Simon

Meeting began at 6:35PM.

Key Takeaways

Chiller

- Still in the process of getting a permanent chiller, as decided by the advisory committee. Right now, the library has engaged Lothrop to do the planning. Not ready to go out for bid yet.
- Bob Gabalski further explained that they are in the process of putting together the architect and engineer reports on the chiller replacement. The new chiller will replace the water towers on the roof. structure and acoustic are being planned
- Before the chiller can be installed, there will be a review process with the NY Education Department. NYSED has oversight over construction projects on educational buildings such as libraries. Starting to size the chiller and consider options.
- Due to supply chain issues and the NYSED process, the new chiller will not be installed in time for the summer cooling season. Bob estimates the earliest it could be installed is August or September. The library will have to use a rental for most of the summer.
- The chiller will have to be enclosed to control the acoustic levels, as the machine is very loud and could disturb our neighbors. Lothrop has an acoustic expert working on the project.
- The new chiller will be much smaller than the two dead chillers in the library, more technologically advanced.

Community Engagement

- The library is engaging a two pronged approach: there is a new survey out now that is going to every single resident. It is also online and available to take at the library. We also will be calling library patrons to do the survey over the phone, to make sure we get senior citizen responses.
- We are collecting names and addresses in the survey to make sure that people don't respond more than once.

- There will be a raffle each week for an Amazon gift card. When someone takes the survey, they are automatically entered in the raffle.
- The library needs help from LRAC members to get as many responses as possible.
- The survey has more questions about how people use the library, other than the state of the library.
- Eugenia will share a PDF of the survey and a link with LRAC.
- Eugenia also asked the members to share it with any clubs or organizations they belong to and pass it around to people they know. Online version is up.
- Already in two days that it had been up, there were more than 100 responses. If we keep that up week after week, we'll get good turnout.
- Kathy Kelley asked if there is a cost analysis of how many people use the library in the summer. She said that there is a feeling that the library is not being used, and we need data that show that it is.
- Eugenia said that the Library is used far more for programs, events, classes, etc. There is a lot of participation as a communal civic space. Yes people take out books, but we're more than that now.
- The Library will have the most recent statistics very shortly thanks to the annual report. We share the annual report to the community every year. We can put the usage info in there. We can also find better ways to get that info out there. We are open to suggestions.
- Eugenia will share links from library thought leaders on the future of libraries.
- Anecdotally, the Pearl River Public Library shines in terms of programming. We have more programs and attendees than all libraries in the system. This old perception of keepers of knowledge doesn't exist. It's about access to knowledge, services, and spaces. That's where libraries are heading.
- The Library just got stats on card holder numbers and it went up slightly from last year. The numbers went up with COVID now that we have an online form. We also partnered with PRSD and have signup during Kindergarten registration. There are 9,510 card holders, out of 15,564 residents. That's over 61% of residents!

Focus Groups

- The Library had one focus group in person with parents of toddlers before we had to close again due to the COVID surge. Now we are going to start them up again.
- There were also two sessions with library staff.
- The first focus group was with parents with toddlers and two sessions with staff. Went very well, lots of dynamic input and dialogue. Bob will send notes from the sessions to Eugenia.
- The focus groups are going to take place over the next few months.
- Bob explained that the sessions are meant to be dialogues not monologues. They start the conversation, and let the conversation go on and steer it every now and then. The staff had great input on how to better serve patrons. They provided intricate details on where the good and bad parts are. It has problems, but it shines in many ways.
- The renovation has to feel like it belongs in Pearl River. What's really important is that the community has roots that need to be respected, preserved, and enhanced.

- Eugenia asked the LRAC members to let her know of any groups that we can do it with. We'll make it convenient for them. We need lots of different groups represented.
- Lothrop is contracted for long range planning and focus groups.
- There is no deadline for when the focus groups will end. It will take as long as it takes, once Lothrop feels they have a nice balanced feedback.
- We will

Additional Takeaways

- Eugenia will share the Annual Report with LRAC once it is completed.
- The next LRAC meeting will be **Apr 7, 2022**.
- LRAC will be involved in their own focus groups, most likely before the next meeting. It would be multiple sessions in March.
- The library is looking to reopen for programs in March.
- The NYSED application is a multi-step process that begins with a letter of interest. Bob explained that we are not there yet. After the letter, we begin the process of filling out many cumbersome forms. Lothrop will send the letter of interest within the next month. The application should be completed by June. We need to complete the application before going out to bid.

Meeting ended at 7:15.