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I'm now watching the Guelph Public Library Board meeting, and I have no idea what's on the agenda! Stand by...



We're doing a round of introductions for all staff and board members present.

Chair Ellery asks for declaration of conflicts of interest, and there are none.

Consent agenda? I cannot find the agenda online so I have no idea what all is one it, but Goller asks about safety at the library. 18 safety incidents last fall?

Carolyn Elston-Ryder from Human Resources says that an "incident" is very broad, and may of those involved the same person who was already banned but he keeps coming back.

Vice-chair Williamson says staff do a really excellent job supporting patrons, some of whom need more support than others, but it's really encouraging to see interactions in more "tense moments."

Motion to receive consent agenda passes unanimously.

Duncan Bates, associate architect at Diamond Schmitt, begins the first presentation, a recap of the main library project.

Bates says there were tasked with executing the strategic vision of the board, which includes questions about accessibility and community resilience. The 88k sq. foot project has been a "moving target" but the goal has been to create a space that answers a growing community.

Bates says during the design process they thought a lot about Guelph's history and the history of the Baker Street area. First floor is children's library, second is fiction and maker space, and third floor is a "monastic space" incl. non-fic and archives & lit from above.

Bates is describing the look of the design and there are slides on the screen in the board meeting room that I unfortunately can't see.

Follow this link to get some idea about what it's going to look like. Bates says that Baker Street is definitely going to change. <https://www.guelphpl.ca/en/about-us/new-central-library-.aspx>

Cllr Caron asks if this will be 100% net zero building. Bates confirms it will be.

Klassen asks if there might be opportunities for a cafe or gift shop or some revenue generator? Bates says it was a consideration, but using the library as a catalyst to help the downtown succeed meant incl something like a cafe was taking away an opportunity.

Cllr Klassen asks if selling bricks for donations is a possibility and then the bricks end up in the courtyard or something. Bates says the design is pretty much done, and it will be up to the library to come up with funding options. Naming rights could be a thing.

Member Webb says that some of the history talked about in this presentation settled on a "settler narrative". Bates said feedback from Indigenous community was "difficult to distill." There's no obvious Indigenous connection or history at the site they can build off.

Member Ly says that the renderings are curated for certain customer, and not, seemingly, for people already downtown. Have there been any consultations with them?

Bates says that the new library is three times the space, so they're getting more room and more space to access. He also notes that Upper Wyndham has suffered for a long time, and he hopes that the redevelopment has an impact on the social good of downtown.

Library CEO Kraft says any of the new buildings he's been to are still welcoming and accommodating to all people in need. He suspects this new building in Guelph will be the same.

Ellery adds that transitioning people from one building to the other should be a consideration, and when it looked like the library was going to be built on the other end of Baker they had begun outreach and that's something maybe the staff and board should start.

Ly says the issue is that there's really nothing in the plan he's seen that says all people are welcome, but that may be an issue and a question for later in the process.

Williamson says he thinks that it's up to board and staff to acknowledge the tension between the bright and shiny library and who uses that space. It's good that they start that work right now and keep it in mind as they proceed.

Shovel in the ground? Stephen Gazzola, Project Manager, says that there's still a lot of prep work to do. The working drawings are pretty much done, construction manager is being hired and the city is looking at schedule. Out of for bid end of Feb. Late spring possibly.

Gazzola adds that they're "tidying up" the budget docs and notes that "things are crazy out there" in terms of construction issues. He says that staff know it's going to be tight, but they'll also know fairly quickly if they're in a good place.

Goller asks about the approach given the issues with the South End Rec Centre. Gazzola says it will be construction management, and that the SECC is a specific case because there was a very direct funding envelope. There's been a process of validation throughout library project.

Bates adds though the whole redevelopment plan consists of multiple pieces, it can't really be compartmentalised.

Ellery says that she will take away concerns about Indigenous history, accessibility and library users but it's time to move on. Motion to receive the report passes unanimously.

Next, an update fundraising. An assessment with KCI has been completed, and the aim is to fundraise \$3.5 million which would include \$1 million from the FoGPL. The exact plan has not been made public.

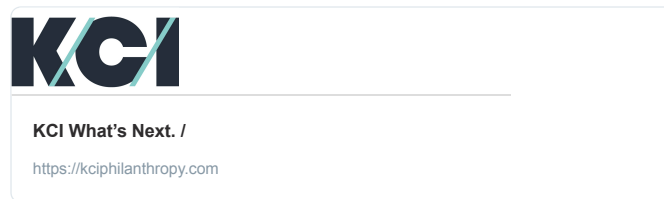
There will also be another \$1million from the reserve funds for this project, plus another \$1 million (\$10k plus) from major gifts and an additional \$500k from all other sources.

Library staff is working on or has completed policies, pipeline, the campaign plan, an FAQ, donor pitch deck, naming and recognition opportunities, "Ask" Training, and volunteer structure and responsibilities.

Kirsten Bester, Development Officer at Guelph Public Library, says that people have already been reaching out about fund-raising initiatives, giving and volunteering. They're still in the process of fleshing out those plans.

Next steps: recruitment of volunteers, clarifying campaign priorities & opportunities, developing community campaign, outreach to potential lead donors and coaching and support from KCI.

Who are KCI?



Caron asks if Library has a relationship with the Guelph Community Foundation? Bester says GPL has an endowment with the GCF, and for that matter, so do the Friends. They get dividends at the end of every year.

Q: Do we know where the funds are going? Can people earmark their gift? Kraft says there will be parameters, but the campaign is still in its infancy stage (though a lot of work has been done) but they'll bring the 3 pillars to the board once they've been complete.

Motion to receive the report passed unanimously.

Next, call for nominations. Ellery says they're being pushed back so the board members can think about their opportunities and if they want to step up: Chair, 2 vice-chairs, secretary and treasurer.

The board is also going to formalise their rep to the Ontario Library Association. Also, looking for a formal liaison to the Friends of GPL.

Ellery says that she would like to propose that meetings move to Monday nights starting monthly in March to accommodate the fact that city council meeting are now on Tuesday. One member has a conflict on the third Monday, so we're doing second Monday instead.

Motion to extend the meeting passes unanimously. Ellery says it looks like we won't be able to get through the agenda on time.

Changes to borrowing policy is the next report. One of the changes is the creation of digital access card to allow equal access for people that can't provide proof of address, which will allow them to borrow two physical items plus unlimited computer and digital access.

This will allow people to have access to the library with dignity and it will help staff by issuing quite so many temp passes. Also, one card will replace uni student, Guelph property owner, City employee and reciprocal borrower.

The online registration has also removed the gender field and allows the option for patrons to use their preferred name. Parents and kids will be able to link cards so one person in the household can pick up for everyone.

Goller asks if staff know how many more people can access with the community card. Staff say that there are about 50 people every day who are given a temp pass at the main branch alone.

Looks like that's the end of the meeting.



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