

The Lapeer District Library will be the community's destination for resources, education, technology and connections.

**Lapeer District Library
Special Meeting/Saturday Retreat of October 6, 2018
Marguerite deAngeli Branch
Minutes**

18S.10.01 CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by chairperson, Jan Watz at 9:08 a.m.

18S.10.02 ROLL CALL:

Jacque Wilson	City of Lapeer	12/31/2018	Present
Charlotte Babb	County (Burnside Township)	12/31/2020	Present
Hill Kim	County (Hadley Township)	12/31/2019	Present
Gary Phillips	County (Deerfield Township)	12/31/2019	Present
Karen Rykhus	Lapeer Township	12/31/2020	Present
Perry Valle	County (Metamora Township)	12/31/2021	Present
Janet Watz	Mayfield Township	12/31/2021	Present

Quorum is 4. There are 7 Board members present.

Also present are Melissa Malcolm, LDL Director and Pat Presby, recorder. In audience are Pam Orr, and Cherise Laidler.

18S.10.03 The meeting was divided into three areas of concern:

- A. Brainstorming the past bond issue**
- B. Lapeer Community Schools proposal**
- C. Where do we go from here?**

18S.10.04 A. BRAINSTORMING THE PAST BOND ISSUE: Using the notes from the last VYNLL (Vote Yes for a New Lapeer Library) as a structure for discussion and brainstorming the following was considered:

18S.10.05 Fundraising: A straightforward review showed a balance of \$1112.94. The bank account will be kept open. Recommendation: Sell t-shirts to the public, not just VYNLL members.

18S.10.06 Communications:

- Letters to the editors were requested, and some individuals were asked specifically to write a letter. The consensus was to write more, better, and earlier letters. (Letters had started in May.)

- There was an error in handling community engagement. Perhaps it would be more effective to stream community meetings live on FaceBook (FB). Providing a link to counter misinformation did not prove to be effective.
- The VYNLL committee members looked at the surface of the campaign and thought everything was okay; however, the defeat told us that there were undercurrents that were overlooked.
- Voters did not understand why some townships voted and others did not, but still could use the library. In point of fact, there were committee members who were unclear or confused about districts and taxation.
- The board considered what kinds of information people need and when to seize opportunities to educate the voters. Groups that do not meet during the summer need to be caught and informed early on (e.g. MOPS). Instead of people coming to informational meetings, we need to go to their groups (e.g. senior centers). It was decided that information about the myriad of library services needs to be put out in front of the voters now and continuously. To keep these services in the public eye, the township brochure racks can have slips outlining the library's services as well as placing the information in property tax bills that will go out soon. One main consideration was how to promote what's happening at the library in ways other than the web page or the newspaper. While a third of our card holders get the e-newsletter, and FB is active, the question remains as to how to reach the voter who is neither negative nor disinterested and have that voter realize all that happens at the library and its subsequent importance to the community. The board considered a welcome packet, FB "like us" contest or awards as possibilities.
- Residents of Lapeer County don't understand what a 21st century library offers and how woefully inadequate the deAngeli building is to meet the benchmark. To help center on the value (and draw) to a community that a library can be, the bond campaign needs to encourage realtors, manufactures, and business owners to become advocates. Person to person contact with this group could be productive especially reminding them that anyone who works in Lapeer can get a library card. Signs in business windows would make for awareness of the importance of the library to the community.
- The message for a new library needs to be crafted to the public on a different level. The amount (\$12.5 million) was off putting to some, despite the comparison of a raise in property tax being less than the cost

of a cup of coffee a week. This comparison was not effective with those of the farming community. To many, it was an immediate “no” when the amount of the bond —\$12.5 million—was heard.

- More library patrons needed to be turned into activists instead of relying on the VYNLL committee members. “Yes” voters can influence the undecided or indifferent voters. Patrons who visit a branch should be rewarded in some way to re-inforce positive attitudes and involvement. (There was some confusion with patrons who thought that branches would be closed when the new library opened because the bond signs said “Lapeer Library”).
- Buying the property before going to the voters with a bond proposal was a problem in the community’s eyes. Despite the fact that the property was paid for with cash and that the purchase was judicious in light of rising property values, this issue kept coming up with some of the community members. While there was no intention to coerce a “yes” vote for a new library, some viewed it as such. People didn’t realize how much work went into the selection of the property.
- The web page needed a webmaster.

18S.10.07 Community Meetings: There were 9 meetings with a total of 15 non-board non-staff people attending. It is evident that there is a need to go where people are already gathered, like township board meetings. A representative of the board could use public time, perhaps on a quarterly basis, at township meetings to keep library programs and services and the library’s presence in the community known. Setting up a library advocate at township meetings would keep the locals aware of current updates at the library. “Advertising” the library is also possible through the radio with a sponsorship of a community event.

18S.10.08 Post Cards: Mass mailings vs. targeted mailings were discussed. Some post cards came back; some were not used. The question of when to send them out and how to approach mass mailings was not resolved.

18S.10.09 Volunteers: More volunteers who were not committee members could have been used for non-library events.

18S.10.10 Meetings: The VYNLL committee decided to meet on a semi-regular basis after the board decides where the building project goes from here.

18S.10.11 There were other thoughts on the bond issue failing to pass:

- What we did right—fundraisers, signs, staff involvement as volunteers

- What we could have done differently—wording of yard signs as “Lapeer” was confusing to some; lack of person-to-person contact; needed specific letters from specific people
- What we could do better—more board member involvement; involve the honorary chairs more; ask opinions of specific groups of people; make known improvements at the branches resulting from the bond passing; code requirements were not explained but reflected in the sketch; deal with reaction to things people thought we didn’t need (fireplace, café); work on getting active chairs; need to get community leaders involved; make the sketch more general; commit to getting a list of positive voters; capture the people who were really disappointed by the outcome of the vote.

18S.10.12 B. LAPEER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS PROPOSAL: The discussion revolved around pros and cons, issues that would need to be worked out and deal breakers. It resulted in setting up a meeting (10/11/18) with LCS superintendent at the regular board meeting with the discussion to center around the board’s 10 key questions that need answers before a decision could be made by the LDL board.

18S.10.13 These are the key questions:

1. What is the nature of the business relationship between LCS and LDL? Shared costs?
2. Autonomy? Will LDL have identity as a public library? (Censorship of books on shelf?)
3. Will LDL have a lifetime lease?
4. How much control of architect, design, and aesthetics will LDL have?
5. How much space? Storage? Parking?
6. What is the vision for the campus? Where are the other entities?
7. Will LDL have to change services needed because of school services needed? What costs would be involved and who would pay for them?
8. Is there a site plan to look at?
9. November 1 decision deadline is unrealistic.
10. Is there an allocation for furnishing and equipment in the school bond?
11. What about collections and computer access?

18S.10.14 The following observations, questions, and opinions generated the board’s key questions above:

- Perspective of LCS and LDL is different; could the VYNLL members be included as part of the LCS bond proposal group?

- If community input is desired for the decision, what groups should be asked? Is there even time to do this by November 1st?
- What happens if LDL decides not to go with the LCS proposal?
- What are the opt out parameters?
- Would including a library in the proposed campus foster more support for the LCS proposal?
- LDL's operating millage will still come up in 2022. How will this impact the proposal? Its passage?
- Voters will think they are voting for the schools. Would the schools be better able to "sell" the bond proposal with the library "attached"? Some townships that are in LDL are not able to vote for Lapeer schools.
- Does LDL's decision (due by November 1st) impact the amount of money asked for in LCS's bond issue or their approach to campaigning for it?
- What about security? The free flow of people was expressed as a concern by LCS's focus groups.
- Is the library to be integrated into the complex or apart and free standing? Is there enough land? Who determines the design?
- What control would LDL have over the landlord/ lessee relationship? How would LDL have a voice?
- Expenses under facilities and equipment in LDL's budget would still remain. There is no category to pay for rent in addition to that. If LDL leases the space what exactly is included?
- How would parking be managed? Maintained?
- For those who liked the idea of the library being grouped with the high school, would this jeopardize a vote for a library on LDL's property?
- Brief research indicated that there are very few communities where a school and public library were in the same complex and that there were difficulties in management as well as operations. The population of these communities was less than 10,000.
- Would there be a liaison between the boards of LCS and LDL?
- LCS's focus groups, while generally favoring the plan, saw problems in parking, building access, and most importantly, liability and security.

18S.10.15 C. WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

1. Look at research of combining high school complexes with public libraries.
2. Contact members of VYNLL to attend the board meeting on October 11 when the board's questions and further discussion will take place with

LCS's superintendent.

3. Questions to consider: What is the new timeline for LDL for a bond vote?
Is a capital campaign for furnishing now in a realistic time frame?

18S.10.16 ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

**Special Meeting:
Metamora Branch Library
November 1, 2018
5:30 p.m.**

**Regular Meeting:
Metamora Branch Library
November 15, 2018
Finance Committee 5:00 p.m.
Full Board 5:30 p.m.**