

Shedd - Porter Memorial Library Minutes
September 09, 2026 Meeting
Approved

Present: Carol Reller, Alyson Montgomery, Kathy Torrey, Jude Willis, Susan Norlander, Matt Saxton

Guest: Brett Morrison

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 pm.

Carol reported that the doors would be returned next Wednesday, 9/16/2026, and the transoms would come down then for work. Carol will be here for 8 AM to meet the contractor and Susan will take over by 10 if needed. Kathy is available too.

Brett joined us to discuss fund raising and capital campaigns.

First topic – *What do you understand a capital campaign to be?*

- Brett defined it as a special campaign to achieve a purpose that has a \$\$ amount attached. SPML has needs that require raising funds.

Second topic – *What is the typical duration of a capital campaign and how long should this last for SPML?*

- Brett indicated campaigns can last anywhere from 4 months to 10 years. He anticipates our needs are probably multiyear and involves the entire organization with the Trustees and staff becoming spokespeople for the campaign. It takes time to convince people that there is a need now.
- Brett felt 3 – 5 years was probably a reasonable estimate for a timeline. The Library has needs so we should start sooner rather than later.
- The fiscal scope of the campaign would be dictated by professional estimates for the work proposed.
- He talked about why us, why now, and why this much.

Third - *How much does SPML need to raise?*

- Our estimates averaged 1.5 – 2.5 million dollars.
- We will need presentation materials and a case for support.
 - We will also need to be iterative.
- Potential lead donors are helpful.
- Projects must be defined first.
- Brett mentioned a silent phase and a public phase. He said most of the work should be the silent phase, looking for the top 5 – 6 gifts, before going public. Identifying these top donors is probably the most important step in raising funds. This could include foundations, public and private, as well as grants, and individuals.
- Susan mentioned that we could structure donations based on sections of the library – mystery, fantasy, etc.
- Carol asked if we should be in a position to take donations of appreciated securities and QCDs. Brett felt we should.

Fourth topic – *How would you prioritize SPML needs in terms of the sequence of fundraising?*

- Jude raised the question of one or more projects at a time. Brett indicated that seed funding and lead donations may dictate what approach is taken. Sequencing of fund raising and/or spending also plays a role.
- Kathy discussed the conditions assessment report done previously.
- Priorities mentioned in no particular order –
 - Humidity control, moisture mitigation and comfort levels
 - Roof
 - Programing
 - ADA Compliance/accessibility
 - Meeting, events, space for programming
 - Building an endowment

Discussion and Brainstorming:

- Brett suggested a vulnerability study to show resiliency based on proximity to the river. Matt pointed out that our flood was based on an issue that should not happen again.
- Endowments –
 - We discussed the current Trust Funds which are technically endowments.
- Brett pointed out that we are at the whim of public funding which can be subject to change.
- We talked about identifying possible donors, particularly those that could make seed donations.
- Matt asked what generations (boomers, gen x etc.) might be more apt to donate.
- Carol asked if we needed our own tax ID # (becoming a 501© (3) organization). We discussed the need for a broker to be involved to facilitate donations of appreciated securities and QCDs. Credit card donations are a consideration too.
- A culture of giving needs to be developed.
- Carol pointed out that we need to be prepared to discuss the usage of digital resources (readers transitioning from paper books to devices) in the future when seeking funds and how that could impact the building.
- Remember we are cultivating donors for future boards.
- “No’s” may really mean “No, not now”.
 - Ask follow up questions – did I explain this well? Do you understand what we are trying to do? Would you be open to us coming back and talking to you in a year?
- We are building relationships, not just a year end donation/transaction. We have to share our enthusiasm.
- Two people meeting with potential donors is helpful.
- Carol mentioned that the Town plays a role in this too as they own the building. She also brought up the efforts regarding financial reporting details and improvements.
- Susan brought up investing in the fund raising with the support of various professionals or consultants.
- We discussed fundraising databases versus the use of Quicken and/or Excel.
- Jude mentioned potential “competition” for fund with other area organizations in need of money too.
- An advisory group was mentioned.

We thanked Brett for sharing his insight and experiences. The meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Reller