

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Advisory Board Meeting
James R. Thompson Center—Lt. Governor Sheila Simon Conference Room
100 West Randolph—Suite 15-100
Chicago, IL 60601
October 18, 2012

Present in Chicago:

Steve Beckett (Chair), Leigh Bienen, Charles Branham, Donna Carroll, Gary Hammons, Ranjan Karri, Dick Meister, Pat Reardon, Craig Sautter, Sean Vinck

Staff/Guests: Kathryn Harris, Carla Knorowski, Eileen Mackevich, Catherine Shannon,

Present in Springfield via video conference:

Teri Barnett, Dave Blanchette, Theresa Cherrier, Garth Madison, Amy Martin,

Absent: William (Bill) Thomas

Steve Beckett, Chair of the Advisory Board, called the meeting to order at 10:03 am. He asked the members of the Board and Staff to introduce themselves.

He called upon Dick Meister to review a paper he had written as a base for discussion of a possible strategic plan. Meister pointed to the headings in the report. He highlighted the role of the Advisory Board. Several board members noted the need for a review of the mission statement and the inclusion of a vision statement. Discussion turned to the question of the placing of the ALPL in a national context. How can this be done considering current fiscal constraints?

Staff then offered a history of the Library/Museum. Beckett summarized the strengths and challenges facing the Library. Initially, the roles of the IHPA Board of Trustees, the ALPL Foundation Board, and the ALPL Advisory Board must be clarified and understood by all. Meister's paper is a working draft can be considered as a base for the development of a six (6) year plan to ready the library for the state's 2018 Illinois Bicentennial. The report identifies benchmarks and targets that will be used to determine "where" the library will move forward and "when" and "how" that can be achieved. The chair announced subcommittees to address the topics present in the draft Strategic Plan. Board members' assignments to subcommittees were based upon interests, and the Chair will have an organizational structure in place by the Spring meeting.

Symbiotic relationship of the three Boards

Amy Martin, IHPA Director, discussed the IHPA Board of Trustees and said the IHPA Bboard, ALPL Advisory Board, and Foundation Board should work collaboratively regarding the bylaws, etc. with Garth Madison, Agency Legal Counsel. Direct Martin said the budget cuts of recent years have hurt the Library especially and the Library has been hard hit by retirements. The Library has been severely hurt, and especially hard hit by retirements. The 7 member IHPA Board sets policy; members are appointed by the Governor; and it meets quarterly. The next meeting is February 13, 2013. On December 5, the three Boards will meet with the Governor in a social occasion and could become an annual event.

A suggestion was made about an annual meeting of all three boards in the spring or summer. Carla Knorowski, ALPL Foundation CEO, suggested that the leadership of all three Boards (Executive Committees) could form a separate committee and meet on a yet to be established timetable. Ranjan Karri questioned the need for joint Board committees, the similar tasks of each one, and whether this would be duplicating work. There is still the need to determine how the Advisory Board and other Boards will work together. Sean Vinck stated that this question is key to the work and success of all three Boards.

Chairman Beckett said there should be an executive relationship between the Advisory Board, the IHPA Trustee Board, and the Foundation Board. The Foundation Board is a 501c3-NFP and works collaboratively, not as an equal to, the government body, i.e. the IHPA and the ALPLM.

Garth Madison referenced the IHPA statute which states that the ALPLM is a division of the IHPA. Its Executive is its Board of Trustees, and by statute the Agency works with Foundation.

Chairman Beckett stated that a flow chart would be ideal in order to visualize how the relationships of the Boards to Agency and to the Library are supposed to be.

Director Martin sees the Advisory Board as helping the Library in much the same way as the Foundation helps the Museum; she state the Library has been long neglected.

Donna Carroll suggested that a particular program or idea be used as an example and apply it to the flow chart and then it can be used as a model for other discussions and decisions.

Catherine Shannon, IHPA Deputy Director, said that the IHPA Board is a policy making board; it approves budgets, space use, purchases or de-accessions.

Carla Knorowski noted that the Foundation serves both the Library AND the Museum, though the word "Museum" is not in its name. The primary goal for the Foundation is to build a donor base, create a strong foundation for that donor base, and to attract major gifts. Success in garnering federal and state funds is important, but the Foundation needs a core group of individual donors as well. Recently bequests, which have been unrestricted support funds, have come in. There continues to be a need for significant individual major gifts.

Knorowski noted that the Foundation has applied for a \$750K NEH grant which will require a \$2.25M match. If awarded, these funds will go toward reducing the Taper collection debt. Another area of fundraising that is important is the establishment of an endowment fund by the ALPL Foundation. The chief priority now is the retirement of the debt for Taper collection: 1500 documents and artifacts that are being purchased for \$25M. Presently the debt is at \$12.5M and the due date is 2017. Previously it was financed through municipal bonds by the City of Springfield, but now is a traditional loan at Wynn Trust.

Eileen Mackevich commented on the programmatic aspects of the Library vis-à-vis the Foundations role as fundraiser.

Patrick Reardon commented that the IHPA Board, Foundation Board, Advisory Board all affect the Library, however the IHPA Board and the Foundation Board are decision making Boards, the Advisory board is “advisory” only. How do three Boards work without “stepping on one another’s toes?”

Chairman Beckett asked if the Library Strategic Plan needs IHPA board approval? Eileen Mackevich commented that ultimately the Plan will need approval from the Trustees.

Dick Meister stated that communication with IHPA and the Foundation will be needed re development of Strategic Plan and it was understood that the Taper collection is the first priority for the Foundation’s attention and activities.

Chairman Beckett requested to see financial statements for the Foundation.

Donna Carroll noted that she doesn’t want to see the Board get stuck on the “organizational plan” to the extent that we can’t move forward. The opportunity for action is now and is inherent in planning for 2018, the 200th anniversary of Statehood. This timeframe can also serve as a five year plan, highlighting various anniversaries and commemorations upon which the Library staff can focus to draw attention to its collections and resources.

Carla Knorowski stated that when the Taper debt is retired, then attention will be focused on building the endowment.

Ranjan Karri suggested that one of the roles of the Advisory Board would be to recommend policy to the IHPA Board. Garth Madison noted that the Advisory Board has a “skill set” to implement plans for the Library and that the statute states what the Advisory Board is supposed to do. (20 ILCS 3405/30-32)

Eileen Mackevich commented the Board should NOT step on the toes of the other Boards, what is needed is for all to work together to increase and enhance the resources and collections of the Library.

Catherine Shannon suggested that Dick Meister and Chairman Beckett be invited to HPA Board meetings. Sean Vinck made an analogy that the Advisory Board may be viewed on the same level as the advisory boards that oversee/advise/recommend the “regulated professions”.

Chairman Beckett commented that it sounds as if a “super structure” flow chart needs to be developed to understand the responsibilities and inner-workings of the Boards.

Chairman Beckett made the following comments re the subcommittee assignments:
By the first week of February, sub-committee members and designated staff will have produced a draft report for review; at the March 22, 2013, Board meeting, Dick Meister and Chairman Beckett aim to have a document to present to the full Advisory Board.

Patrick Reardon inquired, “Where do priorities lie in the Library... where? Artifacts? Collections?”

Dick Meister asked if other state agencies have de-accessioning policies and if so, could they be made available to Board members?

Leigh Bienen, regarding the documents shared regarding the Collections, suggested that a section should be developed regarding our holdings about lawyers, courts, and the legal profession...what do we have?

Chairman Beckett requested definitions for each sub-committee. None were immediately forthcoming.

Dave Blanchette, Deputy Director, noted that PR would be developed vis-à-vis our strategic planning activity and that “whatever means necessary to elevate the library” would be utilized. Eileen Mackevich noted the “Illinois State Historical Library” be incorporated in the official title.

Chairman Beckett commented on constituencies of the Library and developing or expanding existing partnerships and constituencies.

Eileen Mackevich stated that the Advisory Board will need to determine how we inter-relate with other libraries and educational agencies and institutions.

Ranjan Karri added that the “Vision Statement” for the Library should answer the question, “What is it that the Library wants to be?” and that the Mission statement should address the question of: “What, how, and who does the Library serve?”

Staff will initiate the work of subcommittees with the appointed Library Advisory Board members and have drafts prepared by February 12, 2102.

Next meeting: March 22, 2013, 10 a.m. in Chicago.

Possible agenda topics will include: organizational structure; minutes, agreement on length of future meetings (though all felt that today’s meeting, i.e. 10a.m.-noon, was ideal)

The meeting adjourned at 12 pm.

Notes transcribed by: Teri Barnett

NOTE: Please send corrections and/or additions to Teri Barnett: teri.barnett@illinois.gov or by phone at: 217-558-0126.

October 24, 2012