

## MORC Culture/Community Services Subcommittee

The MORC Culture/Community Services Subcommittee was made up of Jean Ginn Marvin, Chair, Michael Vaillancourt and Mary Ann Lynch.

The Committee met on November 16, 2009 with Head Librarian Jay Scherma to discuss the Library and any potential savings that could be realized.

After speaking at length with Mr. Scherma the Committee would like to make the following suggestions as areas that would warrant further discussion. Due to the short duration of meeting time of this committee, and the lack of ability to study not only the issue, but the unintended consequences, we offer these ideas for discussion purposes only.

The first question we have is whether or not it would make sense to have the library become Regional or County based. Perhaps towns could join a consortium. Enabling Legislation could be introduced in Augusta so that Libraries could share hardware and software (by licensing it to the State)

Other “Partnering” opportunities exist with other nearby towns as well as with our own school libraries. It seems unlikely to us that we really need to have 4 libraries, complete with 4 Head Librarians, 4 computer systems etc. in a one block radius.

Other options that could be considered is privatizing the library services as has been done in Hawaii, using custodians from the school department, having paid programs (such as a guest lecturer), shortening of hours (Thomas Memorial is currently open 10 hours above the number required by the State), and renting out space for meetings.

The Committee then scheduled a meeting with Janet Hoskin, Director of Community Services on February 8, 2010 at 4pm. Regretfully Michael Vaillancourt left work early that day as he was ill and Mary Ann Lynch confused the time on her calendar so only Jean Ginn Marvin met with Ms. Hoskin.

After an hour of discussion with Ms. Hoskin, I offer the following as areas that would warrant further consideration:

There is currently a significant amount of office space attached to the Community Services building that is empty and the rent goes directly to the Community Services Budget. There needs to be a plan put in to place to rent this space.

Community Services currently uses an antiquated system to register citizens for classes. New software should be obtained so citizens need not appear in person to register. In addition this would allow for payment with credit cards.

A new plan for marketing needs to be implemented. A printed brochure is no longer effective as a method of communicating with the population. Social Media opportunities (A Facebook page, and a Twitter account for example) need to be used. E-mails for all prior customers need to be kept in a data base and weekly updates of availability of classes should be issued. Regular articles should be in local papers that discuss availability of programming.

Polling of customers should be done to see what kind of classes the community at large would like to see and answer the question as to whether or not current programs are meeting the needs of our citizens.

As was stated in the beginning of this report, these suggestions are offered as areas that would warrant further exploration. The Sub Committee does not claim to have the expertise to make these suggestions. Rather, we offer these ideas as the beginning of several meaningful and necessary conversations.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jean Ginn Marvin (for the)

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