Do You Have an Operation Phoenix in Your Drawer?

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COMMUNITY & STATE PRIORITIES

1. Public safety (fire, police, national guard, etc.)
2. Infrastructure (roads, sewers, water, etc.)
3. Schools
4. Everything else (libraries)
EXEMPLARY AROUND THE NATION

• Douglas County, Oregon
  • “We are not against the library; we just don’t see the library as an essential service. There is just not enough money for non-essential services.”

• Small town Nebraska

• West Virginia
MOST LIBRARY LEADERS REALIZE...

• The library of today will not exist forever.
• Continual change is with us.
• Today the library is more than the sum of its parts.
  • an Internet access point
  • a warehouse of material
MOST LIBRARY LEADERS REALIZE...

• The library must show its role and purpose, its value and benefit to the public.
• The library must show value in every transaction.
• Successful libraries have directors that show the community the value of the library.
Today we are NOT discussing privatization or outsourcing.
PRIVATIZATION & OUTSOURCING

- Privatization or outsourcing is not eliminating a library but changing how it is managed.
- Indicates the government is not looking at the library as a community asset, but as a managerial burden.
WHAT IS INVOLVED IN REBUILDING A NEW ORGANIZATION?

A Creative Process
Planning
Building
Inventiveness
Resourcefulness
AS YOU START OUT...

- Be realistic but creative
- Know your partners & your detractors
  - Know your community
- Have basic legal knowledge
- Have basic business sense
CHECK THE STATUTES

• Limits on funding from political subdivisions (city, county, state, federal)
• Possible consolidation with public or private schools
• Grant restrictions
• Government regulations to advocate or oppose (forced neutrality)
• Understand what you are willing to give up to get what you want
PRIMARY ENERGIZING ORGANIZATION

• Fundraising body with an active board
  • GOOD → Friends of the Library
  • BETTER → Library Foundation
• 501(c)3 non-profit status required
• What about an umbrella community foundation?
ALTERNATIVE ORGANIZATIONS

- School districts
- Volunteer groups (private or civic organizations)
- Political subdivision ($1.00 per year agreements)
- Private contract (outsourcing)
- Specific program or function funding
- Membership structure (think public broadcasting)
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Recruit these members:

• An attorney or paralegal
• An accountant
• An experienced (or at least willing) chief fundraiser
• Prominent citizens who believe in and are ACTIVE and ENTHUSIASTIC about a library
CONSORTIUM

• Are you already in a consortia?
• Make sure to examine...
  • Restrictions on including independent non-profits
  • Whether the by-laws should be/need to be changed
  • Shared consulting
  • Shared Library Information Software (LIS) and other resources
LIBRARY 2.0: THE LIBRARY AS A BUSINESS

• The patron is a customer.
• Libraries must maintain values:
  • Intellectual Freedom, Library Bill of Rights, Right to Access, etc.
• Encourage cost recovery but be willing to take a loss.
WHAT DO YOU DO YOURSELF?
WHAT DO YOU COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS?

• Physical assets of the building
  • Books, computers, network equipment
• Software & networking agreements
• Networking software
• Building maintenance, taxes, utilities
• Insurance
LEADERSHIP

Director of the Library should be:

• Positive and enthusiastic
• Experienced in management
• Customer service focused
• Experienced with programs
• A social entrepreneur
STAFF

Hire staff that is:

- Positive and enthusiastic
- Customer service focused
- Experienced with programs
- Team-oriented
- Creative and wants to have fun
WHY OPERATION PHOENIX?

Associated with the Sun, the mythical Phoenix obtains new life by arising from the ashes of its predecessor.
DO YOU HAVE YOUR OPERATION PHOENIX?