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Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Consolidated Town Hall Meeting Notes

Overview

Three Town Hall style meetings were held in which the Library provided an overview of its funding issues and asked for public comment.

Meeting Attendance:

Thursday, July 16, 7 p.m., CLP – Main: 150 attendees

Saturday, July 18, 10 a.m., Carrick High School: 100 attendees

Tuesday, July 21, 7 p.m., CCAC-Allegheny Campus: 75 attendees

Total # of comments: Approximately 96 people of all ages and diverse background, representing every neighborhood that CLP serves, commented. Additional comments were received by email through the Library's Web site.

Summary:

Attendees at each of the Town Hall meetings were asked to respond to three questions following a brief presentation of the library system's funding dilemma. The questions and representative responses to them were:

1. What do you appreciate most about our library system today in Pittsburgh?
 - Branches are community assets. The variety of locations provide a safe, community resource for children, seniors, students and job seekers.
 - Libraries are diversified centers for learning and provide a family environment for education. They are a critical connection to education.
 - Local library branches are the "hubs" of our communities.
 - CLP is a leadership library providing up-to-date technology, collections of books and learning materials.
 - The library provides opportunities for children and teens to do homework, socialize, connect to the Internet and take part in creative learning activities, particularly after school.
 - Importantly, the library provides equal access to information for everyone (books, computers, programs, etc), which is essential to a democratic society.

2. If the Library system is forced to make significant budget cuts, what could you do without?
 - Overwhelming support for maintaining the branches because of their value to the individual communities they serve.
 - Reducing operating hours and programs preferable to closing branches.

- Some people felt that the public might be willing to pay for certain services (interlibrary loan, holds/reserves), a minimal charge for library cards and fees for use of their facilities.
 - Suggestions were also made to strengthen the Library's use of volunteer resources to help offset people costs.
 - Most were willing to sacrifice hours of operation, programs, and limiting the number of books they could check out/reserve
 - Suggested raising funds from private sources, friends groups, and other fundraising efforts in lieu of cutting services.
3. What would you say to the people who make the decisions about library funding – such as the City, the State, the County, the Regional Asset District – to make library funding a priority?
- Many unaware of the library's financial situation, especially that Andrew Carnegie did not provide money for ongoing library operations, but only for the original buildings.
 - Many speakers were astonished to find out that the City of Pittsburgh only contributes the same \$40,000 amount each year since 1895. They felt strongly that the City needs to step up and make its contribution more in line with today's economics and per capita contributions to libraries from similar-sized cities.
 - There was a general consensus that tax dollars should be used more to support libraries.
 - Generally, most felt that there should be an increase in a dedicated long-term funding source so that the library system can maintain its current operations.
 - Commented on the integral part libraries play in education. Links to schools and Pittsburgh Promise should be emphasized.
 - People should write to their city, county and state elected officials about the importance of libraries and library funding.

Comments:

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh must look at everything as it tries to determine ways to reduce expenses and increase revenues. While many meeting comments address multiple issues, they have been loosely categorized below in terms of People, Places, Programs and Funding, with a Multiple/Other category at the end.

People

Hirsch W., Squirrel Hill - I volunteer at the library and employees of CLP work very hard and are to be credited. The majority of Pittsburghers do not know that Carnegie did not endow the Library. Do a better job of promoting that to the public. Also promote volunteerism to take the burden off of the staff. Internally we waste a lot of time bringing books in from other libraries that people do not pick up. There should be a plan to limit the number the books people can reserve or if they DO reserve a book have a small fee for it.

Rita W., Shadyside - I volunteer at Main and they are so professional. In addition to the 20 dollars and the 10 hours a week I volunteer, I still do not give enough for what I GET from the library. Please do not cut branches, if you have to cut anything cut hours.

Martin L., Oakland - Cut the salaries of the top officials at CLP. As a community, it's our job to voice and advocate for those that cannot be here. Please do not close any branches.

Adam B., Shadyside. Special educator. Lots of those he serves don't have resources at home – computers, internet. They need librarians and professionals to serve them. Young people need it. Donations from community and state officials are needed.

Places

Sonya R., Hazelwood. - Her kids are always at library. She knows they're safe. Her kids got her going to the library – she wouldn't otherwise have started attending. Nothing else in Hazelwood – they could be on street corners, selling drugs, but there at the library. Library is packed with kids, on the computer, talking, laughing – getting along.

Mary Beth B. 27th district...representing a state representative. West End library is her closest library – low economic neighborhood, kids really need that library.

Colmer R., Hazelwood. - Library is around the corner. Attends Alderdice HS. Nowhere else to go, and he gets out really early. Enjoys library because it's quiet, in a noisy neighborhood. Very busy.

Alfred – I use MANY locations because I'm writing a book and I can use the computer 8 hours a day if I go branch to branch. I organize my schedule around the branch schedules. The branches are significant! Develop a strong volunteer corps that they can do outreach instead of staff.

Anita O., Beechview - We all use the Beechview branch library and the thought that it would close is devastating. There is nothing else there for the seniors, the children, the teens. For job searches etc. My children grew up using all of the library programs. They are a vital part of the community. I thank you for the opportunity to give my input.

Erika, Bloomfield - What I value most is the variety of locations. There's a saying that I've heard, if you starve a program there is a chance to resuscitate it, but if you end it you can't bring it back. Please don't close any of the branches.

Mark L., Lawrenceville - One of the first branches of CLP was in Lawrenceville. I live across the street from the Lawrenceville branch. Please keep the branches, they are integral to their neighborhoods. The youth need the library and so do the elderly. I didn't want a stadium or an arena but I'm paying taxes for them. We need sustained funding to KEEP these branches.

Walter S., Hazelwood - I appreciate the libraries (the branches). They provide a huge family environment. Where could the families go if they couldn't go there? There is money available. Get the word out and people will help!

Maryellen, South Side - Since the branch libraries had no vote in getting us into this predicament, what will the board do to save us?

Jim R., Bethel Park - I'm from Hazelwood. As a result of the closing of all the schools in Hazelwood, we are left with the Head Start, the Y, and the Library... they are all so important to our community. Please no cuts in staff, we're already bare bones. Cut in hours could be doable. Maybe a restructure the 1 million debt would help. More fundraising. Also there's a disconnect with the school district... there's so much awareness with the Pittsburgh Promise, what can we do to join with them?

Jamini D., Mt. Washington - The (Mt. Washington) branch is within walking distance of almost everyone. Being located in a mixed community, it's a great place where everyone can see their similarities not their differences. Could volunteers not make more of a difference for the library? If more of us knew then we could be Friends of the Library. Also maybe small charge for services would be helpful.

Christa, Hazelwood - I don't think going to government for funding is the answer. So much has closed in Hazelwood and there is very little that the community can rely on. Residents can't find the funding to commute to those outer branches. Closing branches should be the last resort. All the branches should stay intact.

Barbara W., Hazelwood - Our branch (Hazelwood) is a vital part of the community. It's the one place that people can go when everything else is closed. We would really lose a connection to the community if we lose the branch. Hazelwood is a community that exists without many resources, we NEED our library.

Jackie, Beechview - The demise of our civilization starts with the closing of our libraries. So many fiction and nonfiction books are what opened my eyes to the world as a child. Do not cut branches because they are the hope of the children.

George W., Beechview (written and spoken comments)— Our Library is a huge asset to the people of Beechview, young and old. Libraries are part of a never ending education. Pre-school children enjoy picking out a book and then finding someone to read to them. Once you enter school the importance of the library becomes more important. When an educator gives a class an assignment they have to research they don't go to a baseball game to find needed information. I can't think of a better asset to the education system. ... Heard a great deal about the importance of library resources to all demographics of community, for example, teachers in school send students; library is greatest asset our community has. Costs more to run the largest library, not the four smallest put together; why not close the largest instead? Also, why don't we start to charge minimal fees base on our need. Better to do that than have no library.

Stephen M., Molly W. Carrick – We are members of the Carrick Library's Teen Advisory Group . We work with the Library staff to plan various activities and community service programs here in Carrick. ...If the Library system is forced to make cuts in service, I believe we could make do with fewer days of operation. I would not want to see a whole library location to close. Maybe an alternating schedule between nearby branches. Many kids walk to our branch, but would not be allowed to walk to other branches. They are too far away. The Teen Advisory Group is willing to help in whatever way we can. Please keep us in mind and thank you for the opportunity to speak. The library means too much to close entirely.

Chris D., Knoxville - Appreciate librarians, books, computers, help to children and university students. Cut back hours or alternate days, enlist volunteers, fewer employees. Youth are our future, libraries give hope for the future, positive recreation for youth. Many don't have the money to purchase resources; helps lower economic strata by providing resources. Please don't close the Knoxville Library.

Linda F., Beechview, works there - People come there to draft resumes, gain resources. Third question – take into consideration dynamics of each neighborhood; how many people walk to branch and would have a hardship getting to another branch.

Blair R., Carrick. - Visiting Carnegie Library since a baby – helped her become the reader she is, without the library, she wouldn't have afforded the books; volunteer opportunities help kids stay out of trouble; teens get off the street to a safe, welcoming place where there's positive recreation through programs and resources. Favorite thing is to see kids feel

special when they get library card and can check out books for themselves. Truly believes Carrick L. builds character of kids.

Roberta S., Beechview volunteer - You can get resources from anywhere in the US not just Allegheny libraries. Beechview in particular is more than a library; it is heart of community. One of the only resources left in that community. Computers are always filled, lines waiting. Tutoring services are utilized. Children's services are always full. We have nothing else – can't lose it. We need that branch.

Phyllis, Beechview - When we put ourselves together we make Beechview. Pres. Of Beechview concerned citizens. As a volunteer at library, sees impact on people and kids. Mission supported her vision of helping people. Beechview doesn't have many other amenities. Library supports many of the events they put on. Library is all-encompassing; can help community when other NGOs falter. For a green consideration – Beechview library is the only library right off a mass transit line. Staff development – charging for reserves; partner with other orgs for a percentage. Working one day from home or job sharing. Legislators need to support libraries to further literacy.

Missy R., Carrick - Agrees that no branches should close. Carrick L. is an irreplaceable asset. Carrick Community Council board member. Closing the library would have a negative effect at business revitalization campaign. Library allows her to expose daughter to diversity of books that she wouldn't have been able to – as a result, she excels in reading. Because of services and location. 3 local schools use the library – walk-able after school. Senior citizens walk to library from home; they don't have transportation. Enables them to exercise mind. Please do not take this gem away from our neighborhood.

Beth, Beechview - Greatest asset, 2nd to citizens, is library. In process for revitalizing and vital to maintain services of library. CLP had great foresight to develop branches; vital to have convenient services. See children sitting next to seniors, parents sitting next to children. Friendships, research and programs; library is the community center (there isn't one there). We could do with a slight reduction of hours open. Only to take time to convince Harrisburg and city to fund CLP more. Libraries create a safety net economically (to learn about jobs and resume creation and education) socially for seniors and others to foster interaction. Broadens kids' view of world and life. Studies prove that summer reading prevent the "brain drain" over the summer.

Ailene M., Beechview - Grew up going to a bookmobile. On a historic note – grandparents fought long and hard for Beechview branch. Love our branch and will do whatever it takes; minimal fee for use of resources.

Dave L., Knoxville; Southside library and Main - Gets around pretty well, but guarantees that most seniors cannot walk to Main or other branches not in their community. Bus lines are changing and being eliminated. For seniors to go to their non-local branch, route will change drastically b/c of those changes. Many seniors do not have internet access in their homes. Please don't cut back interlibrary loan services. Whatever you do, do no close down branch libraries.

Amy K., Mt Washington - Appreciates library – safe place to go. Services available to public that aren't available outside of schools. Fun place to go.

Meredith G., (emailed comment) - I live in poor, little, old Beechview, where we are trying hard to resuscitate a dying business district, where the City closed the swimming pool 4 or 5 years ago and then demolished it, where the spray park the City promised this year isn't ready yet and won't be any time soon, where the seniors have been promised a new center for several years now, and they really expect to die before the new one is ready for use. In addition, Beechview has never had a recreation center, nor a community center. So, our little, well-used library is also our community center. It offers many programs for people of all ages and interests. It's where many people go to find out what's going on, or isn't going on, as the case may be. It's where several groups meet, where tutoring and tax advice is given. It offers a clean, interesting place for people of all ages to go: mothers with small children, school children, teens, working people, seniors. It's cheap for sure, It's conveniently located. If the Beechview Library closes, I expect there will be people standing outside the building crying--really, I mean this. There is no other place in Beechview that offers so much to so many people. Many people LOVE the library. They will have no other place to go. Surely someone smart can find a way to keep Beechview and other small, but well-used branches open. I suggest that ALL of the branches close one extra day every week, or otherwise reduce their hours of operation, instead of closing Beechview and other branches.

Kim A., (emailed comment) - I am suggesting that the Hazelwood Library remain open to our community. It's not fair to us, our children and friends to be given such a wonderful gift and then have it ripped out from underneath us. That's what happened to us four years ago with the Hazelwood swimming pool. Many of our children were left without a place to get together safely with our friends and family. Too many of our youth and adults as well were "tossed to the curb" and left feeling unimportant and disregarded. Many of us rely on the materials that we can borrow from the library because many of us can not afford to buy all of the books that we want to read. Many of us are able to walk to the library and use the resources available. Many of us look forward to a trip to the library. My kids and I love going to the library. They get totally hyped up each time we plan a trip to the library. Please, I am begging you to keep the Hazelwood library open for us. A lot of Hazelwood keeps deteriorating and but most of us are here to stay. Please give us some joy and pride by keeping the Hazelwood library open!

Debbie H. (emailed comment) - I live in Hazelwood. Our original Library was closed and moved to another building that is not own by Carnegie Library. You are now licensing a building that is smaller in size. So, why close our library?

Programs

Carl C., Squirrel Hill - Books, DVDs, computers. People would be happy to donate to library if CLP can't buy them. Or a way that the community could help with donating computers. A computer share.

Sue P., Beechview, former employee - Access to books is what I appreciate. It meant a lot to recommend to patrons a good book to read. In Beechview, the branch serves almost as a community center. We could make do without programming and less hours, but we can't do without a library. We need sustained funding. Maybe go after money from the casino or money from the government stimulus package.

Jean T., Highland Park - Fantastic music department. Another asset is the online access to the catalog and interlibrary loan. Maybe you could charge fees for services for interlibrary loan. Increase the friends groups at the branches to support them and advocate on their behalf.

Andrew C., Squirrel Hill - The library allows the community to come together and especially the youth who use it for programs. We cannot cut the money that goes to the Teen and Children programs because that's money toward the future.

Barbara E., Churchill - The public library is important in keeping people healthy. When people have a health problem the first place they turn is to the library, for resources.

Samantha L., Squirrel Hill - The library provides so many educational benefits to the youth. We take advantage of the books, the computers. It's invaluable for educational resources. Please do not cut youth programming.

Megan C., Carrick - Lived in larger cities, and they didn't have the library system that Pittsburgh does; the time has come to charge fees on services, like interlibrary loan. She's a school librarian. Cut back on deliveries to fewer times a week. As an educator, to people in power, libraries make sure that children in impoverished areas are not left behind because of their programs and resources.

Ana S. Redwood, originally from Mt Oliver - Good memories of library, some of few good memories from childhood. How many other kids' only good memories are of their libraries? Find out where the cities are getting their funding, especially Cleveland. Donor program? Grandson- whenever my grandma takes me to the library, I have so much fun, especially the arts and crafts, the reading program there is helping him to read.

Chris, Carrick. - Thanks libraries, especially Julie at Carrick Library. Son has autism and library is able to help him over the summer through the read -a-loud program. Hasn't ever been very involved, but son's engrossment in story has sold him. Son is engaged and excited. Carrick library is very important to him. Would be willing to pay a minimal fee, even if it meant cutting his personal budget. Library is a very important safety net, kept him out of trouble as a child. Grew up in Carrick; Raleigh Durham doesn't have a comparable system despite its progressive reputation. Find out where funding comes from in other cities. What can we do to do the same.

Beverly S., Knoxville. - Request books online, through interlibrary loan. Willing to pay fee for reserves or for other services. Volunteers. Taught class for little girls, they really appreciated. Volunteered to provide materials. It would be devastating to teens, kids, and seniors. When she goes in, computers are full, programs are utilized. Neighborhood needs Knoxville library.

Josephine B., Homewood; PGH board of Ed. #1 – Early Childhood System in Homewood – staff meetings are held there, emergency location for children; use library for workshops – regional or family service specialists; teachers research projects and programs. They don't have many resources or space to promote or gather. Belongs to 2 book clubs, attends workshops, community shows. Advocates parents to join library to teach kids to read – highly valued in community.

April C., Greenfield/ Hazelwood library. - Computer databases are an essential service. Any postsecondary ed student takes those services for granted – no access to the public. CLP is the only access to the public for those e-resources. If cuts happened, lower income neighborhoods should be spared or innovatively spared – such as sharing space. Services are more than bricks and mortar.

John H., CLP Main – Oakland - Where else can you go for local history? Librarians know him from his years of research on local history. Wouldn't have that resource – keeps quality of life going and interest in the area. Collection has books that you can't find anywhere else. Library closes too early – other cities can stay open 'til 9.

Kate G. Subs at CLP system. - Struck by each library's status as the hub of the community. Inspiring to see the diversity of patrons – it's a destination that people enjoy. Libraries are access to the world – even the smallest branch is. Appreciates the county wide system – makes for a huge collection – that's the thing that she could least do without. Has to have the sharing system. Could do without – cut hours across the board, morning hours in particular. Better to cut AM than PM hours because of school.

Funding

Bill B., uses CLP Main and E. Liberty - Former pres of Allegheny Co NAACP. Many orgs are hurting for money. Don't take the approach of cutting – raise revenue. His org has a proposal to present on a fundraising model to raise millions of dollars, and he'd like to share it. Cutting services is unacceptable.

Sherry B., Sq. Hill and E. Liberty branch - Values every use she has. Wants library to be more entrepreneurial. Don't rely on charitable funding. City funding of 40K is laughable. CLP should be a content provider; look for other sources of funding.

Norren D., Oakwood. West End Library. - Doesn't believe there's any way to close branch libraries in good conscious. Need to have access to libraries in communities. Always busy. To fund: why not create a tax on gambling winnings to save libraries? Worked for the drink tax. Talk about saving, not cutting.

Phylis W., E. Liberty. - Speaks for Hazelwood Library. Not going to choose the best thing about library. Disgusted by cutting library funding when terrible budget decisions are made on the national level. Eg bank bailout. Write to Mike Doyle tell him that you support CLP system. Vote against the f-22. (Grad of U. Pitt library school in 1951!)

Roger C., Shadyside - Capital Campaign not less than 100 million dollars. We are in a recession but we need to add to the Development staff and go to the corporate community and ask to invest. To the city – we should be getting a minimum of \$4 million a year. It should be a real goal and there will be consequences if they don't provide the funding. We need to place pressure on the politicians.

Caroline T, Squirrel Hill - Capital Campaign! Instead of 750,000 fundraising per annum, we need to make that larger. We have plenty of foundations that can serve to buttress the library with grants and bequests in terms of resources.

Debra, N. Oakland - I have a 2 yr old granddaughter, who wants to go the library. We have a cultural environment where we can engage people in learning. Online access is important, but a child could not learn that way. Do not build any more

buildings, if you had to cut a building, maybe not ones that are driven to. Engage the community by asking them to donate. Maybe charge 3 dollars per library card. 3 dollars x 2.1 million visitors = the \$6 million shortage.

HPJ, Hazelwood - We have a human touch at the library. We need to find a way to develop fundraising. Carnegie would be dancing the jig right now if he knew we were here fighting for his libraries.

Mark, Squirrel Hill - More automated systems. More self check out stations.

Doug S., Pres. City Council - I face the same plea for money from every organization. The funding stream for the Library comes from RAD... that's what it was created for. Also, try block grant funding. You cannot go to an elected official and threaten them unless you tell them you will support them when they vote to raise taxes. The library also needs to work on an endowment.

Elizabeth, Lawrenceville - One problem is that people do not know what is going on. If people knew what was going on, then there would be more people willing to help. Volunteerism could be a possible solution to some of the staffing and outreach problems.

Patrick L, Hazelwood - The library is a unique resource and it shouldn't have to fight for funding. Pittsburgh's contribution is a pittance. The closing of branches would be catastrophic. The library is one of the few remaining resources to all the communities. Programs could be cut, but please keep the libraries.

Joe G, South Side - People should perhaps be donating their 3 dollars a card, but the true speaker to elected officials is USAGE. Tell the people in these communities to USE their libraries. Funders will only look at the numbers.

Denise G, Homewood - To the city, Criminal that the city only provides 40K. Take Pittsburgh off of the name if they won't support it.

Marianne H, Squirrel Hill - The friends of SQH just gave \$10,000 to our branch. What is the board willing to give? Stay accountable.

Mary, Oakland - Everyone is competing for the same money in a diminishing pot. But what other organization can give BACK the way the library does? \$6! Also, Money is not the only way to support the library. More volunteers! Volunteer your time to write grants, and other professional services.

Pam R. Beechview – suggestions:

Money saving – one day without pay for employees. She's suggesting it for her employer as well.

Cutting hours instead of closing branches. Cut from 5 days to 3 days.

Fundraising. Cans on the counter; cans at 7-eleven or other retail facilities

Write to elected official. Urge officials to do anything they can to put into education budget.

Libraries are so important – not just to adults, vital to young people.

Shame funders into funding libraries.

Mary Z. Overbrook/Brookline - Appreciates Walter at the Brookline branch for helping her figure out the internet. Education – everyone is coming late to the party, focusing on early childhood initiatives; library has consistently provided early childhood resources and programs, before other orgs have. Library is the first line for moms to expose their kids to learning. 40k from city is embarrassing. Very hard time thinking that so much money goes to a dog park instead of library system. Can we downsize funding for unnecessary spending in other parts of the city budget and fund the library?

Lisa C., Beechview. Appreciates convenience of reserving and picking up books. Branch closure in Beechview would expose citizens to long travel or unsafe walking routes. Where does Cleveland get so much funding? Why can't we get those funding dollars? Budgets are a moral document.

John S., Banksville. Hard for him to imagine PGH without library system. Integral part of PGH and neighborhoods. Some of favorite people have been librarians. During move of Hazelwood library and North side library, thought

allocation of resources was wrong, but thinks that of decisions that city makes. Where are priorities? CLP seems to be at the bottom of the city's priorities, but at the top of his. Suggest raises revenue by getting ½ a cent from sales tax. City needs to buck up and pay for it.

Steve H., Knoxville. Knoxville has difficult time – library is essential part of network in community. Works with seniors – brings them to library, where they get resources they otherwise couldn't get. In a city that has a prolific foundation community, we should be tapping it a lot more. Get a prominent Pittsburgher to do fundraising. See Pittsburgh Promise for inspiration. Most of their scholarship recipients have probably benefited by CLP system. Can't think of a better non-profit to fund in these economic times.

Bruce K., Pittsburgh city council, CLP board. - Wants to apologize for the paltry sum provided by city. November discussion of budget – he'll advocate for increasing funding. Can't think of a better way to invest in communities. Neighborhoods who've systematically lost amenities are underserved; the other side of coin is increase in crime, sp. Gun violence. Direct relationship between removal of amenities and increase in crime. When time comes, consider other loss of amenities that neighborhoods have. Wants to offer his position to advocate within neighborhoods, and to public officials. Takes it for granted that he can access media and internet; serves a consortia of seniors who can only access internet through libraries.

Michelle W., Carrick. Library system in Pittsburgh, ½ a century of using libraries as a home away from home. Grandchildren make her appreciate libraries, they go on “mini-vacation” by going there and checking out books on other places. Concentrate on fund raising activities – many small sources can be a big source. Ask citizens to “adopt the library”, get sports person to adopt the library and advocate for the library.

Donnie W., Mt Lebanon - Increase funding – rejuvenate friends groups – CLP has ignored friends groups. Management wants too much control over funding. Friends groups may have less professional methods, but increases ownership by the community of Pittsburgh.

Tim F., Allegheny West. Stats - \$20/per capita, and city's provision of \$40k is embarrassing, appalling. What he appreciates – new library opening; serve many needs. City can do a whole lot better for what CLP provides.

Sarah K., Mt Washington, nurse - None of friends knew about problems that library is having. Concerned that public won't have chance to help. Donation by admission doors to raise money. Only place to use internet and other resources. It's safe. To question #3: Membership has and will increase as need for public services increase and recession grows.

Marilyn B., Beechview. To question #3 – We can dig a little deeper personally. Funders should also dig deeper and make library funding a priority. Pittsburgh is a great city – same competitive spirit led Carnegie to start CLP. He was confident that Pittsburgh would step up. Obviously they haven't, was he right??? Cleveland first, and PGH last??? Mission is to engage the community in literacy and learning -crucial to success of community to have libraries.

Betty E., Lawrenceville.- Suggests library should create an endowment for themselves – 1/10 of 1% of all funding for it.

Sue M., Sq Hill. “Long time library person.” - Concerned/disbelief that funding of an adjunct educational system is so paltry, and second class. Libraries have a job to provide a service to the community, not to raise money. We take those services away from ourselves. It's a slippery slope to cut services. “So you can raise my taxes.”

Jon W., (emailed comment) - I missed the town hall meeting but I would like to make a suggestion anyway. I think you could do more in the way of finding ways to make money in ways that are compatible with the library's mission. You do not need to be purely dependent on state and local funds. You could also make money by hosting events for which people or sponsors might be willing to pay. I am not claiming this will be a complete replacement for the lost funds, but it might help, and it might even make the library more visible and useful to the community. I was led to this train of thought by an interview with the head of the Kennedy Center in Washington, who overcame cutbacks in funds by staging more -- not less -- performances, including the complete cycle of August Wilson's plays, last year. The increased schedule brought in more funds and turned out to not be that expensive. For example, why doesn't the library host book-signing appearances and lectures by authors? Bookstores do this, and they must make money from it. Couldn't the library offer authors the

opportunity to come to Pittsburgh and promote and sell their books, in exchange for a fee? Also, the library has many great facilities for meeting, with good locations, wi-fi capability, etc. It seems to me that it might be possible to rent some of these facilities, at times which would not interfere with patron use, to local businesses. There must be other ways the library could make money without sacrificing its historical mission.

Barb F., (emailed comment) - Have you considered charging a fee for all library cards? This way some of the library's expenses could be defrayed by the people who are using its services. Times have changed and a yearly membership to the library would still be a good value. Or, if you decide to charge to obtain books from other libraries as was suggested at the 7/18 town hall meeting, maybe you could have a library card with a fee that would have as one of its benefits free inter-library loans. I use this service a lot and it could get very expensive if I had to pay for each inter-library loan. I really appreciate the library because I'm an avid reader and never could afford to buy all my books. I also appreciate the computers with internet access -- I use a computer every time I come to the library. Thanks for a wonderful library system with all its many services. I would gladly pay for a library card each year to prevent closures or reduction in services, especially computers and free interlibrary loans.

RSG, (emailed comment) - I imagine your electric bills for the whole system are quite expensive. Would any foundations offer to help or would the electric company subsidize your bill for a charitable cause? Solar panels, etc will likely only help in the long run.

LN, (emailed comment) - Instead of closing branches which should be the last resort, charge people for a library card. Most of the population can afford \$10 for the year which gives them use of materials and computers. For those who are from out of town and don't wish to get a card you could charge \$1 per hour to use the computer. If you just started charging for a library card \$10 per person or \$40 per family yearly perhaps people would have to lose their neighborhood library!

Ryan H. (emailed comment) - I wanted to pass along an idea that I had related to addressing the current fiscal issues. I would suspect that a simple request for a small donation from your current library users might be met with reasonably good response. An email from the library that explains the current problems and requests a \$20 donation to help with the shortfall would, in my case, result in an immediate donation of that amount. To take this a step further, if the history of patrons could be somehow tied to "dollars saved" by that patron and then shown to them, the willingness to contribute may be greatly enhanced. For example, establish as an estimate that a book costs \$10 to buy and a DVD costs \$2 to rent. Then look at my hypothetical borrowing history and note that in the past 12 months I have borrowed 20 books and 5 movies. Using those estimates, simply exposing the fact that the library has saved me an estimated \$210 over the past 12 months could be quite a motivator. I suspect that the estimated savings for some individuals would be simply staggering, bordering on the thousands of dollars.

Peggy D., (emailed comment) - Is there a "Friends" organization for the Carnegie Libraries?? I keep hearing about cutting services but nothing about raising funds other than through individual donations.

Anonymous (written comment) - 2 - 5 cents every dollar from PIT (city of Pittsburgh) for dedicated funding of Library.

Anonymous (written comment)

Ways to raise funds:

1. Goodsearch on internet select Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
2. Cut video access by home computer. Keep computer request and renewal
3. Restrict checkout to 20 books in 3 week period

Marge C. Mount Washington (written comment) - What other organizations, like the library, are you considering to help with ideas about how to raise money and organize. To not reinvent the wheel there must be proven methods to get the process going and not waste time and resources.

Anonymous (written comment) - Are you part of United Way giving? Do you have a number that residents can use for their company campaigns?

John H. (written comment) – I am too poor to help. WQED is also in need. Educators get little. Pittsburgh sports players get millions. Pittsburgh priorities are not correct.

Multiple/Other

Rachel R., Beechview. - Appreciates that it is FREE. Lots of people who cannot afford resources get them from library. Cut back hours, cut back days. Libraries reduce the amount of consumption b/c fewer books need to be printed and stored. Goes to libraries twice a week. If branches close, if Beechview branch closes, it would be devastating b/c lots don't have cars or can't walk to nearest branch because of safety reasons. Kids continue education through summer b/c of libraries. Daughter was willing to give money to library – focus on donations.

Bob M., Beechview. - Doesn't have a car. Costs \$5 to go to Brookline and back; \$2 to other libraries. Not doable, not accessible to go to non-local library branches. Availability is important. Uses library for access to Consumer Reports data, applying for jobs online; hard to make sense of variety of procedures on computer – librarians help. We're so similar to Cleveland in demographics – if they can put up so much funding, why can't we?

Skylar R., Hazelwood. - Likes being able to go to library to work on schoolwork, doesn't have internet at home. Important that it's walk-able. Librarian helps with homework, engages with them. Helps find resources – books and websites. "Library is my second home because I always go there." Gets books there b/c school library is too small.

Marilyn H., Penn Hills. - Uses CLP Main – speaks as president of W. PA Genealogical Society. Over 1500 members all support CLP, contributes to capital campaign. Could not be society they are without partnership with CLP. Actively solicits members to contribute to CLP. Wants other cultural orgs to contribute in the same way to CLP.

Malcolm H., North Side, Observatory Hill. - Seems similar to problems with local Post offices closing. If you close libraries, consider those communities with better transportation for closures, rather than those without it. Consider the ability of those communities who have disposable time to transport themselves. Suggests utilities, greening buildings for savings. Fire the consultants.

David T. - Has familial connections to Andrew Carnegie. Watched changes as CLP drifted from mission, including director without library science background, and traditional library services and research orientation. Library should respect tradition of repositories. Open up board meetings so public has more ownership over what is done. Community needs to participate – what Carnegie would have wanted.

Dou-Yan Yang, (emailed comment) - I didn't speak at the town hall on Thursday, but here are my responses: *What do you appreciate most about our library system today in Pittsburgh?* *I really like that the library system in Pittsburgh is connected with the library systems in the rest of the county. *I appreciate that you can check out books at any library, return them to any library, and that the network will ship materials to the library of your choice. *I am grateful that the audio-visual materials are free to borrow without a rental fee. *I enjoy that the staff are really nice. *I relish the historic buildings. *If the Library system is forced to make significant budget cuts, what could you do without?* I could do without the programming. I don't attend a lot of the programming, although I do attend the special events. *What would you say to the people who make the decisions about library funding--such as the City, the State, the County, the Regional Asset District--to make library funding a priority?* In memory of the recently departed Walter Cronkite, I will include his quote: "Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation." Thanks for all your hard work! Good luck.

Marianne K., (emailed comment) - I had a thought about a suggestion after today's meeting and, though I am not certain if it will be of any help, thought it certainly couldn't hurt to put the suggestion on the table. I know the City of Pittsburgh is inquiring with its residents at this time as to how 'better' the city for the upcoming G-20 summit. One of the things we could argue for is finally a sustainable income for a resource that is used more than any sporting arena in the city. After all, the mayor wishes to 'beautify' the city and to show off its greatness, so what better way than by taking our world renowned library and assuring it's long term existence.

Paul Z. (emailed comment) - Is this some way to get a proposal to make it a referendum ballot item in the November election? Perhaps start a petition to do so.

Malia R. – (written and spoken comments) I am 14 years old. I'm here to represent my generation in this community. I've been going to the Library since I was a baby. I used to participate in Children's Activities, and I even would come home and teach my family what I learned on a felt board. This library has helped me to become the avid read I am, because without them I wouldn't have been able to afford the many books I have read.

Also, Carrick Library has so many volunteer opportunities. I volunteer here every Saturday and I LOVE it. Volunteering at Carrick Library has led me to receive a scholarship for Seton LaSalle High School. This library is always looking for more volunteers, and I highly believe that volunteering keeps teens out of trouble.

I've been volunteering for almost a year and I've seen firsthand how kind and caring the librarians are that work there. They are all experience and amazing in working with the public.

There are many teens my age on the streets, but recently, I've seen many come into the library. Carrick Library is a safe place and somewhere that everyone is welcome. There is something to do for everyone; for example you can take out books, surf the web, participate in the library activities, join book clubs and explore the many DVDs and videos..

Out of everything, though, my favorite thing to see is how excited little kids get when they get their VERY FIRST library card. You can tell they feel so special when they get to sign their name on the card and then pick out the books they want to borrow.

Now, I'm asking you please don't take our library away from us! There are so many great memories that are formed here daily and so much knowledge that comes from the books and librarians. I truly believe that the Carrick Library helps build the character of children and teens and gives them the opportunity to succeed.