

**SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

SUBJECT: Library Expansion Study

DEPARTMENT: Library & Leisure Services **DIVISION:** Library Services

AUTHORIZED BY: J. Goldman **CONTACT:** J. Suzy Goldman **EXT.** 1605

Agenda Date <u>1/25/05</u> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Work Session <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Public Hearing – 1:30 <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing – 7:00 <input type="checkbox"/>

MOTION/RECOMMENDATION:

Staff seeks direction from the BCC regarding implementation of library plan recommendations related to facilities and services.

BACKGROUND:

In March and May of 2004, County staff presented the history and current status of the public library system to the Seminole County Mayors and Managers group. The Library Expansion Subcommittee was formed in May to examine the issue of public library expansion. The Subcommittee included representatives from Casselberry, Sanford, Winter Springs, the School Board, and the County.

Library facilities have not been expanded since 1988. This study is required to maintain requirements for State Aid to Libraries operating grants and to provide a framework for future library development and operation. An updated long-range plan is due at the State Library of Florida by September 2005. Seminole County received \$333,019 in Library State Aid last fiscal year. Grant funding is calculated based upon a percentage of prior year expenditures.

The plan was reviewed with the Library Advisory Board on January 10, 2005.

County staff will present the subcommittee's findings and recommendations to the Board.

Reviewed by:
Co Atty: _____
DFS: _____
Other: _____
DCM: <u>SS</u>
CM: <u>AS</u>
FileNo. <u>BLLS01</u>

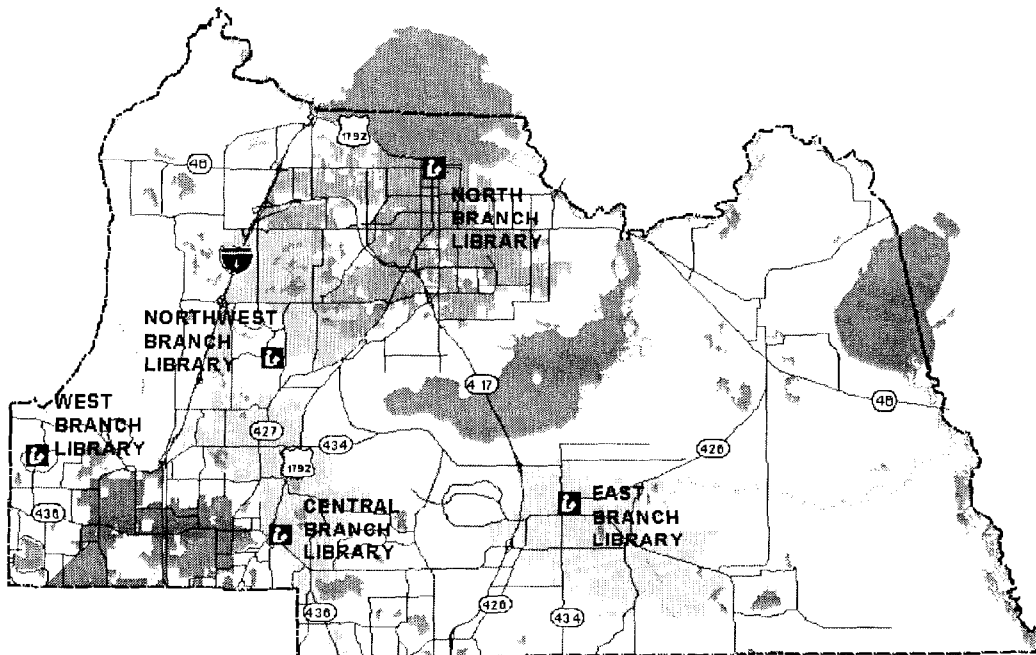
Seminole County Mayors & Managers Library Expansion Subcommittee Report January 2005

In March and May of 2004, Seminole County staff presented a history and status of the Seminole County Public Library System to the Seminole County Mayors and Managers. The Library Expansion Subcommittee was formed by the Seminole County Mayors and Managers in May of 2004. Monthly meetings were held from June through November 2004. This report is a summary of committee progress to date and recommendations for future action.

Background

The Seminole County Public Library System was established in 1974 through a non-binding referendum in which voters approved the levy of one half (1/2) mil of ad valorem taxation for countywide public library service. In 1975 countywide library service was initiated in Seminole County through a contract with the Orlando Public Library to operate branches in Casselberry and Sanford and to provide bookmobile service. This contract was terminated in 1978 with the creation of the Seminole County Public Library System.

In 1982 a referendum was held in which voters approved expansion of the Seminole County Public Library System by issuance of \$7,000,000 in Library Bonds. This resulted in the construction of five new library facilities from 1986 through 1988. These are the current branches located in Casselberry (Central), Oviedo (East), Sanford (North), Lake Mary (Northwest) and Longwood (West).



The library system has been operating under the present collection level of service standard of 1.0 books per capita since 1991. However, in FY 1997/98 the Board of County Commissioners raised the level of service to 1.5 volumes per capita for budgetary purposes. A phased program to reach this level continued until FY 2002/03 when the library buildings no longer had the capacity to hold additional volumes.

The Library System Impact Fee was adopted on April 9, 1991, and became effective in both the unincorporated area and in the incorporated municipal areas of Seminole County on June 1, 1991. The impact fee is codified as Chapter 115 of the Land Development Code.

The fee of \$54 per residential dwelling unit is for the purchase of books only and is calculated on a standard of 1.0 books per capita. Buildings, furnishings and/or equipment are not included. As currently allowed, expenditures of the fee are limited to new books added to the library collection to meet future growth needs.

The fee is effective countywide, with provision made for municipal contribution credits in the event of a city's enactment of its own public library impact fee. Pursuant to this section, a municipal credit results in no county library impact fee within the City of Altamonte Springs. However, 90% (38,471 of 42,466) of the Altamonte Springs population are registered users of the Seminole County Public Library System.

From 1988, when the last library building was constructed, through 2003 the population of Seminole County has increased by 41%. Library circulation for the same time period has increased 172%. The citizen's of Seminole County are heavy library users with 73% of the population holding library cards. In 2004 Seminole County ranked 3rd highest in the state for the number of registered borrowers among large, urban counties. In Orange County only 29% of the population are registered borrowers. In addition, Seminole County is first in the state for children's program attendance per capita among the large, urban counties.

In 2002, Seminole County staff conducted site surveys of the East, North, Northwest and West branch libraries to determine the capacity of each of these sites for expansion. The study determined that expansion of the Northwest and North Branch Libraries beyond current building footprint and parking spaces is not feasible. The East Branch has the potential to expand an additional 8,000 square feet for a total building size of 20,000 square feet, with the acquisition of 2 outparcels. The West Branch has the potential to expand an additional 10,000 square feet.

Branch	Current	Site Capacity
Central (Casselberry)	50,000	50,000
East (Oviedo)	12,000	20,000
North (Sanford)	12,000	13,500
Northwest (Lake Mary)	12,000	12,000
West (Longwood)	12,000	22,000
Total	98,000	117,500

Customer Demand

- Library users consistently request services that cannot be accommodated within the current facilities, such as a video/DVD collection, additional computers, word processors, quiet study areas, more parking, computer classes and a Books by Mail program.
- The Seminole County Public Library System serves a population that grew 77,678 or 27% between 1990 and 2000. Libraries are at capacity lacking space for more materials, equipment, patron seating, and parking.
- From 1988 through 2003 the annual circulation of books and other materials increased 172% and at the close of FY 2003/04 was over 2.6 million.
- Library branches lack space to accommodate a variety of simultaneous uses and levels of activity – patrons who want quiet reading space often find themselves in the middle of groups working on projects, tutor-student literacy teams, a queue of people waiting for computers or active children waiting for library programming.
- There is limited room to accommodate more books and other materials in the current buildings. The facilities were constructed to hold 500,000 books. Presently there are 534,000 in the collection. The current holdings of 1.34 per capita fall short of the State standard of 2.0 per capita. There is a need for more materials and the space to house them.
- The Seminole County Public Library System directly supports multiple levels of education through its programs and services. Twenty five percent of all reference inquiries are directly related to educational curriculum support. Programs that encourage reading target specific age groups and related stages of child development from infants to teenagers.

Many of the issues above can be addressed in the framework of regional versus neighborhood libraries. The current Seminole County branches are neighborhood libraries. They are limited service facilities with a multipurpose room, reference and circulating collections. There is a minimal audiovisual collection and information technology configuration.

The services in demand by Seminole County citizens are those found in regional libraries. These are full service facilities with multipurpose, conference, group study, tutoring and youth services program rooms. Additionally, there are in-depth reference and circulating collections and extensive audiovisual and information technology configuration. Computer labs/rooms are available with instructional services offered.

Charge to Mayors and Managers Library Expansion Subcommittee

Development

1. Determine proposed Level of Service (LOS)

The subcommittee voted to adopt the “essential” level of service from the Florida Library Association (FLA) Standards for Florida Public Libraries 2004 for use in planning. The FLA standards were developed by the State Library of Florida and have been endorsed by the Florida League of Cities and the Florida City and County Management Association. Three levels of service have been established by FLA for use. They are:

Essential: Basic library service which should be offered by every library.
 Enhanced: This level starts where essential leaves off and offers expanded services.
 Exemplary: Highest and best service offered to the community.

- Books per capita (2)*
- Square feet per capita (.6)*
- Computers per capita (1 per 3,000 population)
- Parking spaces (1 per 200 sq ft or local code, whichever provides more spaces)
- Staffing (.3 per 1,000 population)*

* Considered a “core” standard in that it is vital to providing effective public library service. This is the basic standard that a public library must meet if it is to effectively carry out the public library mission.

As is currently the practice, a standard countywide level of service would be utilized.

CENTRAL FLORIDA BENCHMARKS:

Library System	Books per Capita	Books per Capita Adopted Standard	Square Feet per Capita	Sq Ft per Capita Adopted Standard	Service Population
Seminole	1.34	1.00	0.26	N/A	394,900
Brevard	2.26	2.40	0.71	N/A	507,810
Lake	1.72	2.00	0.45	0.50	240,716
Orange	2.07	N/A	0.47	N/A	941,404
Osceola	1.54	N/A	0.41	N/A	210,438
Volusia	1.70	N/A	0.49	0.39	470,770
State Standard	2.0		0.6		
ICMA Standard			0.5		

The International City/County Management Association has adopted a standard of 0.5 square feet per capita.

2. Determine square footage needed by current and future population density

The square footage standard recommended by the FLA is .6 square feet per capita. The following is a breakdown of the current and future square footage needs.

YEAR	POPULATION	SQUARE FEET (.6 sf per capita)
2003	394,900	236,940
2010	455,812	273,487
Current sq ft	98,000	

3. Determine probable locations of expanded facilities

The subcommittee recommends:

- New regional library buildings with increased square footage are needed to meet standards and service expectations.
 - Open 7 days a week
 - Full service facilities with multipurpose, conference, group study, tutoring and youth services program rooms
 - In-depth reference and circulating collections
 - Extensive information technology configuration
 - Audiovisual services
 - Computer rooms/laboratories with instructional services
- New 40,000 square foot facilities to replace, and in close vicinity to, the existing East, North, Northwest and West branch libraries.
- Renovation of the Jean F. Rhein Central Branch Library to increase public service space.
- Relocation of library centralized support and administration functions.
- New 40,000 square foot library in Winter Springs.

Additional assumptions used:

- Projections are based on 2010 population estimates.
- Service areas are based on 4 mile driving range (5 miles for Casselberry).
- Expansion of existing facilities is not possible in the magnitude needed to obtain the State square footage standard.
- Provide a standard level of service countywide.
- Absolute minimum parcel size of 3 acres (5 acres preferable) for proposed 40,000 square foot facilities.
- Preference for one story buildings to minimize staffing needs by maximizing the areas staff can observe from customer service desks.

4. Determine cost of building/renovation

Preliminary cost estimates for both new construction and renovation total approximately \$53 million. This is based on a construction cost estimate of \$132 per square foot and a furnishings estimate of \$48 per square foot. The source for this cost is the December 2004 issue of the Library Journal which highlights library building projects nationwide for the year 2004. Costs utilized were for Florida building projects with a size between 30,000 and 60,000 square feet.

Operations

1. Based upon current services

a. Determine cost of operation of expanded facilities and services

Preliminary cost estimates for operations vary based upon the staffing level utilized. Staffing can be determined either based upon the current staffing level at the Jean F. Rhein Central Branch Library (Option 1) as a standard for a regional library or by utilizing the FLA standard of .3 employees per 1,000 population (Option 2).

Branch	Current	Option 1	Difference	Option 2	Difference
Central	34	34	0	21	-13
East	19	33	+14	21	+2
North	13	33	+20	21	+8
Northwest	18	33	+15	21	+3
West	17	33	+16	21	+4
Winter Springs	0	33	+33	21	+21
Administration	8	8	0	8	0
Technical Svcs.	7	7	0	7	0
Total	116	214	+98	141	+25

Option 1 assumes current levels of service for circulation (book checkout), reference/information services and the current exemplary children’s programming. This would provide a staffing level of 1 employee per 1,224 square foot which is in line with staffing levels at other Central Florida library systems.

- Brevard County 1 per 1,318 sf
- Orange County 1 per 1,392 sf
- Volusia County 1 per 1,298 sf

Option 2 is based upon the “essential” level of service as defined by the FLA standards for Florida Public Libraries 2004. The current children’s programming offered by all branch libraries exceeds this level. Therefore, the application of this standard would result in a reduction in children’s programming throughout the library system and allow for the reallocation of staff to alternate assignments. Department staff does not recommend this option, in that it would reduce the current level of service. Option 1 is recommended.

There may be an opportunity to decrease the recommended level of staffing through the deployment of the new technology of RFID (Radio Frequency IDentification) the need for additional staff for circulation services would be reduced. These systems are currently installed in approximately 300 libraries worldwide. RFID speeds patron self-checkout and collection inventory.

- b. Determine funding mechanism for construction/renovation and ongoing support

Library & Leisure Services has worked with Fiscal Services to identify the most appropriate funding option. Consideration was given to several funding mechanisms available to establish a dedicated source for both the capital expansion/renovation and the ongoing operations element; including the establishment of a Dependent Special District or a Municipal Services Benefit Unit.

To allow for flexibility in execution, staff recommends that the proposed expansion be funded through a combination of voted debt service and as a component of the countywide millage levy. Although only the voted debt service levy requires a voter referendum, staff is recommending that both components be brought forth through two referendum questions.

The current library system is funded through general revenues at an equivalent millage rate of 0.25 mils. Based on a preliminary analysis the estimated millage rate required to fund both the capital (voted debt service) component and the operating (general revenue) component is approximately 0.75 mils; a 0.50 mil increase over the current levy for library services.

Of the total estimated millage rate of 0.75 mils, 0.60 is representative of the approximate cost of full operations after the expansion is complete, inclusive of 0.12 mils for additional services detailed below (0.04 mils for “full audio/visual”, 0.02 mils for “expanded outreach service”, and 0.06 mils for books by mail”).

2. Determine additional services to be offered and related costs

Additional services recommended include:

- Full Audio/Visual collection** \$780,000 annual cost (6 new positions)
 - Staffing increase of 1 Staff Assistant per branch (\$180,000/6 positions)
 - Startup costs of \$100,000 per branch (\$600,000)
 - Annual cost of \$100,000 per branch (\$600,000)

- Expanded outreach services** \$365,000 annual cost (8 new positions)
 - Senior Librarian – Young Adult Services (\$53,000/1 position)
 - Librarian – School Outreach (\$45,000/1 position)
 - 1 Young Adult Librarian at each branch (\$267,000/6 positions)

Books by Mail \$1.25 million annual cost (6 new positions)

- Staffing increase of 1 Staff Assistant per branch (\$180,000/6 positions)
- Courier contract at a per package cost of \$2 and a volume of 500,000 items per year (based upon Orange County costs)
- Operating supplies, furniture and equipment

Scheduling of Library Projects

If the library referendum is held prior to September 2005, budgeting of referendum funds could be available in FY 2005/06. Staff is currently reviewing timetables with the Supervisor of Elections for the possibility of a referendum in May or August 2005 to allow time for public education as well as maximizing voter turnout while school is in session and summer travel is either not underway or completed. Scheduling of projects will be based upon availability of land and/or suitable, existing retail space.

Conclusion

Based upon feedback from current library users, there are expectations for higher service levels than can be provided in current facilities. Increased service levels require more and larger facilities.

Seminole County continues to experience rapid growth. Population projections show 60,912 new persons in the County between 2004 and 2010. If the experience of the current residents is an indicator, new residents will also expect the higher level of service that is proposed.

The Mayors and Managers Subcommittee and County staff recommend placing a referendum on the ballot in 2005 to fund expansion and ongoing operating costs of the Seminole County Public Library System.