

HHS COMMITTEE #2

May 5, 2010

Worksession

M E M O R A N D U M

May 4, 2010

TO: Health and Human Services Committee

FROM: Essie McGuire, Legislative Analyst 

SUBJECT: **Worksession – FY11 Operating Budget, Department of Public Libraries, continued – Noyes Library**

Today the Health and Human Services (HHS) Committee will continue its discussion of the FY11 Operating Budget for the Department of Public Libraries. The Committee will review a proposal from the County Executive and the Noyes Children's Library Foundation regarding the Noyes Library for Young Children. The following individuals are expected to attend the worksession:

- Parker Hamilton, Director, Department of Public Libraries
- Eric Carzon, Business Manager, Department of Public Libraries
- Jan Jablonski and Sheila Dinn, Noyes Children's Library Foundation

Background

The County Executive's FY11 Operating Budget recommended to temporarily close the Noyes Library for Young Children. The FY11 savings associated with this recommendation is \$120,110 and 1.1 workyears (2 part-time positions). The Executive's proposal was to plan new services and minor facility upgrades to the library during the closure, with the intent of revitalizing and modernizing the services and resources the Noyes Library has to offer. The Council has received a great deal of correspondence and has heard public testimony requesting that Noyes remain open.

At its April 14 worksession, the HHS Committee heard from Director Hamilton that the County Executive was reviewing a proposal from the Noyes Children's Library Foundation to keep the library open in FY11. The Committee did not discuss the Executive's recommendation at that worksession, pending additional information.

Noyes Children's Library Foundation

The Noyes Children's Library Foundation was established in 1991 and supported the operation of the Noyes Library for Young Children from FY92-98. Council staff understands

that the Foundation has remained in good standing with the State and Federal governments and maintained its status as a 501(c)3 organization. The Foundation prepared a summary and timeline of its previous activities, attached at circles 3-4. The Foundation states that it raised more than \$300,000 in the FY92-98 timeframe, and indicates that it has recently received positive responses from the community that support will be available again at this time.

FY11 Revised Proposal

On April 30, the County Executive informed the Council of his support for a public-private partnership to keep the Noyes Library operating in FY11 (letter attached on circles 1-2). The Noyes Children's Library Foundation proposes to reactivate its relationship with the County and minimize the amount of time the library would be closed until and during any upcoming renovations. The Foundation also requests participation in the planning of the new structure and services when Noyes re-opens.

Highlights of the proposal include:

- The proposal would maintain Noyes' FY10 service levels of 3 days per week, 8 hours per day.
- The Executive has revised the staff complement at Noyes to minimize costs for the Foundation. While the County savings in FY11 total \$120,000, **the letter on circle 2 proposes that the Foundation be responsible for approximately \$70,000 per year** to fund two merit system, part-time employees and funds for some substitute staff time and a Library Page. The lower amount is due to creating new, part-time positions at lower grades than are currently in the Noyes complement.
- The County will provide ancillary costs and services, such as materials, deliveries, supplies, utilities, and cleaning. The County will also redeploy a full-time Librarian II to complete the staff complement at Noyes.
- The Executive states that the partnership must be cost-neutral; that the County must be able to close Noyes if funds are not available; and that MCPL will continue to run the library.
- The Foundation currently has funds available for close to three months of operations as proposed.

Council Staff Comments

The Council has heard support for the Noyes Library voiced from many in the community, and the Noyes Foundation's proposal seeks to mobilize and formalize that support. The fact that the Foundation can begin the fiscal year with funds for the library is a positive indicator of its fundraising potential. At this point, many of the specifics of an arrangement remain to be worked out in a new Memorandum of Understanding between the County and the Foundation, pending Council action.

On a practical level, Council staff's primary concern is what would happen if the fundraising is unsuccessful, particularly given that merit staff will be dependent on this revenue stream. To address this the Executive recommends that the Noyes positions be added to the grant fund, which requires associated revenue, and be term positions, which can terminate at the expiration of a specified period of time or term.

Although the proposal does not require new County funds be added to the Executive's budget, the Council would have to appropriate funds to authorize the Department's expenditures for Noyes with the expectation of reimbursement from the Foundation.

If the Committee supports the Executive's and the Foundation's proposed partnership for FY11, Council staff recommends the following:

- **That the Council appropriate only funds sufficient for operation through February 2011.** This would be approximately \$47,000. Council staff concurs with the Executive that funds be added to the grant fund and that new positions be term.
- **That the Council request a financial report from the Foundation and the Executive by December 15 of this year.** If the report indicates strong fundraising and funds available for the remainder of the fiscal year, the Council can then introduce and act on a supplemental appropriation before the end of February to continue operations. If the report indicates that funds may not be available and the Council does not support continuation, then the Department would no longer have appropriation to continue operations.
- **That the Council encourage the Executive to clarify the terms of the new positions** to maximize flexibility and to minimize potential impact on other positions in the system in the event a mid-year closing is necessary.
- **That the Council adopt language for the operating budget resolution clarifying the Council's intent for the partnership in FY11.**
- **That the Committee review a draft MOU agreement prior to July 1.**

MEMORANDUM

April 30, 2010

TO: Nancy Floreen, President, County Council
George Leventhal, Chair, Health and Human Services Committee
Valerie Ervin, Vice President, County Council

FROM: Isiah Leggett, County Executive 

SUBJECT: Noyes Library for Young Children

I understand from Parker Hamilton, Director of Public Libraries, that Councilmember Ervin has set a meeting to develop strategies to keep the Noyes Library for Young Children open in FY11, while planning for the restructuring of that service and facility proceeds.

As stated by Ms. Hamilton to Mr. Leventhal during the Libraries' budget session on April 14th, the Noyes Children's Library Foundation has been in discussions with the County on reviving the public-private partnership that supported the operation of the Noyes Library for Young Children from approximately FY92 – FY98. I am very grateful for their efforts and willingness to contribute their time and resources to keep the Library open. I also understand that the Friends of the Library, Montgomery County may also partner in this effort, particularly for raising funds for the physical modification to the facility.

I have directed my staff to make all efforts to revive this partnership, with the following guidelines:

- The partnership must be cost-neutral to my latest budget recommendations for Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL).
- The new partnership agreement will be flexible enough to allow the Foundation to raise funds throughout the year, but will also allow the County to terminate services at Noyes library in an orderly manner that is consistent with the personnel regulations, should fundraising efforts not be successful.
- As in the prior agreement, MCPL will run the library.

Ms. Hamilton and her staff have worked with the Foundation to create a staffing complement that will minimize costs, while still allowing the branch to operate at its FY10 service levels (3 days per week, 8 hours per day). At present, we believe this will require the Foundation to raise approximately \$70,000 per year to fund two merit system, part-time represented employees and a modest fund for substitute staff and a Library Page. The County will redeploy a full-time Librarian II to round out the staffing of the facility; service the branch with deliveries and supplies; and will pay for the utilities, cleaning, and other facility costs. The County will provide basic library materials, but the Foundation may enhance those offerings by mutual agreement with MCPL.

I recommend that the County Council endorse this partnership as soon as possible, to support the Noyes Children's Library Foundation in their efforts to raise funds. I am confident that they will be able to do so, given their tremendous success in the past, and the fact that they already have close to three months worth of core operations funding in hand.

Finally, I request that if the Council does support this partnership, that your staff initiate the addition of a part-time Library Desk Assistant, and part-time Librarian 1 (term positions) to the Grant Fund budget of the Department of Public Libraries during your approval of the FY11 Operating Budget.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please contact Ms. Hamilton if you have any need for information regarding this partnership.

IL:ec

Attachments

cc: David Dise, Director, Department of General Services
Joseph Beach, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Jennifer Barrett, Director, Department of Finance
County Councilmembers
Peter Fosselman, Mayor, Town of Kensington

The Noyes Children's Library Foundation
Box 31 • Kensington, MD, 20895 • 301-365-4415

The Noyes Children's Library Foundation was established in 1991 in cooperation with the Montgomery County, MD County Council, in order to serve as the private arm of a unique public-private partnership to fund the Library's operating costs. Throughout the 1990's, the Foundation raised funds and awareness for Noyes; conducted special events for children; and sent volunteer Penny Theater performers to countless other libraries, schools and community events. The Foundation was recognized in 1993 for extraordinary service to the community by being designated a Point of Light by the national Points of Light Foundation.

Timeline of Activities of the Noyes Children's Library Foundation:

- 1991: The Stars Come Out for Noyes - Gala Auction
- 1992: Once Upon A Time - Mailing Campaign
- 1993: The Stars Come Out Again for Noyes - Gala Auction
- 1994: Time To Make Noyes - Gala Auction
- 1994: The Cornerstones of Noyes - Mailing Campaign
- 1995: A Garden Full of Noyes- Gala Auction
- 1996: Noyes For All Seasons - Gala Auction
- 1997: A Box Full of Noyes, The Fun-Raising Auction - Gala Auction
The Penny Theatre - Mailing Campaign
- 1998: Child's Eye View of Noyes - Mailing Campaign
- 1999: All the Best From Noyes, Celebrating a Century of Children's Literature

Additional funds were provided through five grants received between 1991 and 1999.

Special Events and Sale of Merchandise

- Book Fairs
- Cut-a-thon at Saks Fifth Avenue
- Theater Evening at Bethesda Theater Café with performance of A Christmas Carol, presented by the Bethesda Academy of Performing Arts.
- T-shirt, note card, book bag and poster sales.

Community Activities

- Penny Theater Performances
- Noyes Children's Library Foundation May Fairs
- Noyes Children's Library Foundation Storybook Parades
- Kensington Labor Day Parades
- Kensington Earth Day Celebration
- Strathmore Hall Family Arts Day
- Children's Day at Bamboozled in Bethesda
- Garrett Park Centennial
- Burtonsville Community Day
- Noyes Children's Library Feliz Navidad program
- Noyes Children's Library Foundation's Halloween Party
- Noyes Children's Library 100th Birthday Celebration (this was a yearlong series of events in 1993 supported and organized jointly by the Foundation and MCDPL. Included parades, time capsule burial, and special events for children).

Media Coverage:

FOX Morning News; Good Morning America; *Parenting Magazine*, cover and feature article; *Washington Post* Home Section; *Gazette* Newspapers; *Variety*; *Montgomery Journal* newspaper; *Potomac Life Magazine* (March/April 1993 cover and article).

**The Noyes Children's Library
and
The Noyes Children's Library Foundation**

"Everything within Noyes's single, homey room exists to infuse kids with a fierce, irresistible love of reading."
Parenting Magazine, 1991

"Noyes Library for Young Children—Located in the oldest public library building in the Washington area, this library serves as a systemwide resource and model library for early learning and early literacy."
County Executive's Budget Proposal for 2010

The Noyes Library:

- Was founded in 1893
- Is the oldest public library in the Washington area
- Was among the 9 libraries that joined to form the Montgomery County Library System when it was created in 1951.
- Was converted to a library for young children in 1970
- Was designated a historical site by MNCPPC in 1970
- Was featured in a 1981 Encyclopedia Britannica film, "Libraries in the Pursuit of Happiness."
- Was featured in a *Parenting Magazine* article on libraries in 1991.
- Has steadily increasing circulation
- Is heavily used by children, caregivers, and families from all over Montgomery County
- According to the County Executive's Budget Proposal for 2010, closing Noyes will save the county \$65,000.

The Noyes Children's Library Foundation:

- Was founded in 1991
- Raised about \$300,000 from individuals, businesses, foundations, and community organizations in the early 1990s.
- Funded the Noyes Children's Library (1991-99) in a public-private partnership that became a model for the county.
- Was recognized in 1993 for extraordinary service to the community by being designated a Point of Light by the national Points of Light Foundation
- Has engaged over 150 active volunteers in fundraising and long-term planning
- Has, since 1991, provided Penny Theater puppet shows for thousands of young children in libraries all around the county, public schools, preschools, shelters, and Strathmore Mansion
- Has proposed to again help fund the Noyes Library in a public-private partnership with Montgomery County during the current budget crisis.