

Board packet May 16, 2017: Use of the Committee of the Whole

Friday, May 12, 2017
10:58 AM

Subject	Board packet May 16, 2017: Use of the Committee of the Whole
From	Ryan Livergood
To	libraryboard
Cc	Noreen Reese; Celia G. Ornelas; 'annelinsdau@aol.com'; 'bonnies2024@att.net'; 'Kathleen Kettman'; Amy Blanchard; Sandy Beda; Jan Marsh; Ryan Livergood
Sent	Friday, May 12, 2017 10:54 AM

Good morning,

One of the first decisions our new Board will face is to decide whether or not to continue using Committee of the Whole (CoW). I am strongly in favor of CoW and I recommend the Board continue its use of Committee of the Whole indefinitely.

To paint a fuller picture, allow me to provide a brief overview of how committee work was done prior to the use of Committee of the Whole. Essentially, members of the Board were assigned to committees, and it wasn't necessarily for Trustees other than the President to attend every committee meeting. So in a typical month there might be three or four committee meetings (i.e., Personnel, Buildings and Grounds, Finance, and Policy). This system certainly worked, but there were a number of disadvantages to it. For example, one of the disadvantages was long regular board meetings, as there were Trustees missing from committee meetings when important matters such as policies and budgets were discussed. In an effort to make the Board function more efficiently and effectively, the use of Committee of the Whole was enacted.

Here is how I see the pros and cons of Committee of the Whole:

Pros

- Much shorter regular board meetings
- Fairer to the Board President and Executive Director (under the old system both attended on average from three to five meetings a month)
- All Trustees are present when important matters are initially discussed
- All Trustees are together more often which contributes to making a better and stronger Board

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Cons

- Committee of the Whole meetings can be long
- Meeting is too soon in the month for the previous month's financial reports to be ready (although the delay hasn't proven to be a significant negative to date)
- Under the old system, the majority of the Board was not required to participate on all committees

To reiterate, I strongly believe that the Board functions much more effectively and efficiently with the use of Committee of the Whole. I recommend the Board continue its use of Committee of the Whole indefinitely.

Thanks,
Ryan

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"Congratulations on the new library, because it isn't just a library. It is a space ship that will take you to the farthest reaches of the Universe, a time machine that will take you to the far past and the far future, a teacher that knows more than any human being, a friend that will amuse you and console you---and most of all, a gateway, to a better and happier and more useful life."
– Isaac Asimov

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