

We Are Accountable to You!

An Open Letter to Library Users from Diana Wilson, Board of Trustees Chair and Charles Hunsberger, Director, of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District

The Library District serves over 9,000 citizens every day. Our primary accountability is to you! We are accountable to you for books and materials, building facilities and service that our staff delivers to you.

In late July, we met with citizens at the West Las Vegas Library during a seven-hour open house. Concerns were aired about staffing, books, the facility and community relations. We took your concerns as a blueprint for an action plan which was immediately put into motion. Some issues could be solved right away; others take longer and we are working on them.

You asked for more staff for West Las Vegas Library.

We recruited and hired a librarian with both a master's degree in library science and a full range of library experience to ensure that patrons receive the best possible service. In January we will post a second position for a cultural events staff member to oversee the needs of the library's new community auditorium which will be completed in February, 1993.

You asked about personnel and hiring practices.

The library district strictly follows affirmative action guidelines to hire personnel without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, gender, age or physical disability. The library district staff includes 25.4 percent minority.

You asked for clarification on how to locate information and books in the library.

Library staff is in the process of re-training and cross training on how to deliver information to our patrons, including brochures on how to locate certain books and how to use the Library of Congress Classification System. In addition, 20 staff members are either enrolled at UNLV for library-related studies or have signed up to attend library school.

You asked for more reference books and updated reference material.

Our library administrator immediately assessed the reference deficiencies and has placed book orders to meet the needs.

You asked about discarding outdated and worn-out books.

The Library Board immediately adopted a new policy to conform to government regulations which allow disposable books to be put on sale to the public in library book sales or library used books stores.

You asked about book selection.

Selection is made by a large committee of librarians, with master's degrees in library science, on the basis of 1) new book information through professional periodicals 2) patron requests 3) needs and 4) budget constraints. \$3.3 million will be spent this year on new books and materials. Library patrons are encouraged to make their requests.

You asked about the new auditorium and about space needs in the literacy department.

The new auditorium seats 300 people, with fixed seats, a stage and an outer lobby. It will be finished in February, 1993. The capability of the new auditorium surpasses the current meeting room seating of 100. The literacy coordinator is reviewing the space and equipment needs of the literacy tutoring area.

You asked for information on the Library of Congress Classification system.

Library of Congress Classification brochures are currently available in all branch libraries and staff will assist you in locating any materials in any branch library.

You asked for an advisory committee to be established to maintain awareness of patron concerns.

The Library District met with leaders of the West Las Vegas community for advice and counsel in establishing an advisory group. Discussions are ongoing. The Trustees welcome any group to come before the Board at any of their meetings to discuss library concerns.

You asked the Library District to hire more black subcontractors on the library building projects.

The library district follows federal contract procedures that require contractors to list their minority subcontractors. Copies of all plans and specifications are available at Construction Notebook, Dodge Reports, Library District Headquarters and the Las Vegas Minority Business Development Center. In the "notice to bidders" package, the library district specifically states that "Minority business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, creed, sex or national origin in the consideration for an award." The package also states that the Library District "wishes to ensure that those businesses owned and operated by minorities are afforded every opportunity to participate in the Library District's projects"; and goes on to state that all general contractors are expected to solicit minority and women-owned business firms as subcontractors and material suppliers. Additionally the package includes the Clark County Minority, Women and Disabled (MW/D) Business Enterprises Directory which gives the MW/D company certification date, name, address, phone and contact person.

We have made a detailed report for your review. It lists all the concerns and questions you raised at the open house, and gives answers to you on what action we have taken. You can obtain a copy of the report at West Las Vegas Library, or we will send one to you if you request it on the form below.

We hope you will take a moment to fill in the form below with your comments and suggestions. Please include your name and address if you would like the report to be mailed to you. Be assured that we take all of your concerns seriously and will do our best to satisfy your needs for library service.

Yes! I would like a copy of the Director's Report to be sent to me:

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ How can the Library District better serve your library needs?

Please comment: _____

Return to: Trustee Chair Diana Wilson, Las Vegas Library
833 Las Vegas Boulevard North
Las Vegas, NV 89101