

Position Description Director Flint Public Library

Background

The Flint Public Library, founded in 1851 by the Ladies Library Association, is the largest library system serving the City of Flint. The city boasts: Whiting Auditorium, Sloan Museum and other cultural amenities (Bower Theater, Flint Institute of Music) all set on a 30-acre site near downtown. Flint is also host to the University of Michigan's Flint campus. New residents will find the City of Flint a great place to live, with choice of schools, outstanding parks and recreational opportunities, safe, friendly and diverse neighborhoods and the best city services. It is the fifth largest city in Michigan and is most known for being the birthplace of the General Motors Corporation, and the Flint Sit-Down Strike of 1936-37 that played a vital role in the formation of the United Auto Workers.

The system includes a main branch and three smaller branches. Its main branch is located in the historic Cultural Center of the city of Flint and housed within a historic building, built in 1958. It is surrounded by the main offices and buildings of the Flint Cultural Center, the Flint Institute of Music, two museums and other related cultural interests. Until the year 2000, the Flint Public Library was institutionally associated with Flint Community Schools. As a result of state legislation in 2000, the Flint Public Library successfully separated from the Flint Community Schools and began a two year process to establish independent funding, and an independent Board and to embark on a strategic planning process that would ensure the future of the institution.

The Library continues as a vital and essential part of community life and is a source of civic pride throughout its history. It offers sixty-six hours of public access per week. The system includes 450,000 volumes, including audio and visual media. The library has been the recipient of many accolades and awards throughout the years. It has built an excellent reputation for the depth of its collection, the service of its staff, and the innovative programs it brings to the community. It is of paramount importance to maintain this standard of excellence in the future.

To accomplish this vision, the library recently concluded a new strategic plan, Vision 2016: The Shape of Things to Come. During an 18-month period and with the participation of staff, Board and scores of members of the community, the library engaged in a strategic planning process that was formally adopted by the Board. The resulting strategic plan will be the document that describes the work of the library for the next five years.

The Boulware Group

Current Situation

The Flint Public Library operates with a budget of \$4.9 million and a staff of 59 full- and part-time employees. The Library receives approximately 90% of its funding via property taxes levied on all properties within the City of Flint. The current economic climate throughout the state of Michigan, projects suggests an overall decline in overall real estate value. The City of Flint projects a decline in tax receipts, a reflection of the falling real estate values throughout the city. The library will be affected by this anticipated decline and has projected \$4.3 million in tax receipts for FY2010 and a continued decline through FY2012 at the rate of 0-3%. The balance of the budget is funded by foundation grants, major gifts and other sources of revenue, both state and local. The Flint Public Library hosts a circulation of 305,223 volumes, of which 94,858 are children's titles and the remaining 210,365 are non-children's materials.

Conversely, the use of library facilities has dramatically increased. FPL sees its mission as serving the community as a vital, vibrant and valued resource. Their mission is to provide access to all: to collections, community, experiences, experts, ideas and information. During this time of economic upheaval the City of Flint is on the verge of reinventing itself. FPL has actively worked to collaborate with its Cultural Center colleagues as well as the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Community Foundation of Greater Flint, the University of Michigan – Flint, the Flint Community Schools, the United Way and the BEST grant funders to find resources, offer programs and work to ensure that FPL is a key component in the community. FPL upholds the American Library Associations Library Bill of Rights that ‘...affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas...’

Specific Role:

The new Director of the Flint Public Library, reporting directly to the Board of the Flint Public Library, supports a focused mission and vision that enhances the quality of life for a diverse and dynamic community in the city of Flint, including an expectation to maintain the existing collaborative and collegial environment while executing against the approved strategic plan. The new Director's performance will be evaluated against the strategic goals and objectives outlined in the Vision 2016 plan.

Administration

The Director oversees the staff and operations of the Flint Public Library. Within established policies, the Director advises on all aspects of staff functions, exercising a high degree of administrative knowledge and ability. The Director oversees the activities of the library staff and plans, implements, and monitors administrative policies to achieve the FPL's mission and goals. The Director is responsible for hiring, training, evaluating, rewarding, and retaining the Library's professional staff. The Director, gifted in inspiring and motivating staff, promotes staff development, diversity, and equal employment opportunity objectives.

Fiscal Management

The primary duty of the Director is to ensure the financial well-being of the Flint Public Library. Fiscal responsibilities include rigorously managing its finances and raising funds for the organization. The Director must have demonstrated experience in managing complex budgets in order to rigorously manage its finances. The Director initiates the development of effective, ongoing partnerships with individuals, organizations that will contribute to the funding base of the Flint Public Library.

Programmatic Oversight

Flint Public Library is consistently recognized for its award-winning programming. Beginning in 2004, the year they were nationally recognized by IMLS, the library has continued to develop innovative programs from the “Baby-Sitters Club” and the tried and true annual MLK celebration, to a new tradition of Blues/Jazz on the lawn. The Flint Public Library has long served as a gallery for local artists, as well as the national seat for the African American Sports Hall of Fame. We will send the programming initiatives in detail to anyone interested in this position.

The Director is responsible for oversight and management of all aspects of the Library’s programs and services. The Director supports the planning, development, and management of library programs, exhibitions, research, referral services, literacy and career assistance, inter-library loan services, publications, and special collections. Within broad policy guidelines and established objectives, the Director advises on all aspects of services and functions. The Director participates in a broad range of local and regional activities designed to engage diverse communities in the activities of the Flint Public Library.

Communications/Marketing

The Director serves as principal spokesperson and advocate for the Library. The Director relates the Library’s mission and goals to citizens in clear and compelling ways. This official engages and collaborates with private citizens, members of religious institutions, public officials, union leaders, scholars, and business leaders. The Director develops joint programs in cooperation with civic and community organizations, local colleges and universities, and other municipal libraries, as well as provides expert advice and consultation to civic and community leaders, library professionals and scholars. The Director keeps abreast of developments in community-based libraries and the use of cutting-edge information technology to engage communities and schools.

Major Objectives

The Flint Public Library expects the new Director to accomplish the following major objectives over the next 12-18 months:

- Re-engage the effort that supports the implementation strategy addressing the capital needs of the Flint Public Library, including new construction, renovation and system upgrades;

- Continue to build upon the extraordinary programming in a way that meets the needs of the community, engages all aspects of the community and distinguishes the Flint Public Library within the city;
- Launch efforts to develop an additional organization: the Flint Public Library Foundation;
- Build world-class library operations consistent with the mission and goals of the Flint Public Library, including strong Board relationships; and, maintaining the work environment as a continuous, lifelong learning experience that supports a dynamic organizational culture;
- Develop funding partnerships that will expand and strengthen the library's infrastructure, services, and community ties;
- Engage the Flint community in a major fundraising campaign and create new partners to assist in the construction of a new facility;
- Leverage and enhance the information technology platform of FPL to industry best practices that incorporate business priorities, improve reliability, and implement a multi-year plan for handling servers, networks, and software;
- Assess the overall performance of each department and determine best practices to improve productivity and responsiveness;

Professional Characteristics:

The following qualifications are preferred in the new Director:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and a MLS or MLIS degree from an ALA-accredited library program;
- At least ten years of senior management experience in a complex multi-site library system, preferably in a union environment;
- Ability to plan, direct, and manage the operations, programs, and staff of a complex organization;
- Develop new diverse streams of funding, ensure the efficient use of available resources, and provide leadership and direction in fiscal matters as they pertain to the organization and its mission;
- Ability to develop the talents and skills of employees effectively and equitably, supervise a staff, and coordinate multiple projects simultaneously;
- Ability to speak as the voice of a major cultural institution and implement marketing strategies to raise the profile of the organization;
- Demonstrated willingness to be involved with the community and actively participate in professional library associations;
- Experience in working effectively with governing commissions or boards;
- Ability to engage with grassroots-level groups and have close ties to the Flint community;
- Familiarity with the opportunities and challenges of community-based institutions with special emphasis on African-American audiences;
- Ability to meet State of Michigan law requiring certification of librarians.

Personal Characteristics

The following characteristics are preferred in the new Director:

- Passion and values that align with those of Flint Public Library and its mission;
- Visionary and highly creative individual committed to engaging young readers, developing new readers, and building a greater appreciation for knowledge, supporting the City of Flint’s emphasis of life-long learning;
- Active understanding of current library technologies, trends, and innovations;
- A team-building, collegial approach to work;
- Drive, coupled with energetic, entrepreneurial leadership qualities;
- Ability to build, strengthen, and maintain both internal and external relationships;
- Healthy respect for colleagues, employees, and superiors;
- Goal-oriented, project-oriented, and achievement-oriented;
- Demonstrated excellence through achievement;
- Personal and professional integrity and honesty;
- Community focused and the ability to network with partners to build strong critical relationships for the Flint Public Library Director;
- Superb verbal and written communication skills;
- A warm, personal style.

Compensation

Compensation will be commensurate with skill and market.

Application

Please forward resume, salary history, and appropriate material immediately to:

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