

**Virginia Commonwealth University
VCU Libraries Advisory Committee**

**4th Floor Conference Room, James Branch Cabell Library
November 15, 2013**

Minutes

Attending

Meredith Baines, Matt Browning, David Burton, Jose Dula, Kathy Kreutzer, Gerald Miller, Whitney Newcomb, Peter Nguyen, Faye Prichard (acting chair), Jeanne Schlesinger, Carolyn Song, Carolyn White

Absent with notice

Lisa Brown, Corey Davis, Lisa Phipps

Absent

Les Harrison, Neha Sakhawalkar

Staff: Dennis Clark, John Duke, Jeanne Hammer, John Ulmschneider, Pam Fraga (recording secretary)

Guest: John Glover, VCU Libraries

Business

Review and approval of agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

Review and approval of minutes from October 2013

The minutes were approved as presented.

Interior design overview; priorities for investing new building funds: This topic was combined with the first topic in the reports and discussion section.

Reports and Discussion

New building schedule and phasing; shifting and de-accessioning collections – PowerPoint, handout
Mr. Ulmschneider thanked Ms. Prichard for again acting as chair in the absence of Dr. Davis. He noted that he would combine the next two items on the agenda since they were so closely related.

Mr. Ulmschneider reviewed interior design elements, beginning with the finishes on each level, including flooring selections and wall finishes. He also showed several different views of the potential exterior elevations. In discussion, he noted that the new facility will increase available space by about 30%. Total library space after completing the new building will remain short of the documented needs of students and faculty, and substantially below library space at comparable institutions.

Mr. Ulmschneider discussed three items in more detail:

- **Vitrine.** This is the display feature that will be created on the entrance side of the new building. Mr. Ulmschneider reported that several display technologies are under consideration, and showed

some examples of these in other buildings. The feature may cost between \$500,000 and \$600,000, and will be able to display art work, messages, televised games, emergency messages, and virtually anything else that can appear on a video display. Several Committee members expressed strong concern about the cost and the value of such a feature, worried that, among other things, it might look “flaky” or be seen as commercial. Mr. Ulmschneider said that the design team also has been concerned about these issues, and that the VCU Libraries will put in place appropriate mechanisms to ensure that use is appropriate and serves the University community. Several members still expressed concern that the point of the library was to get people inside and this feature served the outside of the building.

- Schedule of events related to construction. Mr. Ulmschneider said that the construction schedule has been moved up a few weeks in order to meet the ultimate goal of a fall 2015 opening. Construction of the new temporary entrance on the east side of Cabell, just south of the current location of Starbucks, will begin in January and should be ready by the end of spring break. He said that the relocation and de-accessioning of over 100,000 volumes in Cabell Library has begun and must be completed by the end of February to meet schedule constraints. The undertaking is enormous: the entire Cabell print collection will be shifted and compressed, and every one of Cabell’s 1.5 million volumes will be “touched” in some way by the end of the project. In addition, services must continue uninterrupted during the entire period. Cabell Library will continue to be open around-the-clock throughout construction, offering all the usual services.
- Phase 1, the beginning of the relocation of offices. This first phase will begin with relocation of utilities in the building, including HVAC and electrical; new offices on the 1st floor and the temporary entrance; new office spaces on the 3rd floor for the Admin Offices; new space allocated for Special Collections and Archives on the 4th floor; and new emergency exits. The new spaces will accommodate staff who must be relocated from offices on the north side of Cabell, where the new building will connect with the existing library. Mr. Ulmschneider referred the Committee members to the handout for additional information.

VCU Libraries’ public events in fall 2013: a report - handout

Mr. Ulmschneider reported a very successful fall event season. He reminded the Committee that the VCU Cabell First Novelists Award and Festival (co-sponsored with the English Department) will be on Tuesday, November 19th, and the next Digital Pragmata event will be Thursday, November 21st. He referred the Committee to the handout for more details. Ms. Prichard said she had had a chance to see Dr. Schlesinger’s photo art displayed at TML and commented on its impressive quality.

Demo: Digital Pragmata initiative – handout

Mr. Glover reviewed the history and focus of the program and said that it has grown and expanded into monthly Brown Bag Lunch events with different speakers and topics. Often the topics come up as part of the discussion on the day. A program on new south and social justice is planned for the spring, as well as a program on the future of digital vs. print monographs. Mr. Glover said that with the departure of Kristina Keogh, the new Head of Innovative Media, Eric Johnson, has joined him in working on this project. In discussion, it was suggested that new faculty in Communication Arts might be interested in being on a panel.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.