

# Letter

## Library's present space 'inadequate'

FEB 13, 1986

Dear Editor;

Your article of Feb. 11 states that the 3000 square-foot library space in the Overwaitea mall is "described as adequate by some." You do not mention that there are some who consider the space utterly inadequate. In any case the space is temporary: we have it for only 16 and one-half more months.

According to the B.C. Quantitative Standards for public Libraries, a

minimum space requirement for our present population is 7640 square feet. The library board for the past three years has projected and clearly outlined a requirement of 10,000 square feet to meet these provincial standards and to allow for future

expansion.

The Library board's first choice has been for a new building, and as recently as the December '85 meeting of the board a motion was carried that the library submit a proposal for a new building. The newly-elected

board will have to consider the options available at its first meeting on Feb. 20, but there can be no doubt that we shall aim for the delivery of library service that is due our community.

Helena Mott.

# Library backs Legacy project

By STAFF WRITERS

The Fort St. John Public Library Association voted 6-3 last night to go along with the area's proposed Expo Legacy project.

The project has been planned as a renovation of the Bay building in the downtown. Led by the city, possible user groups have been discussing the project for the last few months.

"It wasn't that we didn't want our own building, that would have been an ideal situation but we're in a difficult position and wanted the support of the variety of groups in the community," said Helena Mott, new chairman for the library board.

"There was a lot of pressure to go along with the project," she continued. "The political parties were already behind the project so it was difficult to say no to. But now that we have decided to go this route, we will certainly do as much as we can to make it a good library.

Ald. Dave Bodnar, liaison person with city council, was one of the three who voted against the concept saying he didn't want the commercial area lost from the downtown core.

"The old Bay building holds a strong assessment value that if lost, will have to be made up by the local taxpayers," he said, referring to the yearly \$43,000 in taxes the city gets from the property. "That money has already been figured into the budget and dispersed so if we lose it to the library/theatre complex, it'll have to be made up."

## DOWNTOWN PLAN

A second consideration is that when the downtown revitalization project begins, taxpayers will further have to

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pick up the frontage costs alongside the building.

"I think we have to be realistic in what we can afford," he continued. "I have not heard of a municipality yet where the Legacy funding has contributed more than 40 per cent to a capital project so there's still a good deal of money have to come up," he said.

He said another concern is that the regional district has not yet committed themselves totally to the project.

"Although they've indicated they would share the operational costs, they haven't specified a percentage and they didn't say anything about sharing capital costs," he said.

User groups were asked this week at a Legacy committee meeting to submit their operating budgets which would be included in the formal application for project funding. The groups have until Feb. 26 to submit their documentation.

Totally in favor of having a library/theatre complex somewhere, Bodnar suggested a better idea might be to put the legacy funding in trust for the time being, until a more acceptable idea can be worked out.

In spite of objections, members of the committee are seeking letters of support from the community for the project, and are looking into additional sources of funding for the proposed library-theatre complex.

The next meeting of the Legacy committee is Monday, March 3 at 7:30 p.m. in council chambers, where the group will give the application a final look before it is sent in.

# New FSJ Library board elected

By STAFF WRITER

The Fort St. John Public Association elected a new board of directors at its annual meeting Thursday.

The board consists of 10 people, including a liaison person appointed person by city council, in this case, Ald. Dave Bodnar.

Nine additional officers were elected from 13 nominees. The new board members are: Jack Bailey, who said he was retired and needed something to do; Gene Blishen, who wanted to begin the process of finding the library a permanent home; Dave Bradley, who wanted to see the library in a separate building "before dying;" Jane Haugen, who admitted she wasn't the younger, fresher blood everyone was looking for, but was very old blood with 14 years of experience; Liam Hylad, who stated a strong commitment to the community and an interest in libraries since he was six years old; and Riccardo Loro, Charles Maclean, Helena Mott and Joe Sloan, who all looked upon it as an opportunity for serving their community.

## VANDERGUGTEN RESIGNS

The first order of business for the library's new board of directors will probably to elect a new chairman. For the past three years the position had been filled by Peter Van-

dergugten, but at last night's meeting he announced his resignation.

"The future of the library and the possibility of new premises through the Legacy Fund look promising," he said. "We have made great headway and have overcome many obstacles, however, after three years it's time to give someone else a turn. We could use some new blood and fresh ideas."

Recently elected as the new president of the Chamber of Commerce, Vandergugten promised

members that the library would have full support of the Chamber.

## BUDGET ACCEPTED

The library's 1986 budget was handed down for discussion last night, and was immediately accepted by the membership.

The total budget requirement for this year amounts to \$121,134.76.

Last year the grant from the City was \$107,000 but this year the board is requesting \$112,784.76.

The library expects to generate

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approximately \$8,350 on its own through overdue book fines, copy fees, projector rentals, lost books and rural fees. However, if funding is received from the Regional District for 1986 fiscal year operating costs, membership fees will not be charged to rural residents.

## SALE

The Friends of the Fort St. John Public Library Association is preparing for a book sale at the Co-Op Mall, Saturday, Feb. 15.



**COUNTING DOWN** to a new beginning Ald. Dave Bodnar (right), Romi Haseo, supervising librarian (seated) and Pat Doonan record the

election results that determined the new board of directors for the Fort St. John Public Library Association.