

Planning & Running a Library Facility Referendum Campaign



Ideas & Lessons from the
Cranbrook Public Library Board



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The Prologue





Prologue

First Referend um

- 2000
 - City makes new library facility a priority





Prologue

First Referend um

- 2001 – 2002
 - Architect selected
 - Gather community input
 - Develop new library facility plan
- November 2002
 - First referendum fails
 - ▶ Slight majority in City
 - ▶ Slight minority in RDEK Area C
 - ▶ Majority required in both areas
 - Major Issue: Cost



Prologue

Looking at Options

- 2003
 - City strikes the New Library Facility Planning Committee
 - ▶ Target: reduce cost of facility by 25%
- 2004
 - Opportunity to purchase building



Prologue

Looking at Options

- Architect and engineer conduct feasibility study
 - ▶ Building can be adapted for library use
- City enters into negotiations with owners





Prologue

Second Referend um

- January – April 2005
 - Architect develops adaptive floor plan
 - City finalizes negotiations
 - ▶ Sale contingent upon referendum results
 - Regional District of East Kootenay decides to hold referendum July 9
 - City of Cranbrook decides to hold referendum November 19
 - Library Board strikes referendum campaign committee
- May 2005
 - Referendum campaign begins





The Beginnin g





Beginning

**Identify
Roles**

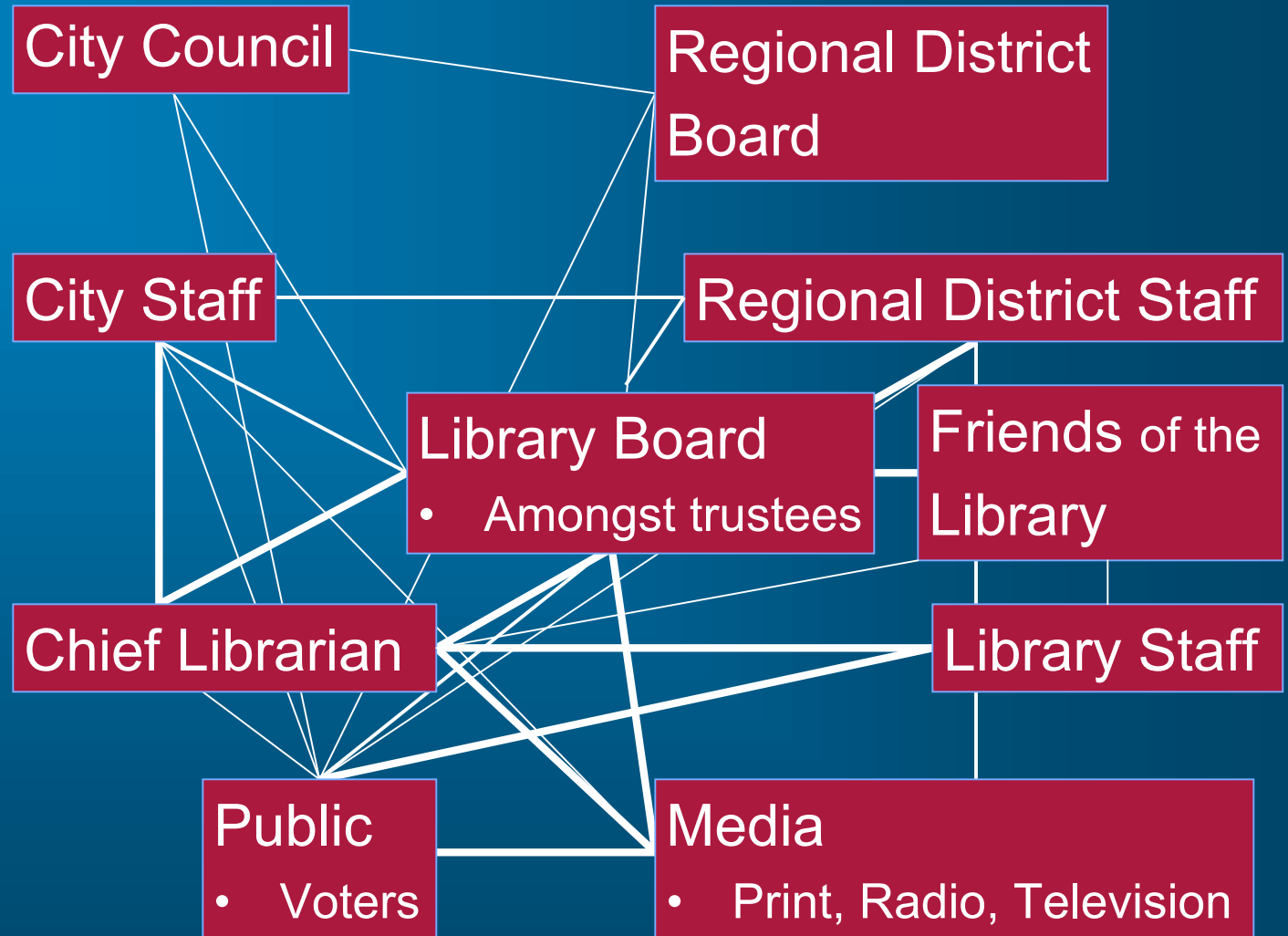
- Strike a referendum committee
- Meet with the key stakeholders
 - Library Board
 - Chief Librarian
 - Library staff
 - City staff
 - Regional district staff
- Determine who controls what information





Beginning Communication

Lines of Communication





Beginning

Establish Roles

- Set day-to-day communication channels
- Establish roles
 - Information
 - Promotion
- Identify activities each stakeholder group must undertake
- Provide framework for information sharing
- Let all parties review material being released to public before it is released



Beginning Communication

Lines of Communication

Media

- Print, Radio, Television

Friends of the Library

Public

- Voters

City Council

City Staff

Library Board

- Amongst trustees

Regional District Board

Library Staff

Regional District Staff

Chief Librarian

How to Run a Successful Library Referendum

April 26, 06



Beginning

Key Points

- All communications between stakeholders must be:
 - Clear
 - Concise
 - Open
 - Ongoing
- Better to say things too often than not often enough
- Each stakeholder must respect the roles of other stakeholders



The Middle

How to Run a Successful Library Referendum

April 26, 06



Middle Planning the Campaign

- Determine the scope of the campaign
 - Strike Referendum Campaign Committee
 - Timeline
 - Research
 - Budget
 - Key Message
 - Message Delivery
 - Evaluation
- Bring these components together to develop the work plan





Middle Timeline

- A timeline helps keep things on track
- Maximize lead-in time
 - Start thinking about a referendum at the same time as planning for a new library

6 + Months	6-4 Months	3-2 Months	6 Weeks – 1 Day
Research Message Logo Slogan	Budget Promotional material Preliminary stakeholder meetings	Develop working plan Review promotional material and print	Stakeholder meetings The campaign



Middle Research

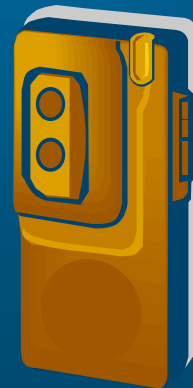
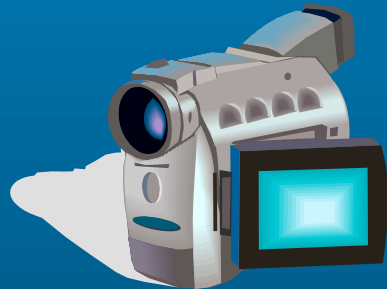
- Library staff have access to a wealth of information – use them
- Look at other referendum campaigns





Middle Research

- Determine what information is already in the public domain
 - Information from public planning sessions
 - Anything published in local media regarding the new facility





Middle Research

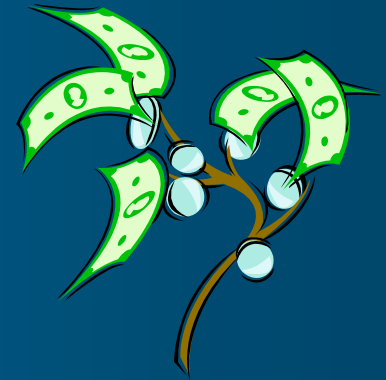
- Get a sense of community sentiment
- Gauge the political climate
- Be aware of external forces – past, present, future – that may impact the campaign





Middle Budget

- The budget is a major factor in determining the type of campaign
 - Direct Costs: paid advertising, printing, billboards ...
 - Indirect Costs: staff time, in-house resources ...
- There is no such thing as a no-cost campaign
- Determine source of the money
- Other stakeholders may incur costs based on their roles

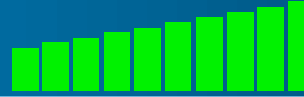




Middle

Budget

Lower Cost



Higher Cost

Volunteer run

In-house material
development and
printing

News releases

Telephone calls

Presentations at
organization meetings

Soliciting donations

Mass mailing

Hire campaign
staff

External material
development and
printing

Paid advertising

Open houses

Internal funding

Directed mailing



Middle

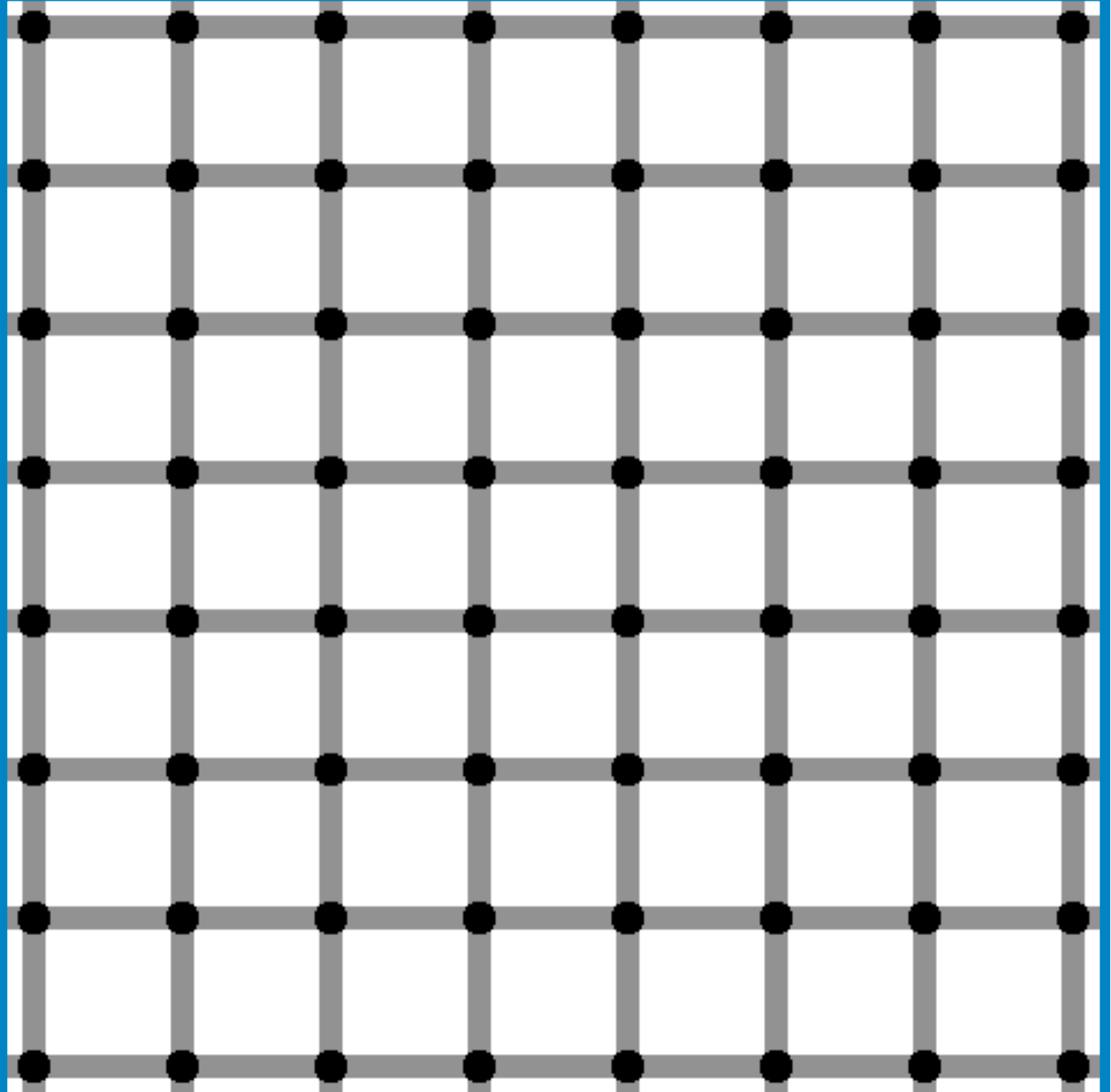
Budget

- Most campaigns have a mix of lower and higher cost items
- It is possible to run a successful campaign on a minimal budget

\$2,947



Middle Ponderin g the Budget





Middle

Key Message

- The campaign needs a clear, consistent message
 - Be brief
 - The message can be your slogan
 - ▶ “Vote yes for your new library”
 - Promotional material supports your message
 - ▶ Answer: who, what, why, when, where and how



Middle

**Key
Message**

- All stakeholders need to know the message
- All stakeholders need to present the message consistently to the public



Middle

**Key
Message
Presentat
ion**

- The logo is another component of the message
 - Create a graphic to be used on all promotional material
 - Can be an image or an adaptation of the slogan

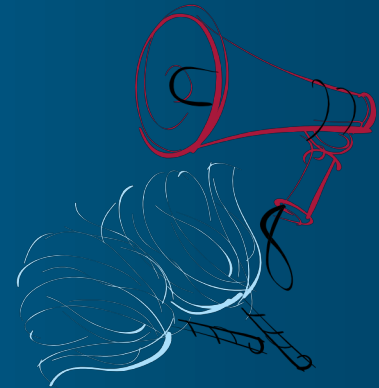




Middle

**Key
Message
Presentat
ion**

- Be genuinely positive and enthusiastic
- What you are promoting is the best option available
- Be a cheerleader
- Do not be impartial
- Do not just present the facts





Middle

Developing the Work Plan

- The majority of the work plan deals with message delivery
- Components
 - Category
 - Task
 - Completed by
 - Assigned to
 - Overview
 - Comments



Middle

Work Plan Details

- Put other stakeholders' activities into the plan
- Ensure all stakeholders have a chance to review the plan
- The work plan is a living document
- Details change during the campaign
- Once the work plan is in place, the campaign can begin



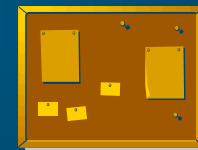
Middle Sample Work Plan

Activity	Key Issue	Needed by	Lead	Overview	Comments
Meetings	Public Information Meeting	November 3 November 9 7 – 8 pm	Larry / Clouston	Organize open houses	Wayne available; Elmer ?
Budget	Cash balance work sheet	October 19	Ursula	Set up budget, revenue and expenditures	Ongoing
Promotion	Update brochures	October 18	Ursula	Must focus on new tax rate, polling stations	Ready for distribution by October 21 Give to Wayne at City for review
	Mail	November 8	Bill	Send to all households in Cranbrook	We can afford one Must sort for post office and drop off 3 days prior to delivery
	Radio	Week of October 23	Angus / Ursula	Interview for Community Focus	Contact Nadine
	Signs in City	November 1	Bill / Angus / Jayne		34 signs available at library Installation completed by November 3 rd
Marketing	Develop phone lists; library members	October 19	Ursula	Spreadsheet with name, number, comments	Idea is to have a simple spread sheet of 20 – 30 names per volunteer-easy recording



Middle Campaign Activities

- Telephone Campaign
 - Contact all adult library members to encourage them to vote yes
 - Comply with privacy laws
- Mass Mailing
 - Simple poster encouraging people to vote yes
 - Include voting dates and locations
- In-House Display
 - Pictures, plans, brochures, Frequently Asked Question sheets, bookmarks, bumper stickers
 - Have staff hand out information





Middle Campaign Activities

- Signs & Billboards
 - Get permission to put up roadside signs
 - Place in strategic locations
 - Involve library users
- Word-of-Mouth
 - Library, especially circulation, staff can directly convey the message to library users
 - Always be ready to answer questions





Media & the Public

- Involve Media
 - News releases
 - Tours
 - Regular updates
- Involve Public
 - Open houses
 - Information sessions





Climax





Climax

Referend um Day

- End all campaign activity the night before the referendum
- Ensure media has the board chair and chief librarian's contact information for a post-referendum interview
- Prepare for both a positive and negative result
- Determine how you will keep track of the referendum results
- Wait



Climax

**Immediately
After**

- Board chair and chief librarian should give interviews as requested
- Keep the message consistent



Climax

**Cranbrook's
Referendum
Results**

RDEK

60%

City

88%



Epilogue





Epilogue

Wrap-up

- Take down signs
- Place a thank you notice in local newspapers
- Recognize referendum volunteers
- Thank the other stakeholders for their participation





Epilogue

Evaluation

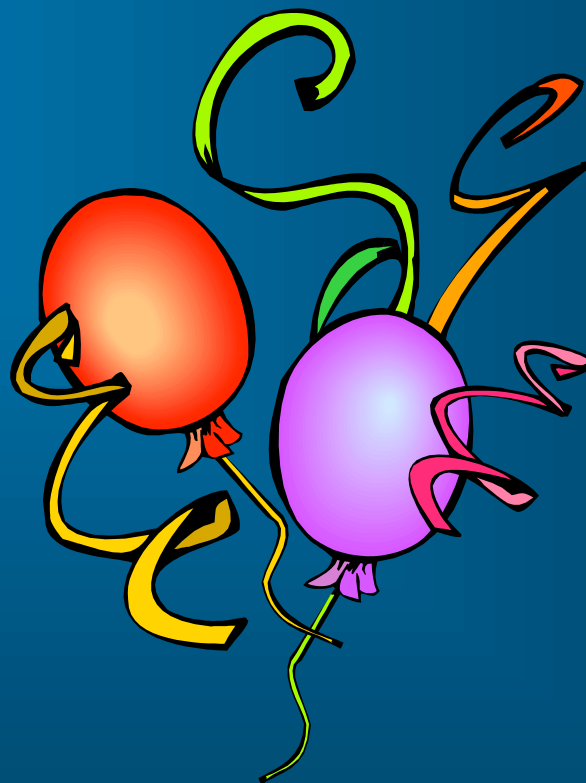
- Meet with stakeholders
- Review the work plan and the campaign
- Answer these questions:
 - What worked?
 - What didn't?
 - What could have been done differently?
 - What is the community's reaction?
 - What are the next steps?



Epilogue

Wrap-up

- If the campaign was successful, have a celebration





Epilogue

Next Steps

- Use the momentum from the campaign to keep community interest engaged
 - Provide local media updates
 - Set up an in-house display
 - Brief staff on the status of the new library facility
- Maintain the relationship with the other stakeholders



Epilogue

Next Steps

- Prepare for the new reality
 - Finalize working plans
 - Develop a strategic plan
 - Make procedural changes necessary for operating in the new space
 - Deal with anything else that comes up



Epilogue

**New
Beginnin
g**

The end of the referendum campaign is the beginning of another volume in the life of the library.



Epilogue

**Next
Steps**

Never tire of hearing the question:

**Are you excited
about the new
library?**



Questions

