

Library consultant to be hired soon to help guide future plans

By Jeff Shmase

LYNNFIELD – The town library is on the verge of hiring a consultant whose job will be to assess the needs of the building both from a pro-

grammatic and facility points of view.

Bids to provide that service are due tomorrow at Town Hall. Originally, the plan was to review bids for the job in May 2012, but the issue was

pushed back after the proposal did not get enough bidders. It was since carefully re-written to be more specific to what the library director was looking for.

“Bill Gustus and I worked for a long time getting the language right this time for the proposal,” said library executive director Nancy Ryan. “The first proposal was written strictly for engineers and

we are looking for much more than that. I already have heard of a bid that will be coming in, so I think we are on the right track now.”

The winning bidder will work with Ryan, library trustees, several members of the Friends of the Lynnfield Library and community members to assess both the library’s and community needs for the next 20 years.

The consultant will look at the existing space, the design of the building, community demographics, usage statistics, existing services and collections and work with a committee to determine what patrons might want from the library through 2033.

The consultant would then create a library building program that would meet these needs in the areas of collections, services and space, the latter component being an “important part of this,” Ryan said.

The library will use leftover funds the town set aside for it from a feasibility study a few years back, as well as money from a public library fund to pay for the consultant. Ryan is estimating the fee for the service will range from \$10,000 to \$20,000 with the project taking up to six months to complete.

The consultant will be on site to conduct meetings with trustees and a library needs assessment committee, but won’t spend his/her entire time in town during the study. Ryan said she anticipates there

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will be a couple of public meetings scheduled on the topic as well.

In the past, Ryan has spoken of the need for additional space.

"An enormous amount of groups could use a meeting space in town and right now there are none," Ryan said back in April. "So we see this as something the community could really, really use."

A meeting room would provide an area for a host of events, including computer classes and adult and children's programs.

"All we have to do is reconfigure the space, say add another four to five thousand feet, and we will be able to do so much more for the community," stressed Ryan.