



# Friends of the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library

*Friends Choose their Own Leadership*

## Leadership Success with a Team

Kathy Adam Browne, Wilma Jozwiak,  
Rhona Koretzky, Sheila Morrioni, and  
Ambika Sambasivan

*Marcie Reed Slot*

# Presenters and Collaborators

- **The Leadership Team**

- Kathy Adam Browne

- Wilma Jozwiak

- Rhona Koretzky

- Sheila Morroni

- Michele Gorab (January 2018)

- **Our wonderful Retreat Facilitator**

- Ambika Sambasivan (Fruitfly Consulting)

*Marcie Reed Slot*

# How we were - CPHL Friends 2000

- Books for Babies
- Get Out the Vote
- Outreach
- Limited Proctors Ticket sales
- Travel
- Used Book Sales
- Basic website
- Basic email marketing

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# CPHL Friends: 2015

- Battle of the Books
- Books for Babies
- Extensive Proctors Ticket sales
- Get Out the Vote
- Outreach
- Travel
- Used Book Sales
- Increased Hospitality
- Two Towns – One Book community read
- Crossing Cultures events
- Junior Friends of the Library
- Interactive website
- Sophisticated use of email marketing
- Social media engagement
- Community scholarships

***What's the same?***

***... Board Members still have complex lives...***

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**For the President, it was getting to  
be too much ...**

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# Things We Had Tried . . .

- Instituted a two-year term limit to eliminate the dreaded “President for life” phenomenon
- Added Past President and President-Elect positions
  - Past President provided support for the first year of a President’s two-year term
  - President-Elect “shadowed” the President for the two years before rising to the role of President
  - This model was in effect for two terms

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# What we learned

**PRO** The Past President/President/President Elect model helps get people up to speed

**CON** The model did little to reduce the stress and burden of the Presidency:

- The need to “be present” for so many activities
- Being the sole primary “point” or contact person for so many different people
- Even with support from the Past President, being the one finally responsible for major issues

# When it all came to a head ...



- **President Elect chose not to assume Presidency**
- **Current President was unable to continue**
- **No other Board member was prepared assume to Presidency**

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# Exploring the Issues

The FOL Board decided to:

- Approach this as a **Critical Moment (not crisis moment)** and opportunity to:
  1. Examine what we were doing and why, and
  2. Determine its alignment with Library Mission (Library was undergoing long-range planning process)
- Become more proactive rather than reactive
- Seek professional facilitation for the process

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# Choosing a Facilitator

## Critical attributes:

- Respectful of group culture
- Flexible
- Skillful in drawing out participants
- Ability to synthesize and present outcomes

**Our choice: Ambika Sambasivan of Fruitfly Consulting**

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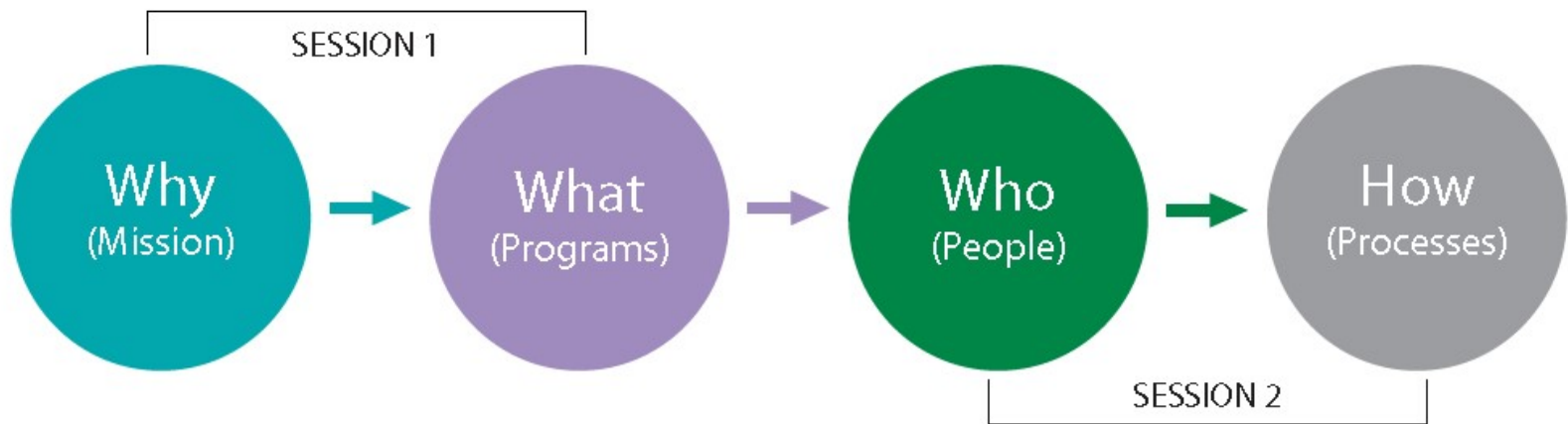
# Consulting GOAL

- ❖ Initiate process of developing a longer-term vision - 'proactive' rather than "reactive" planning
- ❖ Stimulate discussions regarding division of responsibility between Library and FOL
- ❖ Create a 'safe space' to discuss and prioritize current FOL programs/activities in relation to organizational mission
- ❖ Encourage examination of why potential candidates reject role of President (issues underlying the leadership crisis)
- ❖ Initiate discussions about 'ideal' qualities and skills to fulfill FOL Presidency (to address the lack of succession planning)
- ❖ Stimulate development of interim leadership solutions

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# Two-session process and debrief

- Structured and focused
- Minimized distractions
- Productive exercises
- Visuals to assist thought processing



**Good facilitation does not offer  
answers or solutions**

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# Final Facilitation Session

## Defining the Model – Throwing Caution to the Wind!

- Facilitation helped us determine that we were committed to what we were doing because it aligned with our Mission and Vision
- We realized that we had to change or risk losing FOL
- Co-Presidency still left a lot on each plate
- Let's get crazy – let's have a presidential team!

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# We didn't know much yet, but we knew we needed. . .

- To treat the model as an experiment or pilot
- Be flexible in our pilot year
- Our other Board colleagues to also be flexible
- To report back to the Board on the model
- The Board to give us feedback

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# Benefits of a President Team

- More minds tuned to FOL programs and issues
- Pre-Board meetings, as needed, to hash over important issues
- More people learning about more aspects of the FOL
- More fertile discussions about what the FOL is doing and where it is going

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# Changes So Far

- **Original responsibility areas of the Quads**
  - Some areas ended up fitting better under a different person due to interest and expertise
  - Some areas ended up being more or less demanding
- **Personnel changes**
  - Kathy Adam Browne will step down in January and Michele Gorab will become a Quad



# Other Changes Post-Facilitation

- **Simplifying - Yearly Volunteer Thank You Event discontinued due to low attendance**
- **Purchased a banner recognizing volunteers for display at the Library in lieu of event**
- **FOL Board members now attend Board of Trustee monthly meetings to better understand how the FOL may align with or assist in their work**
- **Ongoing engagement with Library staff regarding its long-range plan results to be proactive to their ideas and needs**

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# If you're interested in a Team Leadership Model ...

- The importance of an exploratory process
- The value of a neutral facilitator
- The critical role of flexibility on **EVERYONE'S** part
- The value of a “pilot” approach
- The absolute necessity of open communication

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**MANY THANKS to our  
wonderful facilitator**

**Ambika Sambasivan**

**Fruitfly Consulting**

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*Marcie Reed Slot*

# Want more information?

- Our Website: [Friendsofcphlibrary.org](http://Friendsofcphlibrary.org)
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