Tips for Engaging Friends as Partners
Friends of Beekman Library History

SMALL  LOOSELY ORGANIZED  RESISTANT TO CHANGE  DECLINING INCOME
How do you make the changes?

Very carefully, with tact and diplomacy

With a willingness to dig in and do some heavy lifting

With a sense of humor

With an appreciation for what people bring to the table
What do I do first?

- Core Group
- Increase Income
- Plant Seeds
Core Group

- Make sure you have one or create one!
- Pace activity to avoid burnout
- Be ready to roll up your sleeves
Brainstorm Income Ideas

- Get creative and have fun
- Discourage dismissing ideas but rather flesh them out for merit
- Can you make more from what you are already doing?
- Look at other groups, seek out successful groups
Plant Seeds for 501©(3)

- Structure adds stability
- Library Advocacy
- Take themselves seriously
Identify Potential
Identify Potential

• Hands on observation
• Ask questions about work and life experience
• Identify natural leaders and develop a relationship
Grow Membership
Grow Membership

- Membership Dues
- Focus
- Dedicated membership events
- Annual Social
Help Them Succeed

Success builds momentum
Help Them Succeed

- You must be willing to roll up your sleeves and help
- Delegation alone isn’t an option in a crisis
- Brainstorm ideas for how to increase membership and fundraising
- As they experience success start delegating to leaders
- Attend their events and encourage staff, trustees to attend as well
Recognize Their Success
Annual Meetings
Trustees/Staff
Newsletters and Social Media
Elected Officials
Clearly Defined Roles
Officers and Directors
Committees and Chairs
Worker Bees
Listen and be open to new ideas
• Be enthusiastic about new ideas
• Flesh them out
• Be willing to try new things and evaluate, adjust or abandon
• Amazon, eBay, Raffles, Sporting Event Tickets, Vendor and Craft Fairs
Communicate, Communicate & Communicate some more
Communication

- Open door
- Director attends all meetings and report
- Friends rep to give report at all board meetings
- Library Strategic Plan
Advise and Mentor
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- Structure and roles inform advice and mentoring
- Training opportunities
- Listen
- Encourage and point out potential pitfalls diplomatically
Don’t get complacent
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• Pay attention to tensions and concerns
• Be the diplomat that smooths out the bumps
• Look for future potential
Summary

• Know the basics of organizing a non-profit
  • Treat people as partners
  • Appreciate their contributions
  • Encourage and thank them
Group Problem Solving
Power struggle between members
Negative attitude toward new ideas
Tensions between staff/trustees and friends
QUESTIONS
Resources

How to Form a Nonprofit Corporation by Anthony Mancuso
How to Write a Successful Fundraising Appeals by Mal Warwick
NYLA Friends of Libraries Section
http://www.alan.org/united/friends