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Auburn Public Library Board Assessment by Marc A. Pitman, FundraisingCoach.com

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Overview

The Auburn Public Library is in an exciting point in its organizational development. Having completed an incredibly successful campaign, the board has also navigated the Library to new senior leadership, a more common sense approach to endowments, an extremely clear and succinct set of by-laws. The community support for the Library is growing—even elected officials are now asking to work with the Library. So now is a perfect time to assess the board and to figure out how the “Corporator” structure in the by-laws fits with the current realities and needs of the Library.

As will be expanded on below, the board is functioning quite well. A few tweaks, like a formalized orientation and a possible annual recommitment, will help clarify their role and re-engage them.

While there’s a general ambiguity about the role of corporators shared by all groups, the corporators represent an amazing potential for the Library. As is spelled out below, clear expectations of coporators are needed, as well as more regular (and none electronic) communication.

Comments from the Board

The Auburn Public Library’s board is remarkable. Each of the members have a clear understanding that the board exists to help with the big picture of the Library, not the daily operations. And each board member seems genuinely proud of the Library’s achievements and service to the community.

Meetings

Board members seem to think board meetings are well run. Information gets to them in plenty of time before a meeting to allow them to come prepared. They like the relaxed way the chair leads the meetings.

While all feel questions are acceptable and discussion happens during the meetings, a comment theme was that many agenda items are already decided before the meeting. The term “rubber stamping board” did come up in the interviews. Board members suggested that the value of efficient and fast board meetings—despite the full board only meeting every other month—might lead to decisions all but being made between meetings.

While most said meetings were “fine,” there seems to be a trend in younger the board member’s having a desire for more high-level conversation and engagement. If the board wants to recruit younger board members, this needs to be addressed.

“Dick is an excellent board chair. Everything gets done and it’s all very comfortable. You have materials in advance so you can formulate questions.”

—a current APL board member

“The agenda seems already decided...We just get the ‘done deal.’ We’re not receiving the necessary information ahead of time in a way that’s not ‘pre-set.’”

—a current APL board member

Orientation

All board members recall being invited on the board by a friend. Some board members said the only orientation they received was being handed a binder. Only one member remembered a formal orientation involving:

- a visit to the library
- a tour
- a frank discussion of the obligations and responsibilities of board members
- and receiving a binder and a handbook

A formal orientation is a basic sign of respect for the new board member taking time and energy to volunteer for the Library and should be something that gets formalized.

Use of gifts and talents

Most board members feel they are able to use their gifts and talents on behalf of the Library. But it wasn't clear that they'd been informed what gifts or talents had helped them get nominated to the board.

Many are interested in helping with direction of the libraries programs more than help with fundraising. And many were surprised to find out that fundraising for the Library was more than organizing book sales and bake sales. Members thought the new development director was a terrific addition to the Library and brings a fresh enthusiasm. But that didn't make them feel any more comfortable calling people for donations.

"I give an annual donation. With Jim, more is required of us. I don't like it. Jim is fabulous. I do it for Jim but not because I like it."

—a current APL board member

New members

All saw a need for "younger" board members who could be "more actively involved." Although younger was somewhat elastic a term (often meaning "younger than me"), many mentioned needing more people willing to work between meetings, people well connected in the community, and people willing to be external faces for the Library (either in fundraising or advocacy).

Some board members offered specific names of prospects. More than one board member who didn't offer specific names suggested getting more teachers on the board, apparently because they'd be well connected with families. Others recommended finding prospects among the families that frequently use the children's section.

There was no indication that suggested board members were intentionally coming from existing corporators.

Recommendations for the Board

The Library's board members are a wonderful group. Here are some suggestions that would make both the current board members feel more comfortable with their role, help them engage more between meetings, and help the board fill vacancies as they occur.

- **MEETINGS**

Consider meeting monthly. This is probably *not* going to happen, but organizational development studies indicate that teams lose their "memory" after 4 weeks. Allowing more than 4 weeks between meetings necessitates a re-hashing of the history of the conversation to help bring members back up to speed. That re-hashing takes time. So if meetings can't be monthly, the Library might consider extending meetings to 90-minutes.

- **ORIENTATION**

Based on the interviews with peer libraries who had active and engaged boards, a formal orientation is non-negotiable. While time consuming up front, this will save loads of time over the course of a board member's term. Orientations should include:

- Meeting at the library
- Sharing the person's qualities, gifts, or talents that caught the attention of the board
- A tour of the facility and introduction to the staff
- A handbook and/or binder that includes the narrative history of the Library, by-laws, and anything else that will help board members get up to speed (bios of fellow members, news clippings, articles on being a model board member)
- A succinct way of telling the Library's story that will allow board members to be effective ambassadors
- A frank discussion of the expectations of board members, including
 - Attendance at meetings
 - A meaningful donation to the annual fund ("meaningful" can be defined by the board member)
 - An ability to tell people about the Library in a compelling way
 - Advocacy for the Library including letters to the editor and attendance at city council meetings when called on
 - Participating with writing fundraising letters or making asks
 - Having a "radar" on for prospective board members
 - Possibly hosting at least one coffee/cocktail party either for cultivating the community or for actual fundraising [an outline for such an event is at the end of this assessment]
- Beginning and ending with sincere gratitude for the new board member taking on this special role.

An annual commitment form will serve as an ongoing reminder of these expectations and allow for board members to update their interests. [A sample is at the end of this report.]

- **NEW MEMBERS**

To assist the Library in recruiting new board members, and to help new board members know how they “fit” and what they add to the board, the Library may want to consider creating a grid of qualities making up an ideal board for the Library.

The advantage of a grid is an immediate visual snapshot of what types of people board members can be looking for. The columns would need to reflect the values of the Library. From what I’ve heard, there is a desire to make the board represent a cross-section of the communities served. So things like age, professions, interests, etc. would need to be reflected on the grid. [An example of such a grid is at the end of this assessment.]

- **Between meetings**

Since meetings are every other month, often with a break in the summer, there is a sense among board members that they need to “do something.” But they aren’t sure what. Based on the interviews, it seems the Library specifically needs advocacy in the community and growth in fundraising. Why not develop a sort of “menu” of actions to take between meetings. Ask each board member to take 2 actions, just one a month, and report about their experience at the next meeting. The menu might include:

- Writing letters to the editor of the Sun Journal and other weekly publications like the Twin City Times
- Writing thank you notes to donors,
- Making calls to donors to do nothing but thank them for their support,
- Signing annual fund appeals,
- Writing notes on annual fund appeals,
- Showing up at council meetings so councilors begin to recognize board members,
- Making specific fundraising phone calls,
- Helping in a book sale,
- Inviting a group to use the space and catering available at the Library,
- Attending the Maine Library Association conference and report back to the board

The list could be longer but it’s important to have a mix of introvert and extrovert options. The board members that felt discomfort with the fundraising often expressed a discomfort with the “extrovert” nature of the tasks—phone calls, etc. They wouldn’t mind helping with mailings or doing other behind the scenes activities.

Comments from and about Corporators

The by-laws of the Auburn Public Library outline a group of people, the “members” of the corporation, that are called “corporators.” Corporators seem to be a vestige of a past age, a time when it was just expected that leaders in the community would also be contributing volunteers in civic institutions.

Board members and corporators alike don’t seem to know what the Library’s corporators group does, or indeed what qualifies a person to become a corporator. One person spoke the sentiment of most when she said, “[The corporator group] seems to be made up of anybody who’s done anything in the community.”

All parties—board members, corporators, and staff—desire a group more engaged with both the library and with the community. But the corporators can’t be blamed for not being more engaged: *they’ve never been asked.*

Based on the interviews conducted for this assessment, corporators are nominated by the board and not asked to do anything more than show up at the annual meeting...if they are able to. Some corporators have no idea how they became one. Many assume being a “corporator” is an honorary title conferred by the Library.

To continue or not

There was a definite sense of “why do they exist if they don’t do anything.” There is a common desire to see a more engaged group that is more active with the life of the Library.

One strategy is to change the definition of who makes up the “membership” of the corporation. The proposed change last fall was to make all card holders “members.” (The Blue Hill Public Library has a less problematic definition of members: any adult donor in the previous 12 months and any adult card holder.)

But based on my interviews and research, I don’t believe a change in members will automatically result in a more engaged membership.

The corporators aren’t the problem

I don’t think the problem is with the corporators. The problem is the Library neither articulates expectations of corporators nor communicates with corporators as a group. So in a sense,

“It seems the corporators are just open to anybody. It’s too watered down; too generic. Corporators should be somewhat selective and charged with responsibilities.”

—a current APL corporator

“Corporators provide a base for the Library in the community. It gives the Library various avenues of influence—community, politically, and for funding.”

—a current APL corporator

“I was asked to be a corporator but never really asked to do anything.”

—a current APL corporator

the corporators are doing exactly what the Library is asking of them: nothing.

Neither staff, nor board members, nor corporators could point to any Library communication between annual meetings. And these appear to be largely email based without a sense of whether all the hundreds of corporators had email or read it regularly.

The corporators are an amazing opportunity

Most non-educational nonprofits *long* for a group of people with something like “alumni status,” people that are in a group closer to their nonprofit than the rest of the community. *Corporators can be that.*

The very name holds a level of pride to many of the corporators I spoke with. It’s a wonderful way to keep former board members in the fold, acknowledging their service while lessening expectations.

Also, by definition, the board members must be from the communities the Library serves. *Corporators don’t.* So the corporators are a formal way for the Library to cultivate ongoing relationship with people that love the Library but may be out of the service area. This could be particularly helpful for fundraising.

Finally, the corporators can be a vital proving ground for prospective board members. Invite someone as a corporator with a few simple expectations and you can see if they fulfill the expectations or not. If they do, they will be much better a board prospect than just someone not really connected with the Library.

“Corporators represent a reservoir of supporters, but you have to work to keep them inside the tent.”

—a current APL corporator

“Corporators could be a real sounding board for the Library.”

—a current APL corporator

Recommendations for Engaging Corporators

I recommend keeping the corporators. But with clear expectations. The two common expectations suggested by corporators themselves were

1. Some sort of fundraising expectation (both making a personal annual gift and working on some fundraising aspect)
2. Advocating for the library as needed

A third expectation would be participation in periodic intense projects. One corporator said the group is especially there for special projects like the recent capital campaign. While you can't keep the group ramped up to that level all the time, it's there when the library needs it.

Here are the steps I suggest

- Get board agreement on the 2-3 expectations of a corporator based on what the Library needs. I think they should be:
 1. Corporators are expected to make a meaningful annual gift to the Library.
 2. Corporators are expected to advocate for the Library when called upon or when they themselves see the need.
- Consider adding a provision in the by-laws for removing corporators: perhaps not making a donation for 18 months? There is already provision for corporators to resign. But the corporators I spoke with understood it would help the Library to be able to keep a clean list too. One non-interested corporator put it bluntly, "The Library needs to know who's in and who's out."
- Communicate these expectations to corporators both by letter and at the annual meeting. Couch it in terms of:

"For almost 100 years, the corporators have been important in the life of the Library. As we prepare for the next 100, we need the corporators more than ever.

Since the campaign, we've been working hard to be streamline and be as efficient as possible while serving the growing Library use of our communities. In speaking with many of you, it's become clear that you are proud of the Library but you'd like us to set out some expectations, giving definition to what it means to be a corporator for the Auburn Public Library. After a year of conversations and extensive investigation with board members, corporators, and the practice of other Maine libraries, these are the two simple expectations: _____ and _____.

If you'd like to remain a corporator, your annual fund gift and attendance at the annual meeting will let us know. If you'd prefer to stop being a corporator, that is fine. Please let us know. If we don't hear from you in 18 months, we'll assume you no longer want to be a corporator and will remove you from the list."

It's important that this comes across in the spirit of gratitude for their being corporators and gratitude for them asking for clarification as to what being a corporator means. It might help, if it can be credibly pulled off, to apologize on behalf of the Library for letting expectations become unclear.

- Create a communication plan for corporators. I'd recommend something in the mail at least quarterly. One non-interested corporator advocated *not* mentioning stats and circulation only. He said, "Be engaging. Have communication that involves interaction rather than overwhelming us with information—that only makes us dormant. *Ask people to do something*—[it could be] physically come in, anything but ask them to actually *do* something."
 1. What if each quarter, the Library funded a one-time-per-corporator 10% coupon for the café?
 2. What if board members made it a point to call 3-5 corporators to thank them for being a corporator and update them on the cool things happening.
 3. What if staff were able to involve corporators in the various programs of the Library?
 4. What if there were a "corporator's picks" shelf of reading recommended by corporators?
- Recognize corporators whenever possible. One such example is Jim's great idea of listing "corporator" after donors' names in the annual report.
- List the corporators in the database and make an attempt to call each one. It will be a hassle, but if an active and engaged membership is the goal, this is worth it. This shouldn't fall on one person but can be split up among staff and board.
- Make a concerted effort to ensure that board members come from the corporators. This will help in two ways
 1. If quorum at Annual Meetings is an issue, ensuring all the board members are also corporators will assist in reaching quorum.
 2. Recruiting board members who have already have served in a group that expected annual donations and some sort of advocacy will help make it easy for new board members to fill these roles.

Even if you were to only mail them quarterly, that would cost less than \$1000 in postage—an investment definitely worth making.

A 2-Phase Plan for a Highly Engaged Board and Membership

Phase 1: Fall 2011 to Spring 2013

This plan assumes the corporator structure being maintained but with more explicit expectations.

August—September 2011

- Board discussions about corporator expectations and a letter to corporators thanking them and acknowledging the desire they have to have some expectations. Invite them to the annual meeting to discuss those.
- Annual meeting with conversation of corporator expectations and discussion about how to best communicate those.
- Draft annual appeals for the next 12 months (3-4)
- Invite prospective board members
- Pull together materials for a memorable orientation

October—December 2011 *←most generous quarter of the year for most nonprofits*

- Get an annual fund mailing in the mail by early November (therefore ready for mail by mid-October). Consider segmenting out all corporators and sending them a slightly more personalized appeal. Ask for help from board members and corporators in assembling the mailing.
- Consider getting a donor to cover the costs of the mailing (or all the mailings) so that “all donations go 100% to mission.”
- Ask board members to consider calling people. And have staff (at least the director and director of development) make lots of calls. Preferably to people able to commit \$500 a year.
- Also call corporators to report back on the outcomes of the annual meeting and follow up on the mailing of expectations.
- Be sure to get out a quarterly corporator communication. To reinforce the “inner circle” idea with this group, you might want to make it a simple 2-sided, photocopied self-mailer. Or mail it in an A6 envelope (folding the letter in half rather than in thirds). The larger envelope shouldn’t affect postage but will help this Library mailing stand out.

January—March 2012

- January can be a month of gratitude. Make sure as many people as possible send thank you’s to donors—either as generic “thank you” notes or as more specific notes from board members directly to donors.
 - Consider having a program in the children’s section include writing thank you notes with crayons or some other colorful medium. This will reinforce the fundraising message to multiple generations. This should also help you in identifying potential corporators and board members.
- Continue the long work of cleaning up the corporator list.

- Finish up the first 2012 general appeal in February for mailing in March
- Send a quarterly corporator communication. Reinforce the expectations and include quotes of corporators who are relieved for the clarification. (If you're feeling gutsy, also include corporators who are relieved and opt to no longer be a corporator to show that people can resign, no harm-no foul.)

April—June 2012

- Get another appeal in the mail in late April/early May (before the end of school and the beginning of weddings in June)
- Involve the board in the Silent Auction. Specifically invite corporators too.
- In this quarter's corporator mailing, highlight the auction and what corporators can do to help. (Donate items, donate time, donate money, etc.)
- If possible, a June mailing might be helpful (but with the auction, it might not be practical).

July—September 2012

- Wrap up the annual fund (thank you's, annual reports, etc) including board members as much as possible. (Thank you phone calls are *much* easier for board members to make than solicitation calls. And donors are genuinely surprised to not be asked for money.)
- Draft letters and quarterly updates for next 12 months
- Get board members their recommitment form prior to the annual meeting.
- Recruit 2-3 board members to do a house party

October—December 2012 ← *most generous quarter of the year for most nonprofits*

- 2-3 house parties (make them in October to avoid the holiday rush)
- Recruit 2-3 more board members to do house parties after January
- Quarterly mailing to corporators—consider one with a reply envelope to facilitate donations
- End of year annual appeal, preferably mailed before Thanksgiving

January—March 2013

- January can be a month of gratitude. Review what was done last year and repeat. Consider other creative, low cost ways to thank.
- 2-3 house parties
- Recruit 2-3 more board members to do house parties next quarter
- By March, the "no donation in next 18 months" will have expired. If approved as a condition of corporators at the September 2011 annual meeting, you can now purge the corporator list. If this seems too harsh, you may want to create an honorary, non-voting "corporator emeritas" category to celebrate people who at one point helped the library.
- In the quarterly corporator mailing, highlight the fun and success of the board house parties and ask for corporators who will host

Phase 2: Spring 2013-Fall of 2015

April—June 2013

- 2-3 house parties
- Recruit 2-3 more corporators or board members to do house parties next quarter
- At least one annual fund letter
- At least one corporator communication: maybe with a 10% discount to the café (discount funded by the Library, not the café)
- Review corporator list with board and staff to identify prospective board members
- Make phone calls to follow up the request for corporators to host house parties
- Work on developing a prospective corporator list too

July—September 2013

- Thank you's and annual report with corporators and board members highlighted in donor lists
- Review the houseparty strategy done by board members and consider how to role this out to the corporators too
- 2-3 house parties
- Recruit 2-3 more corporators or board members to do house parties next quarter
- Draft next 12 months of appeals and updates
- A general appeal in late August/early September would be great
- Annual meeting preparation

October—December 2013 ← *most generous quarter of the year for most nonprofits*

- Try for 3-4 house meetings with board or corporators
- Send a general appeal in early November (therefore get it all ready to go in mid-October)
- Recruit 2-3 more corporators to host house parties after January
- Mail quarterly corporator communication
- Develop call lists for director of development, library director, and (if possible) board chair—if possible, calls should be asking for gifts of \$1000, may be paid at \$84/month

January—March 2014

- Handwritten thank you's for gifts given in 2013 by staff, board, and any corporators
- Consider a thank you video from card holders—specifically thanking donors
- Continue holding 2-3 house parties by corporators and board. And recruiting 2-3 hosts for next quarter.
- Get an annual appeal ready to be dropped late March (therefore finished in February)
- Mail quarterly corporator communication—perhaps highlighting house parties and asking for others to host them too

April 2014—August 2015

Repeat the rhythm that has now developed.

Sample Board Member Job Description

MISSION: The Auburn Public Library offers community members of all ages services to satisfy popular interests, realize self-directed learning and academic goals, find information on a variety of topics, meet and interact with others, and evaluate information effectively.

ANNUAL BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES/COMMITMENT FORM

Board Member's Name: _____

I understand my responsibilities as a Board Member are to:

1. Serve as an active advocate for the APL
2. Make a personal contribution to the annual giving campaign (*there are no determined amounts as each person contributes according to their individual ability*)
3. Attend all Board meetings—generally six a year
4. Participate on a Board committee
5. Provide professional counsel and guidance
6. Provide, as needed, volunteer support (example, helping with a library program or showing up at a city council meeting)
7. Review the annual budget, major expenditures, and investment of funds
8. Assist in fundraising activities; I will consider at least one of the following activities:

_____ My company will make an Annual Giving contribution

_____ I will assist in building the Annual Giving donor file by submitting the names of potential new donors

_____ I will participate in fundraising events and help to sell tickets for such events

I feel my skills can be best utilized by working with the following committees or interest areas:

COMMITTEES (please check those of interest)

_____ FINANCE COMMITTEE

_____ DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

_____ NOMINATING COMMITTEE

_____ EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

AREAS OF INTEREST (please check areas of interest)

_____ BY-LAWS

_____ STRATEGIC PLAN

_____ TECHNOLOGY

_____ LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

_____ BENEFITS

_____ COMPENSATION

_____ INSURANCE

_____ FUNDRAISING

_____ THANK YOU CALLS

_____ ASKING CALLS

I accept the above commitment as an understanding of my role and responsibilities as a member of the Board of Directors.

(SIGNATURE)

(DATE)

Board Composition Grid

This is just an example, it would need to be created with the needs of the Library.

2010/2011 Board Composition

	BOARD MEMBERS 2010-2011	TERM		GEN.	AGE				LOCALE					PROFESSIONAL FIELD														AREA OF EXPERTISE								
		START YEAR	TERM		FEMALE	MALE	21-35	36-50	51-65	OVER 65	GREATER WATERVILLE	BELGRADE, CHINA, SIDNEY, VASS.	FAIRFIELD / CLINTON	SKOWHEGAN / MADISON	PUTTSFIELD / PALMYRA	MANUFACTURING	FINANCE	LEGAL / LAW ENFORCEMENT	EDUCATION	MUNICIPAL / POLITICAL	CHURCHES / CLERGY	COMMERCE	SMALL BUSINESS	MEDICAL	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	INSURANCE / REAL ESTATE	PUBLIC SERVICE	PR/MKTG / COMMUNICATIONS	LABOR / UNION	SOCIAL SERVICES	PROGRAM / PLANNING	LEGAL	HUMAN RESOURCES	FUNDRAISING / DEVELOPMENT	FINANCIAL PLANNING MANAGEMENT	MANAGEMENT ADMIN
1	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
2	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
3	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
4	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
5	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
6	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
8	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
9	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
10	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
11	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
12	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
13	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
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17	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
18	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
19	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
20	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
22	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		
23	Barbara A. White	2010-2011																																		

Sample Corporator Job Description

MISSION: The Auburn Public Library offers community members of all ages services to satisfy popular interests, realize self-directed learning and academic goals, find information on a variety of topics, meet and interact with others, and evaluate information effectively.

CORPORATOR RESPONSIBILITIES/COMMITMENT FORM

Corporator's Name: _____

I understand my responsibilities as a corporator of the Auburn Public Library are to:

1. Make a personal contribution to the annual giving campaign (*there are no determined amounts as each person contributes according to their individual ability*)
2. Advocate on behalf of the Library either
 - a. when called upon by the Library (ie. to attend a city council meeting) or
 - b. voluntarily (ie. holding a house party to introduce Library leadership to my social circle or writing a letter to the editor)
3. Attend the annual meeting in September

AREAS OF INTEREST (please check areas of interest)

____ LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	____ STRATEGIC PLANNING
____ ATTENDING COUNCIL MEETING	____ ASSISTING WITH LIBRARY PROGRAMS
____ HOSTING A HOUSE PARTY	____ EVENT BASED FUNDRAISING (like book sales)
____ INDIVIDUAL/CORPORATE FUNDRAISING	____ SERVING ON THE BOARD

I accept the above commitment as an understanding of my role and responsibilities as a member of the Board of Directors.

(SIGNATURE)

(DATE)

Outline for a Board Member or Coporator House Party

Regular cocktail parties in other people's homes should be an important part of your calendar. This is a low-level, one-time way for people to take significant action on behalf of the Library. It's particularly good for board members to do these, as well as other influential people in your community.

Here's what such an event might look like:

6:00-6:30 pm People arrive, mingle, & nosh (maybe wine/beer and cheese & crackers or heavier hors d'oeuvres)

6:30 Welcome from host, share why the library is so important to them personally, introduce director or board chair

6:40 Director or board chair make a few comments or introduces video (if you have one)

6:50 Director or board chair follows up video with 3 specific gift amounts that make sense to your cause.

You might say something like: "As you can see, the Library is helping in so many ways. We're helping kids read, helping adults get jobs, and even helping the community attract new employers. We're far more than just books. But we need your help:

- \$10,000 will fund an endowment to pay for _____
- \$5000 would _____
- \$1000 will _____

OR

An alternative way could be to bill this as "no fundraising at the event." In that case, you'd leave them with some materials and let them know that the host or a member of the staff would be following up with them in the next week or so.

OR

A third way to do this is to not ask for money at all. Simply use these to introduce people to your cause. You might ask them to volunteer or become advocates and give them ways to do both.

7:00 Host wraps up, if not a solicitation event s/he can thank everyone for coming, and encourage them to take information as they leave "This is a great organization. Thank you all for coming. Director/board chair will be here to answer questions. Please help us finish up the food."

OR (better)

The host says, "We believe in this so much, we're giving \$x,xxx to do _____. We ask that each of you would consider doing that too."

OR

A plant in the crowd says, "I want to sponsor a day. I have my check book right here and will commit to doing that."

7:10 More mingling and chatter as folks ask questions and start leaving.

I wouldn't do a Q&A after the video unless you get a real sense that the group will give a lively discussion. The awkward pause of waiting for the first question is often a momentum killer at an event.

These could be used as purely informational sessions too. But I advise you do them as solicitation events.