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Report of Library Committee

Frazer Arnold

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REPORT OF LIBRARY COMMITTEE

THE following report of the Library Committee is also the report of a special committee composed of the District Judges and members of the Library Committee, appointed by the president of this association, to negotiate arrangements for donating our library to the City and County of Denver.

It is proposed to give this valuable asset to the city, without consideration other than the latter's agreement to make the District Judges its exclusive managers, and to agree to keep it up to date, for the use of the courts and lawyers.

As long ago as 1903, when Judge Dunklee was president of this association and Judge Starkweather was one of the members of the Library Committee, the justice and desirability of having the law library belong to and be maintained by the city was officially urged by this association.

Matters took a different course, however, and the present library has been built up, somewhat by the donation of books belonging to members, but mainly by an allotment of the funds of this association paid out of dues of the lawyers who have belonged. Up until four years ago, the lawyers carried the entire burden, unaided. Beginning in 1927 the city has paid, through the District Court, the sum of \$2,000 each year toward the maintenance and upbuilding of the library, which now consists of 7,544 volumes and is quite a good going concern, indispensable for the transaction of the business of the courts.

The annual sum of \$2,000 has not been enough, and the association has been paying out of its own funds approximately \$400.00 a year to supplement the city's contribution.

As regards the cash value of the library, it would no doubt be difficult for us to find a purchaser who is looking for such a library as a unit. To dispose of it piecemeal would be like junking an industrial plant, and would probably not net more than six or seven thousand dollars.

While very convenient for members of the Denver Bar, this library is indispensable for the Judges, and if it did not exist, or if this association did not see fit to donate the library or the use of it, it would be necessary for the city to create a new library, at a cost of about \$30,000.

Perhaps in strict logic, or if money were plentiful, we might be warranted in exacting a substantial price from the city for this transfer. But this association exists for purely public purposes; and, moreover, several thousand dollars of the city's money have already gone into law books to which we hold the title. Therefore it seems proper not to ask any cash consideration whatever.

However, there is no reason why the lawyers of Denver should be specially assessed any longer, and the present appears to be an opportune time for the city to take over its responsibility, when the courts are about to move into the new building, where an excellent room has been provided for the library.

From the point of view of the members of this association, nothing substantial will be lost, and much will apparently be gained. The condition of the proposed gift will be that the city shall maintain and keep the library up-to-date, and that it will be administered by the District Judges, who will employ the librarian and govern the library, the funds therefor coming from the city through the appropriation for the Second Judicial District; the policy of the library will undergo no perceptible change, except that it will be possible for the judges, without taxing the lawyers, to continue a reasonable and conservative expansion of the library in the way of additional textbooks.

It is desired at today's meeting to obtain a broad authorization from the membership for the Board of Trustees to carry out the arrangement indicated above; and to that end I offer the following resolution and move its adoption:

"BE IT RESOLVED that the governing body of this association, namely, its Board of Trustees, be and they are hereby authorized by the members of The Denver Bar Association to give, transfer and deliver unto the City and County of Denver, the books and documents constituting the law library now the property of this association, upon such particular terms and conditions as to the control and upkeep of such library as they may think proper."

Respectfully submitted,

FRAZER ARNOLD,
Chairman.

(The foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the association.)