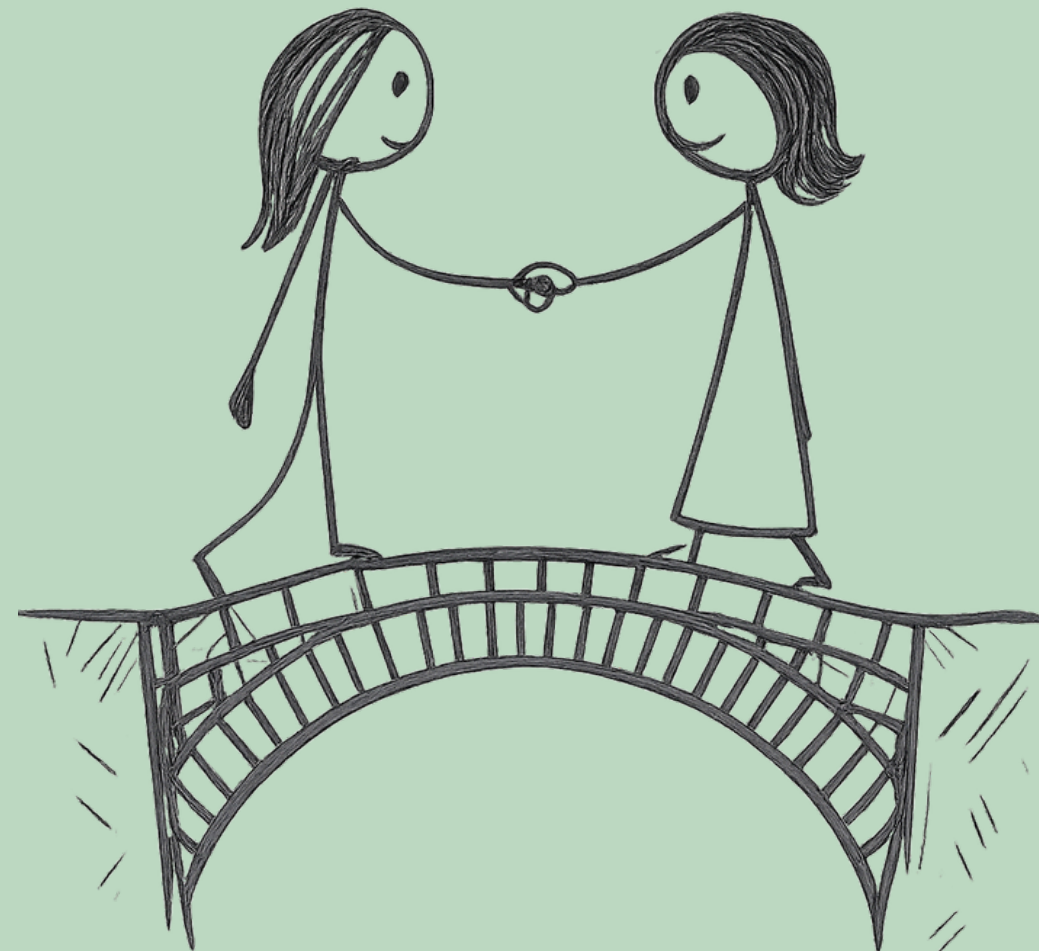


# Bridge Building When You're Not a Department

By: Michelle Adcock and Michaela Willbanks  
or if you're our County Mayor "those Michael ladies from the library"



# Rules and Expectations



- Be respectful of all participants and perspectives
- Engage collaboratively—listen, contribute, and build on ideas
- Maintain appropriate volume and tone for a professional setting
- Avoid dismissive language or behavior toward others' ideas or experiences
- Be open-minded and willing to consider different viewpoints
- Stay present and attentive (limit side conversations and distractions)
- Participate actively and thoughtfully in discussions and activities
- Ask questions constructively to deepen understanding
- Use inclusive and professional language at all times
- Support a positive learning environment for everyone



# About Michelle



- Roller derby mom
- Plant lover
- Occasionally makes her own clothes
- Has actual Roly-polys as pets (yes on purpose)
- Loves Jane Austen and Louise Penny
- Proud Western Kentucky and UT Graduate
- Once asked Cecilie if we could count chicks in our Circ Numbers (she said no and thought it was an April Fools' Joke... it wasn't)



**STOKES  
BROWN**  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

*Serving all of Robertson County*



# About Michaela



- Proud older sister, aunt and cousin
- Frequent movie goer
- Loves to travel
- Has a cardboard cutout of Harry Styles in her office (and yes she does dress him up for Halloween)
- Loves historical fiction, gothic horror, and nonfiction
- Proud UT Chattanooga graduate (BS in Poli Sci and MPA)
- Once asked Cecilie to bring her back a Norwegian boyfriend (she said she would... Michaela is still waiting)



**STOKES  
BROWN**  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

*Serving all of Robertson County*

# About Our Library.



- Located in Springfield but serving ALL of Robertson Co
- Level 5 Public Library
- In the Red River Region
- Joint venture, equally funded by the City of Springfield and Robertson County (NOT a department)



# Common Challenges

What are challenges that joint ventures often face that other libraries don't?



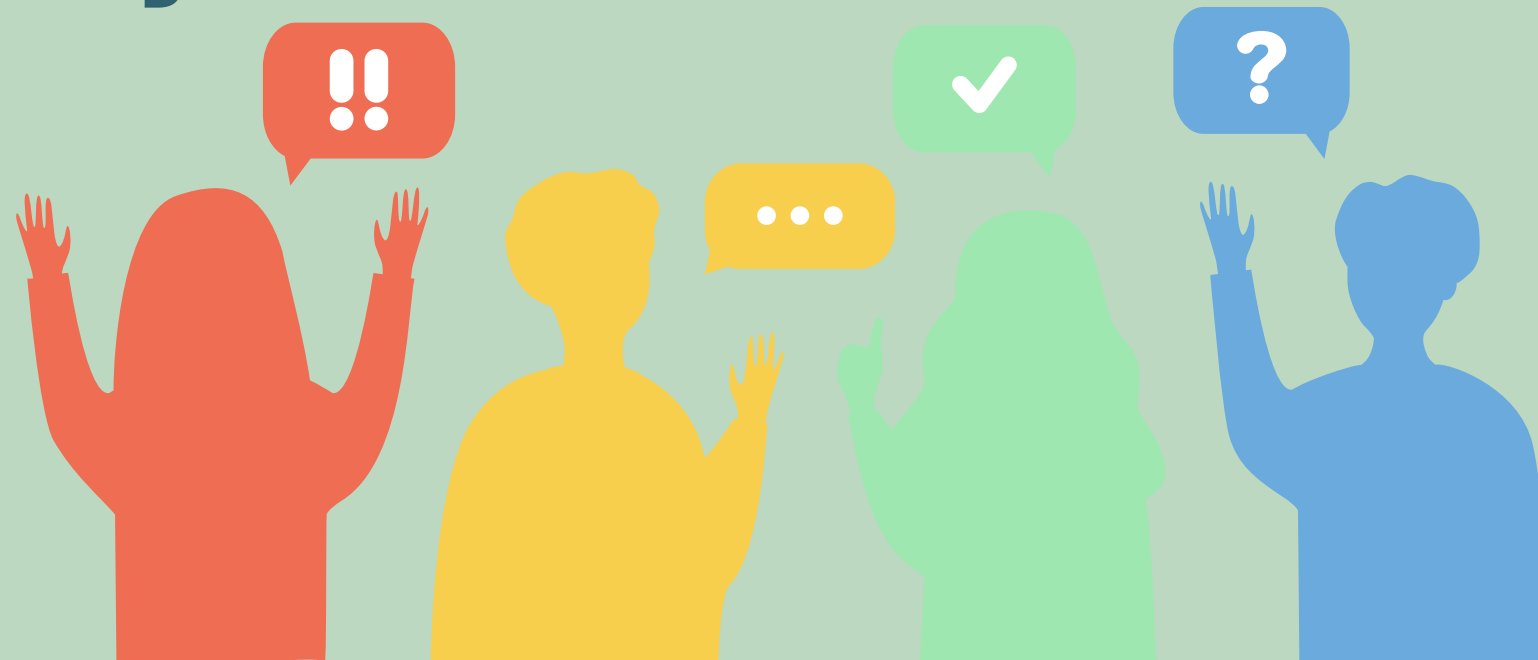
# Special Opportunities

How can we turn these challenges into opportunities that other libraries don't have?

**EMBRACE  
CHALLENGES!**

# Discussion

- How to provide stability with staff and budget?
- Isolation vs Independence?
- How do you build a network of people you can rely on?



# Our Tips

- **Get Involved! (Kiwanis, Rotary, Chamber, Health Council, Prevention Coalition, etc.)**
- **Ask MTAS and/or CTAS**
- **Have a CPA on retainer**
- **Free up time to make connections that make your job easier in the long run**
- **Director/Assistant Director duo with different skill sets**
- **Rigorous Hiring Process (ask the questions you actually want to know)**
- **Strong and collaborative strategic plan**
- **Build relationships with Police, Fire, Maintenance**
- **Even if you're an Eeyore, be a Tigger**

# More Tips

- Don't take local politics personally
- Don't be afraid to invite your funding bodies to your library (give them a tour, show them the budget line item by line item)
- Send them board packets even if they don't read them
- Don't be afraid to let them know that what you do as a director is not the standard
- You don't have to agree with someone in order to build a mutually beneficial partnership
- Be an open book (pun intended)
- Think about what you're doing to leave behind your legacy as a Librarian
- Building your network helps prevent burnout

# Contact Us



**Stokes Brown Public Library 405 White Street, Springfield,  
TN 37172**



**615-384-5123**



**Michelle Adcock: [director@stokesbrown.org](mailto:director@stokesbrown.org)  
Michaela Willbanks: [ad@stokesbrown.org](mailto:ad@stokesbrown.org)**