Minutes of the Ramsey County Library Board  
February 16, 2011  

LIBRARY BOARD PRESENT:  
Matthew Anderson, Beverly Aplikowski, Paula Mielke, David Norrgard, Roberta Weltzin, Lori-Anne Williams  

LIBRARY BOARD ABSENT:  
Janice Rapheal  

STAFF PRESENT:  
Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Sandy Walsh, Deputy Director; Lynn Wyman, Deputy Director; Meg Robertson, Arden Hills Library Manager; Julie Neville, Property Manager  

OTHERS PRESENT:  
Jan Parker, Ramsey County Commissioner  

CALL TO ORDER:  
Norrgard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Ramsey County Library in Mounds View, 2576 County Road 10.  

PUBLIC COMMENT:  
No public comment.  

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:  
Williams made a motion to approve the agenda for February 16, 2011, and the minutes of January 19, 2011, as presented. Mielke seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.  

GIFT ACCEPTANCE:  
The Friends of the Ramsey County Library worked with Tivoli Too, a 3-dimensional sculpting and design studio, to develop a concept for the fireplace walls in the children’s room at the library in Roseville. The walls will be painted, and the Scrabble wall tiles, magnetic wall and magnetic letters will be created and installed by Tivoli Too at a cost of $28,480. A copy of the design concept is attached for your information.  

The Friends also donated $7,300 for the purchase and installation of gallery rails for temporary art exhibits, and to fund artwork for the Children’s Study Room at Roseville.  

Besides the two donations from the Roseville Capital Campaign, a third donation from the Friends is the result of a grant received from the Active Living Ramsey Communities Coalition. The grant will fund $7,000 for the Active Minds/Active Lives Project. Of the funds, $5,000 will be used to purchase books and other library materials that encourage increased physical activities for children and adults. The remaining $2,000 will be used to purchase lendable bike locks for all seven library locations, to encourage customers to bike to the libraries.  

Williams made a motion to accept the Roseville Capital Campaign donations totaling $28,480 for the painting and 3-dimensional art concept for the fireplace walls in the Children’s Room created and installed by Tivoli Too; to accept the Roseville Capital Campaign donation totaling $7,300 for the purchase and installation of gallery rails and artwork for the Children’s Room; and to accept the Friends’ donation from the Active Living Ramsey County Coalition for the Active Minds/Active Lives Project totaling up to $7,000, which will be used to purchase books and other library materials and lendable bike locks for the seven Ramsey County Libraries. Mielke seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.
DISPOSITION OF SURPLUS MATERIALS:
With the closing of the Ramsey County Library in Arden Hills at the end of 2010, the Friends of the Library are planning to hold a surplus sale to dispose of furnishings, equipment, and weeded books that will not be utilized at the new facility in New Brighton. The surplus sale will be held March 24-27, 2011, in the Arden Hills facility located at 1941 West County Road E-2. If the building is sold or otherwise needs to be vacated, the sale will be moved to the Community Program Room at Roseville.

The sale will be run by the Friends, with assistance by Library staff. Ramsey County Property Management and the City/County Surplus Disposal Coordinator have approved this plan.

Williams made a motion to direct staff to dispose of all surplus property from the Ramsey County Library in Arden Hills in a fiscally prudent manner, and in accordance with Ramsey County guidelines. Mielke seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

FIBER OPTIC ACCESS AGREEMENTS:
Ramsey County Library has existing agreements with the City of North St. Paul to provide building connectivity over fiber optic cabling. This system is used to interconnect the libraries in Mounds View and White Bear Lake to the library network via an existing metro-optical Ethernet network. These agreements are up for renewal in June 2011.

The Library participates in the federal E-rate program, and is seeking to sign new agreements with the City of North St. Paul before early March, allowing the Library to meet current E-rate submission schedules. E-rate is a program available to schools and libraries to help fund telecommunication costs. As part of the E-rate process, the Library posted an online form to solicit vendors interested in providing this level of connectivity (an annual process for services related to E-rate). Not having received any responses that provide alternative connections at these two locations, the Library would like to pursue new contracts with the City of North St. Paul for continued use of the existing fiber which offers the best value for cost and service at these facilities.

The contracts will be based off the existing agreements, with updated term dates and monthly fees. Mounds View’s term will expire no later than October 2013 and White Bear Lake’s will expire no later than October 2014. Both dates are tied to local city franchise agreements that provide infrastructure for the metro-optical Ethernet network. The monthly rates for accessing this fiber will actually be reduced from current rates. At a minimum, Mounds View will go from $475 to $341 per month and White Bear Lake will go from $825 to $570 per month. E-rate further reduces this cost 40 to 50% (via reimbursements after payment of invoices). Bandwidth provided by these connections is 100Mbs bursting up to 1Gb, providing the high quality of service required to support VoIP, data, video, etc.

Williams made a motion to authorize staff to negotiate an agreement for fiber utilization with the City of North St. Paul for service at Mounds View Library, 2576 County Road 10, and White Bear Lake Library, 4698 Clark Avenue; and to authorize the Library Board Chair to sign the agreement; subject to the approval of the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office and the Library Administration. Mielke seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

YEAR END RESERVE LIST:
At the end of each budget year, all Ramsey County departments are required to submit a list of unpaid obligations and planned expenditures. Although both tax and library revenues were below projections, and State unallotment of Local Government Aid was a possibility, the Library proactively reduced spending in 2010. This foresight, coupled with no cuts to County Program Aid, enabled us to cover the loss in revenues and have a small amount left over for special projects in 2011.

Anderson questioned whether the Library’s Fund Balance can be appropriated by Ramsey County to offset shortfalls to general County revenues. Larson indicated that the Library’s Fund Balance cannot be appropriated by the County, and can only be used for Library purposes.

Williams made a motion to approve the 2010 and 2009 year-end encumbrances as proposed. Weltzin seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.
2012-2013 BUDGET TIMELINE:
The budget kickoff meeting was held earlier that day to share departmental levy targets, budget instructions, and expense guidelines. The County Manager is instructing departments to submit budgets with 6% levy reductions in 2012 and 2013. The County is facing a long term shift in strategies, focusing on outcomes, not current processes. The current situation (the “new normal”) is an opportunity to develop new revenue sources and partnerships.

The Library’s budget request will be due at the end of April, and our meeting with County Manager Julie Kleinschmidt and Lee Mehrkens, the Director of Budgeting & Accounting, will be held on May 4, 2011. Kleinschmidt’s preliminary proposed budget will be issued May 20, 2011. Department hearings with the County Board of Commissioners will take place in August and early September, and the maximum property tax levy will be certified on September 13, 2011.

Budget considerations will be on the agenda for the Library Board’s March meeting, and the levy target budget for 2012-2013 must be approved at the April meeting.

ARDEN HILLS/NEW BRIGHTON UPDATE:
The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners voted to approve the lease agreement with the City of New Brighton, the contract for Phase I services from Adolfson & Peterson and HGA, the budget, the financing plan, and the schedule. They also approved the request to forego a Project Labor Agreement for the New Brighton remodeling and expansion. It was agreed by all parties concerned that the project was too small to benefit from a PLA.

The first meeting of the Design Team was held February 4 at the New Brighton Family Service Center. The owner side of the core team includes Bruce Thompson from Property Management, Brad Martens from the City of New Brighton, and Meg Robertson and Sandy Walsh from the Library. The initial meeting was also attended by Susan Nemitz, Chuck Wettergren, and Jolly Mangine. The first part of the meeting focused on process, including schedule, communications, and budget.

The second part of the meeting was devoted to an analysis of the pre-design plan. The Library had asked HGA and A&P to price out the option of relocating the Family Service Center’s party rooms in order to achieve a rectangular space and better access to the community center for the library. That plan was discussed but rejected as being too costly. Other issues were discussed, including eliminating the exterior entrance, relocating the service desk, and the benefits of a small AMH.

The next meeting of the Design Team is scheduled for February 17.

The New Brighton City Council met February 8 and approved the lease agreement. Members of the Council expressed an interest in pursuing the relocation of the party rooms at City expense. That option is being priced by A&P and HGA.

A public meeting was held February 7 to obtain community input on the future design and services of the library in New Brighton. In addition to library and FSC staff, there were 15 people in attendance. Recurring themes were the desire for a warm, welcoming interior with plenty of wood and warm colors, the need for abundant natural light, and the importance of staff/patron interaction. A survey was posted on the Library website, allowing us to gather input from people who could not attend the community meeting.

The library in Arden Hills has been put up for sale. Offers are due February 16.

Preparations for the sale of the building are in progress. The collection is being evaluated, with some items being moved to other libraries, some packed for use in the new library, and others weeded and saved for the Friends. This process is scheduled to be complete by the end of the month. Select furniture and fixtures have been relocated to other branches. A portion of the current shelving will be re-used in the new library. The Friends are planning a large sale in the former library March 24-27.

MOUNDS VIEW MANAGER’S REPORT:
Carrie Watts, Library Manager, was absent due to illness. Her written report was submitted prior to the meeting.

From January 2010 to January 2011, overall circulation was up 8% and children’s circulation was up almost 17%. Library visits increased more than 11%, while computer usage was up 8% and wireless use increased almost 15%.
Mounds View hosted a variety of programs over the fall and winter:

- Laurie Hertzl, Star Tribune books editor and author of the memoir, *News to Me: Adventures of an Accidental Journalist* spoke to a full room of Mounds View patrons about her book and about the process of non-fiction/memoir writing.

- The Okee Dokee Brothers packed children and adults in to a Wednesday morning storytime for traditional bluegrass and folk music.

- On December 31st, Abrakadoodle, a local arts group, led school-age children in making and decorating ceramic masks.

- McPhail Center hosted an interactive musical storytime.

- On a snowy Monday afternoon, local pianist Randy Wall brought his traveling keyboard to the library and entertained everyone with music and cheer.

Security gates were installed and activated, allowing Mounds View to interfile DVD requests with book requests and put the Rental DVDs out for the public. They are now in the process of weeding and shifting to make room for the DVD circulating collection, which should help relieve a lot of the pressure at the Circulation Desk.

There’s been a noticeable influx of Arden Hills’ patrons since January 1st. The request pull lists have been longer and the holds shelf is filled to the max.

They are very happy to welcome Monica Keyport, a Library Page from Arden Hills, to her temporary home at Mounds View for 40 hours per pay period. This ‘extra’ person has helped with the increase in business since Arden Hills closed.

Automation Services installed a second self-check out this past week and it’s already receiving ample use.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**

Nemitz’s February 2011 report to the Library Board was mailed prior to the meeting. (Available upon request.)

Wyman noted that the Ramsey County Library in Roseville was awarded Best Project in Government 2010 by the Midwest Region of the Design/Build Association.

The Library Board discussed the new severe weather procedures developed by staff, recent vandalism at the library in North St. Paul, and the MELSA strategic planning focus groups.

**MELSA REPORT:**

Norrgard indicated that MELSA is seeking a better way to evaluate programs it offers, particularly those funded with Legacy dollars. More than 79,000 individuals have attended Legacy programs, funded by MELSA’s $2.5 million portion of the Arts & Cultural Heritage funds approved by Minnesota voters. MELSA set a maximum fee of $15,000 per program. Programs exceeding this cap must have Governing Board approval.

**FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT:**

In 2010, the Friends’ revenues, excluding the Roseville Capital Campaign, were $135,530, of which $57,466 came from the sale of donated or weeded books, materials and library furnishings. The Friends provided $76,017 for RCL programs and services plus $154,603 for the purchase of equipment, furnishings, books, art, and other materials for the Roseville Library.

On January 12, the Friends received an unrestricted grant of $30,000 from the RAFT Foundation. One of the major goals for 2011 is to diversify revenue sources to enable the Friends to provide more assistance to the libraries.

To date the Friends have raised $459,194 in the Roseville Capital Campaign, of which $221,233 is cash or pledges and the remainder is from grants and in-kind donations. They have released $29,480 to RCL for the fireplace reading nook enhancement. Once the Library Board accepts this gift, the project can be built and installed within two months.
Additional interactive equipment purchased with funds donated by the Roseville Rotary has arrived and will be installed in the preschool children’s area this month.

The middle three panels on the Major Donor Plaque are now filled and will be covered with clear panels to protect the vinyl lettering. Names are now being added to the 4th panel. Tax deductible donations of $500 from families and $1,000 from businesses or organizations qualify for recognition on that plaque.

The Friends need volunteers for several programs and/or upcoming events: the Reading Friends Literacy Program in New Brighton; the used book and furnishings sale at the Arden Hills Library from March 24-27; and the 5K Walk/Run on May 21st. For more information, contact Sue Gehrz at 651.486.2213.

NEXT MEETING: March 16, 2011, RCL – Roseville, 2180 Hamline Ave. N., 6:30 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson,
Library Board Coordinator