Minutes of the Ramsey County Library Board
March 16, 2011

LIBRARY BOARD PRESENT:
Beverly Aplikowski, David Norrgard, Janice Rapheal, Roberta Weltzin, Lori-Anne Williams

LIBRARY BOARD ABSENT:
Matthew Anderson, Paula Mielke

STAFF PRESENT:
Susan Nemitz, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Sandy Walsh, Deputy Director; Lynn Wyman, Deputy Director; Meg Robertson, Arden Hills Library Manager; Julie Neville, Building Services Manager; Chuck Wettergren, Automation Manager; Kristi Saksvig, Communications Manager; Griffin Hughes, Library staff

OTHERS PRESENT:
Jan Parker, Ramsey County Commissioner; Crystal Hedman, Fredrick Hoehn, UW Students

CALL TO ORDER:
Norrgard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Ramsey County Library in Roseville, 2180 Hamline Avenue North.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
No public comment.

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

ANNUAL REPORT TO STATE:
Each year, the Minnesota Department of Education, Office of State Library Services and School Technology, coordinates a statistical survey on library usage, collection size, staffing distribution, et cetera, for every library in Minnesota during the previous year. They publish the information, which public libraries are required by law to submit, in a report entitled “Minnesota Public Library Statistics and Directory.”

Rapheal made a motion to authorize the Library Board Chair and Library Director to sign and submit the 2010 Annual Minnesota Public Library Statistical Report to the Office of State Library Services and School Technology as mandated. Williams seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

LIBRARY GOLD CARDS:
Rapheal made a motion to award Library Gold Cards to Assistant County Attorney Gary Davis, Friends’ members Anne Haase and Sue Thibedeau, and Library volunteers Liz Holst, Wayne Oltman, Eleanore Troxel and Peter White as a symbol of appreciation for their contributions to the Ramsey County Libraries, and to authorize the Library Board Chair to sign the Certificates of Appreciation. Williams seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

ARDEN HILLS/NEW BRIGHTON UPDATE:
The Design Team met February 17 and March 3. On February 22, the New Brighton City Council expressed interest in funding the cost of re-aligning the party rooms to create a square footprint and a better entrance for the library. The City hired HGA to estimate the cost of the renovations. Estimates came in at about $350,000. The City Council authorized spending up to $250,000 on the project. Representatives from the City, the Library, County Property Management, and HGA consulted on a conference call. It was decided that reducing the party room budget to under the $250,000 cap would eliminate the features the City was most interested in adding. All parties agreed to abandon the party room renovation and return to the L-shaped library footprint.
The team has been working on refining that design to allow accurate pricing. The most recent renderings of elevations, floor plans, and site plans were shared with the Board members. The next meeting of the Design Team is March 17.

The Arden Hills library collection has been weeded to reflect the new gateway model of high-demand, popular non-requestable items, resulting in a collection of approximately 25,000 retained items which are boxed and currently being stored at the Arden Hills branch. A few items of furniture, equipment and supplies that will be used in the new location are stored there as well. With the help of volunteers, weeded items were processed and prepared for the Friends sale.

All computer equipment has been removed by the automation services department and will be used at other library branches as needed. Data and phone service have been discontinued to the building. Shelving not being used for the Friends sale has been dismantled and will be inventoried and reused as needed. Selected furniture and equipment items have been delivered to other branches for re-use. The Arden Hills staff has been assigned to other locations. The building is unoccupied, requiring minimal heating and no plowing.

The Friends are preparing for their large spring book and furnishings sale at the Arden Hills building. Excess furniture and weeded and donated books from other branches have been brought to the branch and organized for sale.

Robertson is leading the team that is selecting an opening day collection. Items being purchased for the New Brighton collection are being stored in the technical services department.

Ramsey County Property Management is in negotiations with Bethel University on the sale of the Arden Hills property. Bethel is having an independent appraisal done. The sale is contingent on the City of Arden Hills changing the zoning of the property. The terms of the purchase agreement are being developed.

Walsh reported that the plans for the library in the New Brighton Community Center have been submitted to the Rice Creek Watershed District for approval. She attended the New Brighton Planning Commission meeting, where they approved the special use permit with 12 contingencies, to be carried out by the Library and the City.

The Library Board discussed the Planning Commission contingency that called for the auxiliary parking lot to be constructed immediately, rather than a year later following a parking study as approved in the lease terms between New Brighton and the Ramsey County Board. Nemitz noted that additional spots are needed at the Community Center.

Aplikowski recommended that the Library follow the terms of the lease, and wait until the year has elapsed before funding the auxiliary parking. The amount of the additional parking is $160,000, and the funding is included in the project budget. Commissioner Parker indicated that adding the auxiliary parking is inevitable, and the Library should request the release of funds immediately. Nemitz suggested that the Library Board meet April 6 to discuss the issue, if the contingencies are required by the New Brighton City Council. Williams made a motion to table the discussion to April 6 if needed. Rapheal seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

The Library Board and Commissioner Parker discussed the signage plan for the new library, both on the exterior monument sign and in the interior of the Community Center. The list of add alternates and fundraising opportunities for the facility are being developed.

Aplikowski made a motion to recommend approval to the County Board of the Phase II agreement with Adolfson & Peterson Construction. Williams seconded the motion, and offered an amendment, making the approval contingent upon the provision of appropriate operating funds. Aplikowski declined the amendment. The motion was approved by majority vote, with Williams and Rapheal opposed.

**2012-2013 BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS:**

The Ramsey County Budget and Accounting Department issued its 2012-2013 Budget Instructions on February 16, 2011. The County’s instructions ask the Library to take a six percent reduction in County Revenue (made up of property tax revenue and State funding) in both 2012 and 2013 and to absorb any other expected cost increases or revenue losses.
Ramsey County Library's 2011 County revenue of $8,794,597 includes County Program Aid of $522,352. A portion of the
2011 budget may be reduced if the December County Program Aid payment is reduced by the legislature. The
Library's fund balance could absorb this loss.

Ramsey County Library will meet with the County Manager and Budget and Accounting on May 4, 2011, to discuss the
consequences of the budget target. The Library Board’s budget strategy needs to be set at the April meeting. The
County Manager’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.

The State Legislature will not complete its work before the Library’s meeting with the County Manager. Because actual
revenues are unknown, the levy target budget submitted by departments will be a worst-case scenario budget exercise.
Nemitz noted that the Library currently has credibility with County officials for its fact-based budgeting, and she would
like to keep that respect.

The Library Board discussed several aspects of the Library’s operating budget and revenue sources. Nemitz asked the
Board members to state which budget reductions they personally oppose. Aplikowski mentioned reduced hours, noting
they are a hardship for families. Norrgard noted that the book budget cannot bear further reductions, and suggested
that the library in Shoreview be considered for closing. It was intended as the third regional library in the system, but
the additional hours and resources need to meet this target have not been attained. Williams opposed further cuts to
staffing levels. Weltzin opposed reductions to staffing or hours of service.

Nemitz reminded the Library Board that this is only an exercise at this point, and that Ramsey County Library has no
libraries that are failing. Commissioner Parker noted that operational cost savings will be realized with the opening of
the new library in the New Brighton Community Center.

WEB-BASED SERVICES DEMONSTRATION:
The Library has been working on several fronts to update its Web presence in order to enhance the user experience
with library services through the Internet. Automation Manager Chuck Wettergren demonstrated three projects:

✓ Events by Evanced allows the Library to advertise events through the Web, and allow online registration for
classes. (MELSA sponsored)
✓ Boopsie provides a mobile application to search the Library's collections and services. (MELSA sponsored)
✓ Website redesign (a collaborative project between Ramsey County Public Library and St. Paul Public Library) will
create a shared content management system design to help distribute Web updates and allow sharing between
the systems.

DISTRIBUTION OF LIBRARY BOARD DOCUMENTS:
As the world increasingly moves toward electronic document delivery and web-based information services, the Library
is considering new ways to make documents prepared for Library Board members available to the Trustees and the
general public.

Currently, Library staff creates and assembles thirty paper document packets which are mailed five days prior to the
meetings. In order to meet US Post Office deadlines, the packets must be delivered to the local post office no later than
5 p.m. the Friday prior to each meeting.

With increasing interest in receiving these documents electronically from both the Library Board and members of the
public, Library staff could convert these documents to electronic/pdf format and e-mail them or make them available on
the Library’s website. If the Library Board requests that the packets be offered electronically, an online folder would be
created on the Library’s website, and documents for each meeting would be filed together. The information would be
available immediately for any interested member of the public, not just those who request them via Administration. The
Library could potentially provide laptop or tablet computers at each meeting for Board members to view the materials.

Continuing to prepare paper documents while adding the electronic option would meet the widest variety of
preferences, but raises several concerns.
Because of the time delay, preparing paper documents for US Post Office delivery would be the first priority. Converting the documents to pdf format and posting them on the website would likely not take place until the following Monday, two days before the Library Board meeting.

Documents sent to the Library Board come from a variety of sources, not all of them electronic. To convert all the documents to pdf format and organize in a coherent manner would require an additional investment of staff time.

The Library Board decided to table this discussion to a future meeting.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**

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

**MELSA REPORT:**

Rapheal and Mielke attended a focus group meeting for the purpose of helping develop MELSA’s new strategic plan. Many of those individuals present were unaware of the scope of MELSA’s support for library services in the Twin Cities area. The Strategic Plan must be completed by June 30.

**FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT:**

The Friends are working hard preparing for the sale of 25,000 used books and library furnishings to be held at the Arden Hills Library from 6:30 - 8:30 PM on March 24, 10 - 4 on March 25 and 26, and noon to 4 on March 27. A Friends Members Only Presale is scheduled for 3 - 6 on March 24. People can join the Friends during that time with a $20 tax deductible donation. New members will receive 5 free books of their choice.

The Friends’ Annual Meeting is scheduled from 6:30 to 8:30 on Monday, April 11, in the Community Room at the Roseville Library. Jason Lyons will present information about the exciting new technology education programs being made available with the support of the Friends. The public is welcome.

Registrations are now being taken on-line and via mail for the April 30th Annual Luncheon at the North Oaks Golf Club featuring P. J. Tracy. Members of the Development Committee are seeking event sponsors.

Registrations are starting to come in for the May 21st 5K Walk/Run. The Friends are very pleased to announce that Rosedale Center has come on board as an event sponsor and will help promote the event through signage, e-mail, gift and discount cards, and communication with potential retail sponsors. Members of the Development Committee are working hard to find additional event sponsors. Proceeds will be used to support the Summer Reading Program at all RCL libraries. Many volunteers are needed so please help spread the word.

The installation of additional literacy building equipment on the wall in the preschool area has been delayed until all the pieces arrive.

**NEXT MEETING:** April 20, 2011, RCL – North St. Paul, 2290 North 1st Street, 6:30 p.m.

**MEETING ADJOURNED:** 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson,
Library Board Coordinator