Minutes of the Ramsey County Library Board
October 15, 2008

LIBRARY BOARD PRESENT:
Matthew Anderson, Beverly Aplikowski, Robert Lamb, David Norrgard, Burton Nygren, Roberta Weltzin, Lori-Anne Williams

LIBRARY BOARD ABSENT:
None

STAFF PRESENT:
Susan Nemitz, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Lynn Wyman, Assistant Director; Sandy Walsh, Assistant Director; Bill Michel, Roseville Library Manager; Julie Neville, Library Facilities Manager; Kristi Saksvig, Communications Manager; Jeff Eide, Maplewood Library Manager

OTHERS PRESENT:
Mary Anne Lindberg, Arnold Lindberg, Friends of the Suburban Ramsey County Libraries; Jan Parker, Ramsey County Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER:
Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Ramsey County Library in White Bear Lake, 4698 Clark Avenue.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
No public comment.

WHITE BEAR LAKE LIBRARY REPORT:
Nemitz noted that a written report of activities at the Ramsey County Library in White Bear Lake was prepared by Therese Sonnek, Library Manager.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:
Norrgard made a motion to approve the agenda for October 15, 2008, and the minutes of September 17, 2008, as presented. Williams seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

2009 HOLIDAY CALENDAR:
Each year, the Library staff prepares a holiday calendar for the upcoming year for Library Board approval. The calendar includes all the dates designated as paid holidays by Ramsey County, as well as other dates when the Libraries are traditionally closed. The proposed 2009 calendar was developed with the basic objective of providing public service hours at times when the public might reasonably be expected to use the libraries, while observing the holidays as set forth by Ramsey County.

Norrgard made a motion to approve the 2009 Holiday Calendar as proposed. Williams seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

SECURITY CAMERA POLICY:
The Library Board discussed the proposed security camera policy at its September meeting. Following the meeting, the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office reviewed the policy, in particular whether stored security video is public or private data. According to Minnesota Statute Section 13.37, archived video from security cameras is identified as security data. It is not considered public information. Other changes suggested by the Library Board were also incorporated into the revised draft policy.
The Library Board members discussed the suggestion to require a search warrant or subpoena in order to release stored security footage to law enforcement officials. Norrgard supported the requirement, while Aplikowski was comfortable with delegating this responsibility to the Library Director.

Nemitz noted that a search warrant or subpoena is not a legal requirement for security footage, and gave examples of scenarios when the Library might seek assistance from law enforcement agencies. In these cases, law enforcement agencies may be less likely to follow through if dollar losses are low, and a warrant or subpoena is demanded by the Library.

Anderson spoke in favor of the policy as presented, stating that there may be situations where the public interest is best served by releasing security footage at the Library’s discretion. As a compromise, Lamb suggested that the policy require a subpoena or Library Board approval to release footage. He cited examples of private security footage being used by employees without authorization for illegal activities. Nemitz noted that the policy strictly prohibits such usage, and employees, including the library director, could face disciplinary proceedings up to and including termination for violating the policy.

Nygren made a motion to approve the security camera policy as amended to include release of security footage because of a report of illegal activity “or the compromise of the protection and safety of patrons, employees and property.” Aplikowski seconded the motion. Norrgard offered a friendly amendment, removing the phrase “When applicable” under Signage. Nemitz suggested changing the sentence to read “Signs will be posted at the library entrances where security cameras are in use.” Norrgard and Aplikowski agreed to the friendly amendment. The amended motion was approved by majority vote, with Lamb and Norrgard dissenting.

NAMING RIGHTS POLICY:
Nemitz noted that the proposed naming rights policy was amended following the Library Board’s discussion in September. The Board offered further suggestions, including the addition of a paragraph clearly stating that the Library Board will approve any and all naming proposals.

Nygren made a motion to approve the naming rights policy as amended. Aplikowski seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

STRATEGIC PLAN:
The Library Board discussed the amended version of the Strategic Plan, which incorporated comments from the September meeting, as well as suggestions from the Library’s Management Team. The Board members recommended a few additional revisions to the document.

Norrgard made a motion to approve the Ramsey County Library Mission, Vision, Guiding Principles, and 2009-2011 Strategic Plan as amended. Lamb seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

BENCHMARKING RCL TO OTHER COMPARABLE LIBRARIES:
Jeff Eide, Library Manager at the Ramsey County Library in Maplewood, compiled a statistical report showing comparisons between RCL and other library systems of similar populations served and total income. The information for this year’s report is gathered from the Public Library Data Service Report for 2007.

Continuing a trend from the past several years, RCL far exceeds other library systems in the U.S. and the other MELSA libraries in measures involving circulation and visits to the library.

The Library Board discussed the favorable comparisons, and the factors leading to the high numbers for RCL. Nemitz noted that circulation statistics do not currently include electronic usage, such as database searching and downloadable books. Standards for counting these measures have not been developed by libraries.

The HAPLR library study was also discussed. Ramsey County Library did not score in the top 10 again, due primarily to declining revenues. Eide noted that another ranking system is being developed which uses only output factors.
ROSEVILLE DESIGN PROCESS UPDATE:
In September, the Library working with Meyer, Scherer & Rockcastle, completed design development including the structural, mechanical and electrical/data design in detail. Upon completion of this activity, McGough Construction has been developing the Gross Maximum Price (GMP) for the project.

This week, the Library was informed that the project is $2.2 million over budget. Construction costs for building materials have increased by 11% in the first six months of 2008, and design changes have resulted in cost increases. Property Management and Library staff have begun another value engineering process.

Nemitz noted that the value engineering must be completed within two weeks, or the project may be at risk. The project and Phase II contract was scheduled to be approved by the Library Board in October and by the County Board on November 4, 2008. She indicated that the design team is going back to the original building program, to determine where reductions can be made and still meet the core needs identified in the building program.

Nemitz proposed that the Library Board schedule a meeting for November 5, 2008, to approve the design development and gross maximum price for the Roseville project. After the Library Board approves the project, it would go the County Board for approval on November 18.

THIRD QUARTER REPORTS:
Nemitz reported that revenues from overdue fees and interest income are down slightly from budgeted projections. However, additional income from the coffee shop lease at Roseville will be realized due to the timing of the expansion and remodeling project. Other additional revenues, including property tax receipts, will help offset these shortfalls. Property taxes are generally not affected by the mortgage crisis, because taxes on foreclosed properties are paid by the banks that own them.

Nemitz also noted that staff vacancies have been minimal during the year. Since Ramsey County requires departments to budget for a pre-determined vacancy factor, the salary budget will be tight for the year, with no year end surplus for special projects in 2009. Nemitz is working with Library staff and Ramsey County Budget and Accounting to monitor revenues and expenses through the end of the year.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:
Nemitz’s October report to the Library Board was mailed prior to the meeting. She noted that the pilot project to provide public computing in the North St. Paul Community Center has been very successful. Usage of the computers in the Community Center exceeds that in the library, due to the extended hours of availability.

FRIENDS OF THE SUBURBAN RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARIES:
The Friends membership has doubled since Sue Gehrz was hired as the Executive Director in 2008. The Book-A-Palooza sale held September 26-28 was very successful, with over $5,000 in sales, and only a few books remaining when the sale ended.

MELSA REPORT:
No progress has been achieved in signing a contract with the vendor selected for online tutoring. The losing bidder is still considering an appeal over the selection process.

The finance committee will meet on November 6 to discuss the distribution formula.

NEXT MEETING: November 5, 2008, Administrative Offices, 4570 North Victoria Street, 7 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson
Library Board Coordinator