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

STAFF PRESENT:
Susan Nemitz, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Sandy Walsh, Assistant Director; Lynn Wyman, Assistant Director; Chuck Wettergren, Automation Services Manager; Julie Neville, Building Services Manager; Heidi Holland, Volunteer Coordinator

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

CALL TO ORDER:
Weltzin called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Library Administrative Offices, 4570 North Victoria Street in Shoreview.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
No public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:
Williams asked that recognition for Cox’s last meeting as a Library Board Trustee be added to the agenda, and Nemitz requested that selection of a Library Board representative for the Roseville project also be added. Nygren made a motion to approve the agenda for December 12, 2007, as amended and the minutes of November 28, 2007, as presented. Williams seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

FRIENDS’ GRANT APPLICATIONS:
The Friends of the Suburban Ramsey County Libraries have been applying for local grants to assist the Library in achieving its “green” goals on the Roseville site, since approved County funding does not include the requested financing for LEED Certification. The Friends grant proposal submitted in September to the Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) was not funded, but will be resubmitted in 2008. A Clean Water Legacy grant proposal submitted by the Friends through the City of Roseville to the Board of Soil and Water Resources is still pending.

Jan Wolff, a Friends member and employee of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, worked with Joe Skelly, Friends’ Executive Director, on the grant applications. Wolff is hoping to use Roseville as a demonstration site for “green” public buildings, incorporating natural flora and fauna, and “green” water management features including permeable parking lots, rain gardens, and water sculpture.

Wolff and Skelly discussed timing issues with the Library Board. Nemitz noted that landscaping plans have yet to be finalized, but will be firmed up by April 2008. Some features could also be added at a later date if grant funding became available.

Williams made a motion to endorse the Friends of the Suburban Ramsey County Libraries grant applications to assist the Library in achieving its “green” goals. Lamb seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.
BACKGROUND CHECKS ON VOLUNTEERS:
Ramsey County Human Resources began conducting background checks as part of the hiring process for new staff in October 2007, and asked departments to look at their volunteer programs and policies to determine if background checks for volunteers would be appropriate.

Library staff considered the issue carefully, and recommended to the Library Board that background checks be implemented for new Library volunteers who will be working directly with children or vulnerable adults. The Human Resources Department would be utilized to conduct and evaluate the checks using the same process and criteria used for staff. Applicants would be asked to complete a screening form, and sign a legal release form authorizing the background check.

Lamb voiced his opposition to the policy, stating that the guidelines for passing or failing the background checks needs to be clearly defined, with specific offenses flagged, and firm policies in place outlining which County staff have access to the data, and procedures for safeguarding the data. Williams concurred, asking that the County’s policy be further developed before being considered by the Library Board.

Cox was concerned about the screening form completed by the applicant. She noted that the school districts use fingerprints to complete their background checks, in addition to information voluntarily submitted by those under consideration.

Nemitz stated that she and Wyman had conflicted feelings on the proposal to conduct background checks on volunteers. Lack of fully developed procedures and criteria were troubling, but they also had concerns over not having any policy in place. Nemitz asked Ramsey County Human Resources to handle all background checks on staff and volunteers, with no access to the information by Library staff. Wyman noted that criminal convictions do not restrict hiring.

Anderson stated that consistent criteria are needed for both staff and volunteers. Nygren spoke in favor of conducting the background checks, and evaluating each case separately.

Lamb made a motion to table the issue until criteria are defined and procedures articulated by the County. Norrgard seconded the motion to table. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. Nemitz will report back to the Library Board on this issue in January.

INTEGRATED LIBRARY SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS:
In March 2007, Ramsey County Library’s automation vendor, SirsiDynix, announced that it would no longer pursue development of the Horizon Integrated Library System (ILS). This meant that the planned release of Horizon 8.0 scheduled for the summer of 2007 would not happen, and the support for the Library’s existing version of Horizon will eventually go away. In lieu of an upgrade to Horizon 8.0, SirsiDynix made the decision to merge the development of their two flagship ILS systems (Horizon and Unicorn) into one effort called Symphony that was based on the Unicorn platform.

Because this change affected several planned and funded 2007 initiatives surrounding the Library’s ILS, it triggered an investigation into the current viability of Symphony. An ILS Review Team was formed in July 2007 that focused on reviewing Symphony and clarifying options offered to customers by SirsiDynix.

Demonstrations and site visits to existing Unicorn customers revealed not only many positive elements of the Symphony/Unicorn ILS, but also several shortcomings when compared to Horizon. These shortcomings included; ineffective search strategies, more complex data entry, less intuitive navigation, and a reduction in staff efficiencies in technical services. SirsiDynix has stated that many of these issues could be addressed in future releases of Symphony, and the company is starting to poll existing Horizon customers on what features they would like to see incorporated into a future release of Symphony.
The ILS Review Team also took into consideration the amount of change SirsiDynix has been enduring, and delays in getting information about product direction. There are reasonable concerns whether SirsiDynix is providing a clear and stable vision for Symphony at this point in time.

The ILS Review Team recommends delaying a Symphony upgrade until a more mature version is developed. This does not mean the Library does not move forward. This decision would still allow the existing Horizon server to be replaced, providing immediate benefits in speed and reliability. This same server would be capable of supporting a future version of Symphony. Also, SirsiDynix has announced it will release a limited upgrade to existing Horizon users that will provide some functionality slated for Horizon 8.0. Enhancements include email alerts for items coming due, improvements in tracking material flowing between buildings, and support for integrating the SirsiDynix Enterprise Portal Solution used to bring together resources from the catalog, databases, and our web site.

The review team also recommended that the Library:

- Monitor Symphony development and actively participate in its development.
- Investigate the option of SirsiDynix Enterprise Portal Solution for the existing Horizon system, as well as third party search overlays that could create greater independence from ILS vendors.
- Pursue ecommerce by integrating third party credit card solutions
- Investigate what other ILS vendors are offering.
- Keep an open dialog with other MELSA/Horizon libraries as to the plans they are making for maintaining ILS systems over the next several years.

Nemitz noted that she is disappointed at the delay, since there was a small window of opportunity to upgrade the ILS prior to the groundbreaking on the Roseville project. However, with the recommendation to wait, an upgrade will not be possible until the Roseville project is complete due to limited staff resources.

Williams made a motion to approve staff recommendations regarding the integrated library system. Cox seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

LIBRARY BOARD REPRESENTATIVE FOR ROSEVILLE PROJECT:
Nemitz indicated that the County is hoping to issue the RFP for the Roseville project in January, with the design team to begin meeting in February. She is seeking a representative from the Library Board to serve on the design team. Williams and Norrgard both volunteered to be the representative.

Lamb nominated Williams to serve as the Library Board’s representative on the Roseville design team. Cox seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

FACILITIES MASTER PLANNING:
Weltzin reported that the community input meetings for the master plan were well attended despite the snow. About 25-30 citizens attended each meeting, which featured good discussion and engaged citizens. Notes from the community meetings were mailed to the Board members prior to the Library Board meeting.

Nemitz shared demographic charts showing the location of patron homes versus their main library, as reported in the Library’s patron database.

Walsh posed several theoretical questions to the Library Board to assist the facilities planning consultants in their data gathering. The questions included:

- Is closing a library worth the political ill will that will ensue?
- Can enough be gained by merging libraries to offset the unhappiness of small library proponents?
- Is there a value in small libraries?
What core services have to be at every branch?
What makes a library a “central library?” Do we have one? Do we want to have one?
Is there a size at which a library should not stand alone? How do you determine that size?
What does our current delegation of space within our branch say about what we value?

2008 WORKPLAN:
Nemitz’s 2008 Workplan was mailed to the Library Board prior to the meeting. Quarterly goals for 2008 will be identified with the first quarter reports.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:
Nemitz’s December report to the Library Board was mailed prior to the meeting.

MELSA REPORT:
The Advisory Board will hold a retreat on December 13 to discuss the allocation of additional state funds.

FRIENDS OF THE SUBURBAN RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARIES REPORT:
The Friends thanked Nemitz for her support during 2007.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR’S PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND SALARY REVIEW:
Weltzin reported that this discussion would be postponed until January, as the appraisal documents have not been received yet from Ramsey County Human Resources.

NEXT MEETING: January 16, 2008, Administrative Offices, 4570 North Victoria Street, 7:00 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson
Library Board Coordinator