Minutes of the Ramsey County Library Board
December 8, 2004

LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:
Matthew Anderson, Victoria Cox, Bruce Kessel, David Norrgard, Roberta Weltzin

LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:
Susan Wolsfeld

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:
Alice-Jo Carlson, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator

OTHERS PRESENT:
Roseanne Byrne, Susan Nemitz, Joyce Schneider, Library Director Candidates; Jan Parker Wiessner, Ramsey County Commissioner; Mary Anne and Arnold Lindberg, Joan Bartell, Friends of the Suburban Ramsey County Libraries; Gail Blackstone, Ramsey County Human Resources

CALL TO ORDER:
Cox called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Library’s Administrative Offices, 4570 North Victoria Street in Shoreview.

CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS:
The Library Board interviewed three finalists for the position of Ramsey County Library Director. The candidates interviewed were: Roseanne Byrne, Deputy Director of the Dakota County Library; Susan Nemitz, Associate Dean of the Minneapolis Technical College; and Joyce Schneider, Administrative Group Manager of the Washington County Library.

BUSINESS MEETING:
Following a break for dinner, the Library Board reconvened at 7:05 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Library Administrative Offices.

PUBLIC COMMENT/INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS:
None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:
Anderson made a motion to approve the Library Board Agenda for December 8, 2004. Norrgard seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously by the Library Board.

APPROVAL OF LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES:
Anderson made a motion, which was seconded by Norrgard, to approve the Library Board meeting minutes of November 17, 2004 as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

FACILITIES PLANNING PROCESS:
North St. Paul: Carlson reported that the new library in the North St. Paul Community Center is currently scheduled to open on Saturday, February 5, 2005. Furniture and equipment have been ordered, including the fireplace, which is being donated by Kraus Anderson, the general contractor.

Maplewood: The design team continues to meet to finalize the space needs for the remodeled and expanded library in Maplewood, including the tenants on the lower level. Schematics will come to the Library Board in February for approval.
Roseville: The land acquisition process continues, with Carlson to be deposed in January. The date the land will become Ramsey County property via the quick take process has been postponed to February.

STRATEGIC PLAN ACTIVITIES:
The Library Board approved the Library’s 2005-2007 Strategic Plan on June 16, 2004. Since that time, library managers have gathered input from staff and developed planning and implementation activities for each goal.

The Library Board members reviewed the planning and implementation activities developed by staff, and asked Carlson to forward their thanks to staff for the hard work and contributions of all staff who participated in the process.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR SEARCH PROCESS:
Cox indicated that the three finalists for the position were interviewed earlier that day. Discussion on selection of a candidate will resume later in the meeting under Executive Session.

RETIREMENT PARTY FOR LIBRARY DIRECTOR:
With the pending retirement of Library Director Alice-Jo Carlson in early 2005, library staff members have begun preliminary planning for a retirement celebration to honor Carlson for her 38 years of service.

After consultation with Carlson to determine her availability and preferences, staff proposes holding the retirement party at the Ramsey County Library in Roseville on Friday, January 7, 2005, from 4-7 p.m. Invited guests would include the Library Board members, staff and retirees, County Board and County department heads, MELSA library directors, Friends of the Library, former Foundation members, local government officials, and others as appropriate.

The event would be catered, with hors d’oeuvres, cake, punch and coffee provided. The Friends have also volunteered to help with the event by providing the cake and floral arrangements. Funding is available in the Library’s 2004 operating budget from unspent funds within the Library Director’s travel budget.

The Library Board discussed retirement parties for other Ramsey County department heads and outgoing County Managers with Wiessner and Blackstone, who indicated that these events are typically held at a restaurant, with guests paying for their own meals. The Library Board previously authorized funding a retirement party for outgoing director Marianne Roos in 1999 and retiring director Norman Vinnes in 1993.

Norrgard made a motion to authorize library staff to plan the retirement party for Alice-Jo Carlson on Friday, January 7, 2005, from 4-7 p.m. at the Ramsey County Library in Roseville, and to authorize the expenditure of funds not to exceed $2,000 for the event. Weltzin seconded the motion, and offered to be the Library Board liaison with staff in planning the event. The motion was approved unanimously by the Library Board. Weltzin will contact Ramsey County to obtain details on the County’s policy for funding retirement gifts. Governor Pawlenty’s Office will also be contacted to request a proclamation honoring Carlson.

LIBRARY GOLD CARD:
Larson proposed that a Library Gold Card also be awarded to Carlson upon her retirement as Library Director, with final wording of the accompanying certificate to be determined via e-mail prior to the retirement party on January 7.

Norrgard made a motion to award a Library Gold Card to Alice-Jo Carlson in honor of her 38-year career with the Ramsey County Library. Anderson seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.
RESOLUTION REGARDING THE RETIREMENT OF DIANNE MATSON:
Anderson made a motion to approve the Resolution Regarding the Retirement of Dianne Matson, and to authorize the appropriate signatures on the document. Kessel seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:
Carlson reported that the Library has entered into an Agreement with the City of Maplewood for snow removal at the library in Maplewood on weekdays. Weekend snow removal will continue to be handled by a private contractor. Carlson is also working with the City of Arden Hills to extend the snow removal and lawn care agreement currently in place for 2004.

Nicole Herold has been selected as the new Technical Services Manager. In addition to her experience with Ramsey County, Herold previously worked in the Technical Services Dept. at Duluth Public Library. Ramsey County has received an offer to purchase the former library building in North St. Paul. The offer was made by the Boy Scouts of America, at a price of $700,000, with $450,000 paid at closing and the balance paid via contract for deed. The organization plans to use the building for administrative purposes, and sale will again be contingent upon a zoning change by the City of North St. Paul.

MELSA REPORT:
MELSA is funding a publicity campaign featuring advertisements on the sides of city buses, and commercials on local radio station KS95.

METRONET REPORT:
Lynn Wyman submitted the following report on Metronet’s November 16, 2004 meeting.
- The price for booth rental at the State Fair increased in 2004. Metronet will pay MELSA $500 for the shared space in the Wonders of Technology building.
- The Exemplary Librarians DVD is being shown on local cable TV on Metro Channel 6.
- The School Media Census executive summary is being distributed throughout the state. There were difficulties with data analysis that resulted in the census coming in over budget. Key findings of the 2004 School Media Census are:
  - Staffing and spending in school library media centers makes a difference in student reading scores.
  - 93% of Minnesota Five Star Schools in Reading and Math have a media specialist at least some hours per week.
  - Minnesota School Library Media Program spending for books has decreased significantly since 2002.
  - Minnesota School Library Media Programs have collections that are not current and are seriously out-of-date in several subject areas.
  - Both professional and support staffing levels are lower in schools where 50% or more students receive free or reduced-price lunch than in schools where 15% or less of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch.

Recommendations:
- Increase state and local spending on resources to update all school library media program collections. Collections should meet the standard of current; that is, an average copyright of 10 years old or newer.
- All schools must provide a high quality, professionally-staffed library media program to insure Minnesota students have access to the information they need and the training to use it.
- The Minnesota Department of Education must demonstrate its commitment to school library programs and recognize their impact on student literacy and achievement.
- The Minnesota State Legislature and the Minnesota Department of Education must continue to fund the Electronic Library for Minnesota so all Minnesotans have access to thorough, accurate information for their academic, business, and personal use.
- The State of Minnesota should adopt quantitative and qualitative standards for school library media programs to insure that all students have high quality school library media programs.
Library media specialists and their supporters must develop education programs for various audiences to help increase understanding of what school library media programs do for students.

The Minnesota Department of Education should continue data collection and analysis on school library media programs to provide on-going measurement of media programs and school library media program impact on student achievement.

- Metronet co-sponsored a workshop called “Disaster! Preparing a Library Response Plan.” The workshop was presented by Bob Herskovitz, the Outreach Conservator for the Minnesota Historical Society, on November 9 at the Ridgedale Library. A second workshop has been planned for early in 2005, as well as a series of webinars on disaster planning.
- A new brochure on library advocacy has been developed for use by school media specialists.
- The Governing Board voted to accept the audit prepared by Carpenter Evert Certified Public Accountants.
- Susan Baxter gave notice that she will be retiring effective 1/21/05.

FRIENDS OF THE SUBURBAN RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARIES REPORT:
Weltzin reported that book store sales have increased by 11% during the past 12 months. Sunday hours have been eliminated, due to difficulty in finding volunteers to work and low sales. The merger of the Friends and Foundation into one group is moving forward. The Foundation will cease to exist legally on January 1, 2005, if all goes according to plan. The remaining $24,000 held by the Foundation will be used as seed money for the Friends’ capital fundraising efforts. Guidelines are being developed, including a 25% cap on funds used for any one project. The Friends’ by-laws will require revision, with a vote taken at the annual meeting in May. Many contributions for the fundraising campaign for North St. Paul are being received.

ADULTS IN CHILDREN’S AREAS OF THE LIBRARY:
The Library Board discussed an article distributed by Anderson about a library system that instituted a policy for forbidding adults without minor children present from being in the children’s area of the library. Anderson suggested that the Board consider this topic in conjunction with the annual review of the Internet Access Policy in January.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:
The Library Board went into executive session at 7:45 p.m. to discuss the interviews with the three finalists for the Library Director position.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR SEARCH PROCESS:
Upon returning from Executive Session, Norrgard made a motion to offer the position of Library Director to Susan Nemitz. Weltzin seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Blackstone will work with the Personnel Subcommittee to prepare an employment agreement upon formal acceptance of the Board’s offer.

NEXT MEETING:
The Library Board’s next meeting will be held Thursday, December 30, 2004, in the Conference Room of the Library Administrative Offices, 4570 North Victoria Street, beginning at 4:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:
Following a motion by Anderson and a second by Kessel, Cox adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Larson
Library Board Coordinator