Minutes of the Ramsey County Library Board
February 18, 2009

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

LIBRARY BOARD ABSENT:
Janice Raphel

STAFF PRESENT:
Susan Nemitz, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Lynn Wyman, Deputy Director; Julie Neville, Library Facilities Manager; Chuck Wettergren, Automation Services Manager; Meg Robertson, Arden Hills Library Manager; Bill Michel, Roseville Library Manager

OTHERS PRESENT:
Sue Gehrz, Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries

CALL TO ORDER:
Williams called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Ramsey County Library Administrative Offices, 4570 Victoria Street North.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
No public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:
Lamb made a motion to approve the agenda for February 18, 2009, and the minutes of January 21, 2009, as presented. Norrgard seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

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. Because library fine revenues, investment income, and State revenues were down in 2008, and staff turnover was less than anticipated, the Library is ending the year without funding for special projects. The only carry-forward will be book orders placed in 2008 that were backordered. Several projects from the 2007 and 2006 year-end reserve lists are ongoing, and this funding will carry-forward as well.

Lamb made a motion to approve the 2008, 2007 and 2006 year end encumbrances as proposed. Norrgard seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

DISPOSITION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY:
With the library in Roseville scheduled to close in April, 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 temporary library on Arthur Street, nor in the remodeled and expanded facility. The surplus sale will be held April 16-19 in the current Roseville facility.

The sale will be run by the Friends, with assistance by Library staff. A second sale will be scheduled in 2010 to dispose of surplus items used at the temporary library, but no longer needed. Ramsey County Property Management and the City/County Surplus Disposal Coordinator have approved this plan.

Lamb made a motion directing staff to dispose of all surplus property from the Ramsey County Library in Roseville in a fiscally prudent manner, and in accordance with Ramsey County guidelines. Norrgard seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.
LIBRARY BOARD BY-LAWS:
At the Library Board’s Annual Meeting in January, several additions to the By-laws were suggested; including a purpose statement, language regarding indemnification, and clarification of the Chair’s voting authority.

Norrgard suggested two revisions to the purpose statement, and moved its approval as revised. Lamb seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

ROSEVILLE COFFEE CART:
Nemitz requested approval to negotiate an agreement by quotation with Emiamacas, LLC, operating Dunn Bros. Coffee, the current provider at the Library in Roseville, for a coffee cart at the temporary library in Roseville. Because of the short duration of the agreement, the Library will not be pursuing an RFP process at this time, nor is it practicable for the Library to seek additional quotations. It is estimated that the value of this agreement would not exceed $12,000.

Nemitz noted that the County Attorney’s Office has approved this proposal in concept. Lease revenue would be a percentage of gross income, and the vendor would pay any build-out costs.

Norrgard made a motion to approve negotiation of an agreement with Emiamacas, LLC, operating Dunn Bros., for a coffee cart at the temporary library in Roseville, subject to the approval of the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office. Aplikowski seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

ROSEVILLE MOVE UPDATE:
Staff at the Ramsey County Library in Roseville are preparing for the closure of the Roseville building and the move to the temporary location on Arthur Street, where the build-out is underway. Wyman reported that the staff is putting the collections in order, alerting patrons to the coming changes via signage, handouts, postings on the website and printed receipts, and word of mouth. The book drop will remain open at the Hamline location until late April, and the Arthur Street location will have a stand-alone book drop. Patron will have the option of changing the pickup location for their requested items, suspending their requests, or picking them up at the Arthur Street site, which will be open for request pickups on a limited basis during April. A floor plan for the temporary location was distributed.

The Library Board asked about construction signage at the Hamline site, and suggested posting maps to the temporary site and other RCL locations. This will be implemented during March and April, but access by the general public to the Hamline site will be restricted once construction begins.

CONDUCT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:
Following a request by staff, the Library began developing proposed conduct policies and procedures about six months ago. The policies and procedures, which have been reviewed by the Library’s Management Team, and the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office, include:

(a) Conduct Policy
(b) Posted Conduct Rules
(c) Banning Procedures
(d) Banning Letter
(e) Unattended Child Policy
(f) Unattended Vulnerable Adults Policy
(g) Unattended Children/Vulnerable Adults Procedures
(h) Missing Child Procedure
(i) Unattended Animal Procedure
(j) Noise Procedures

Nemitz indicated that with the Libraries getting busier, situations are occurring more frequently, and consistency is needed. A banning procedure was desirable, and has never been established at the Libraries. Gary Davis, Assistant County Attorney, wrote an opinion stating that libraries have legal authority to ban a person from entering and using their facilities, a position supported by the American Library Association. Banned individuals would have the ability to appeal to the Library Board, which could review the circumstances as a Board, or via a designated subcommittee of Board members.
The Library Board discussed the proposed policies and procedures, and made several suggestions for minor revisions. The appeal process for banned individuals was discussed extensively, with Norrgard in favor of the matter being considered by the Library Board as a whole, and others in favor of delegating this responsibility to a subcommittee of Board members. Timing was also discussed, i.e. whether to consider an appeal at the regular monthly meeting, or hold a special meeting on the first Wednesday of the month.

Changes suggested by the Board will be incorporated into the documents for approval at the March meeting. Nemitz noted that the County Attorney’s Office is still reviewing whether banning weapons, and under which circumstances, is permissible. If so, appropriate language will be included in the policies and procedures.

**DISCOVERY TOOL DEMONSTRATION:**
Providing a consistent and easy way for customers to search the library catalog has always been a challenge for libraries. Often the software used for searching is only available from the integrated library system (ILS) vendor that provides the database management system used to track library collections. Currently Ramsey County uses the Horizon Information Portal software available with its Horizon ILS.

There has been a growing trend to migrate away from using these proprietary search solutions to provide flexibility and collaborative opportunities between library systems. In their place, third party discovery tools (‘Google-like’ search engines) are being installed. The strengths of a discovery tool include:
- Works with virtually any ILS system
- Provides better integration into web sites
- Supports Web 2.0 interactions like news alerts, customer reviews and user tagging
- Provides the ability to search multiple resources such as local Web sites and databases
- Ensures that vendor resources are focused on improving the search experience

In 2008, MELSA libraries held discussions to identify ways of standardizing ILS services, and it was agreed that the first logical step was to pursue a consistent search experience for customers across all MELSA libraries. To that end, MELSA investigated discovery tool solutions and purchased AquaBrowser for interested members. The goal of this collaborative project included:
- Creating a more uniform search experience across the metro area
- Providing a more visually appealing catalog interface
- Adding features to refine and explore topics
- Providing opportunities for co-development of public training, enhanced configurations, and cooperative ILS planning

Every MELSA system except Hennepin County has asked to be included at this time. Ramsey County Library will install the software during the first quarter of 2009.

Wettergren demonstrated AquaBrowser’s capabilities and features for the Library Board members and answered questions.

**2009 BUDGET UPDATE:**
The Ramsey County Library received a one-time unallotment of $157,670 of County Program Aid in December of 2008 as a result of Governor Pawlenty’s unallotment of $4.3 million to Ramsey County. The Library funded this loss by reducing the Library’s undesignated fund balance. The Library has worked aggressively over the last four years to increase this balance. After this payment, it is estimate the Library’s current fund balance is about $770,000.

In anticipation of expected cuts to County Program Aid from the State of Minnesota, Ramsey County is issuing budget reductions to the 2009 budget. As of this date, the Library has not received its instructions; but the County Manager informed departments that the County will be using the Governor’s current budget recommendations to plan for potential cuts this year. The County normally receives two payments totally $16 million from the State in July and December for County Program Aid. The Governor is recommending a $7 million reduction to Ramsey County’s 2009 aid (39%). Final decisions about actual cuts will be made by the legislature in May 2009.
After the initial unallotment, the Library’s management team began a series of measures in anticipation of further cuts to County Aid. In particular, management has:

- Instituted a soft hiring freeze (positions must be approved by director before filled)
- Reduced spending on substitutes
- Reduced and consolidate administrative meetings
- Created $300,000 book budget contingency (30%)
- Reduced events spending
- Limited out of state travel (must be approved by the director)
- Instituted a sharing of staff

The 2009 Library budget of $9,298,130 assumed $732,074 in County Program Aid. The County is implementing a spending reduction of $262,082 (36% of County Aid). In addition, the Library is anticipating funding shortfalls in the fine revenue and interest revenue accounts (potentially as high as $150,000). Some of these short falls may be offset by unanticipated revenue from Dunn Brothers and MELSA (potentially $136,000).

The Library’s short term strategy should meet the County’s spending reduction goals and preserve for the most part, the fund balance. This will provide the Library 6-9 months to begin long term structural realignment. Meetings have begun with staff to discuss 2010 and 2011 budget projections. Ramsey County will likely delay the development of the 2010 and 2011 budgets until after legislative appropriation decisions. Budget hearings are not likely to take place until fall 2009.

FINES AND FEES REVIEW:
Library fines are charged to encourage customers to return materials in good condition and in a timely manner, making them available for other customers. Revenue from fines and fees also reduces the suburban property tax levy. The Library Board reviews fines and fees every two years, in conjunction with the County’s budget process.

In preparation for developing the 2010-2011 budget estimates, the Library has been collecting comparative information from the Twin Cities’ library systems to determine if changes to the RCL fines and fees structure would be appropriate. Based on the information gathered from the other MELSA libraries, RCL’s fines are at capacity, although there may be opportunities to increase related fees. Any fee increases are not likely to produce significant increases in revenue.

Formal recommendations regarding fines and fees will be presented to the Library Board in conjunction with the budget package for approval.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:
Nemitz’s February 2009 report to the Library Board was mailed prior to the meeting.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT:
Gehrz distributed a list of Roseville Capital Campaign members. Volunteers are needed for the surplus sale to be held April 16-19 at Roseville.

MELSA REPORT:
Norrgard had no report, noting that a meeting hadn’t been held since the last report in January.

NEXT MEETING: March 18, 2009, Administrative Offices, 4570 North Victoria Street, 6:30 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson,
Library Board Coordinator