BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:
Matthew Anderson, Joan Bartell, Bruce Kessel, David Norrgard

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:
Victoria Cox

STAFF PRESENT:
Alice-Jo Carlson, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator, Laura Johnson, Communications & Programming Manager

OTHERS PRESENT:
Tony Bennett, Ramsey County Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER:
Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Ramsey County Library in Arden Hills, 1941 West County Road E-2.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
Kessel made a motion to approve the minutes of January 15, 2003 as amended to reflect Bartell’s election as Secretary. Bartell seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2003 Budget Workshop as amended by Anderson and Norrgard. Norrgard seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:
Carlson’s written report for February 2003 was discussed. She noted that the budget proposals from all County departments to address the shortfall will be considered by the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners on March 11. The upcoming retirement of Ramsey County Manager Paul Kirkwold was briefly discussed. The County Board has asked Kirkwold to remain through the 2004 budget process. Carlson distributed copies of a letter from North St. Paul City Manager Wally Wysopal regarding the Library Board’s proposal to suspend service at the library in North St. Paul due to the anticipated budget shortfall. Carlson will send a response letter to Wysopal. The Ramsey County Library Foundation has delayed ordering the bobble-head collectibles due to financial concerns.

MELSA REPORT:
There was no MELSA report due to the absence of Commissioner Wiessner.

METRONET REPORT:
The Metronet Board met on January 21. Susan Baxter, Metronet Executive Director, was directed to continue her work with the Minnesota Library Council. The Board went into closed session to discuss Baxter’s job performance and compensation rate for 2003. The Board formally accepted Metronet’s audit. The final report for School Library Media Center Census, an LSTA-funded survey of MN media
centers, will go to the printers in two weeks. Results of the census will be presented to the legislature. Census data indicates that a correlation exists between school media center funding and student reading achievement. On April 8, Metronet will be sponsoring a workshop for library staff on "Understanding Accented Speakers." The workshop will be held at the Ramsey County Library in Roseville.

FRIENDS OF THE SUBURBAN RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARIES REPORT:
Bartell sent a written report via e-mail. She noted that the Friends discussed raising their membership fees, but the idea was tabled until the March meeting. The Friends approved a funding request from the Library for $10,500, which includes $8,000 for the 2003 Summer Reading Program, $1,000 for the Summer Reading Program Kickoff event, and $1,500 to hire an individual to wear the mascot costume for appearances. The book sale at the library in White Bear Lake was quite successful, and may set the stage for additional smaller book sales throughout the year. Receipts from the Friends’ Used Book Store topped $29,000 in 2002. The speaker for the upcoming Annual Meeting will be Lorna Landvik.

RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARY FOUNDATION REPORT:
Kessel reported that the Foundation is preparing its Annual Report for 2002. Tamara Hauser, Executive Director, is redirecting her efforts to focus on merchandising, and her hours have been reduced. The Annual Meeting will be held at the Shoreview Library on March 13, with David Dimond of Perkins & Will as the keynote speaker. Dimond will review the preliminary designs for the Library’s upcoming facilities projects.

TRUSTEE VACANCY:
Gene Delaune resigned from the Library Board due to personal commitments that conflict with the Board’s 2003 meeting schedule. The Board members discussed having a farewell reception for Delaune and Catherine Moore, whose term ended in December 2002, and awarding a gold library card to Delaune. The Board approved a gold card for Moore in January. Carlson will contact Delaune and Moore to determine their availability for a farewell reception.

Applications for the vacant Trustee positions were due to the County Manager’s Office by February 7. Interviews with the candidates will be scheduled in March.

Due to Delaune’s resignation, Anderson made a motion to appoint Kessel as the liaison to the Ramsey County Library Foundation. Norrgard seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

LIBRARY SERVICE IN NORTH ST. PAUL:
The Library Board members discussed the letters received from Commissioner Reinhardt and North St. Paul City Manager Wally Wysopal regarding the proposal to suspend service in North St. Paul if necessary due to a permanent budget shortfall. Anderson drafted a response letter to Reinhardt, which was reviewed by all the Board members, and Carlson will draft a response to Wysopal. Several reporters have contacted the Library and Anderson after learning of the proposal from Reinhardt.

Carlson suggested that the Library Board schedule a meeting with the North St. Paul City Council after the new Library Board members are appointed.

FACILITIES PLANNING PROCESS:
Carlson reported that she recently spoke with the Executive Director of the Minnesota Land Trust about the land north of the library in Roseville. They met earlier to review the preliminary design drawings for expanding the facility and parking. The Land Trust felt that the project would be a good use of the property, and urged the Library Board to incorporate ample green space into the plans. The land would need to be acquired through eminent domain, but the Land Trust would not oppose the condemnation.
COMMUNICATION PLAN:
At the Library Board’s Budget Workshop on February 5, 2003, the Board requested that communication planning be added to the agenda for discussion. Johnson prepared a communication plan and a news release related to the Library Board’s decisions at the Budget Workshop, which were shared for comments and suggestions.

The Board suggested that the implementation date be changed to after the March 20 Library Board meeting, when more information should be available on the budget reduction targets. Cable access was mentioned as an additional method of communication. Anderson and Carlson will visit the city councils in North St. Paul and Arden Hills to answer questions and discuss facilities planning.

2002 YEAR END FUNDING RESERVES:
At the end of each budget year, all Ramsey County departments are required to submit a list of unpaid obligations and planned expenditures. Library staff are recommending encumbrances totaling $103,816.52, which includes both unpaid obligations from 2002 and staff recommendations for special projects.

Also submitted for approval are lists of remaining projects from 2001 and 2000 reserve funding, which the staff recommends for carryover. Ramsey County Budgeting & Accounting has asked that the Library Board reaffirm these encumbrances as well as those from 2002. Although some 2002 year end monies are being reserved for special projects, approximately $160,000 from 2002, 2001, and 2000 remaining funds are recommended to fall into fund balance, a practice encouraged by Ramsey County Budgeting and Accounting.

Kessel made a motion to approve the 2002, 2001 and 2000 encumbrances as proposed by Library staff. Bartell seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

2004 BUDGET OVERVIEW:
No information has been received yet from Ramsey County regarding the 2004 budget process.

STATISTICAL REPORT:
Carlson asked for comments and suggestions regarding the new monthly statistical report developed by Chuck Wettergren, Computer Services Manager. The new format will include more detailed data on special services such as self checkout, renewals, holds placed, and web site visits, as well as programming statistics. The report contains a system summary sheet, as well as branch-specific pages. The Board members asked to receive the summary monthly, and the entire report on a quarterly basis. Other suggestions regarding the format were noted and will be forwarded to Wettergren.

NEXT MEETING:
The next meeting of the Library Board was changed to Thursday, March 20, due to concerns over having a quorum present to conduct business. The meeting will be held in the Administrative Office Conference Room, 4570 North Victoria Street in Shoreview, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:
Following a motion by Kessel and a second by Bartell, Anderson adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Larson
Library Board Coordinator