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

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:
Alice-Jo Carlson, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Laura Johnson, Communication and Programming Manager; Chuck Wettergren, Automation Services Manager; Lynn Wyman, Public Services Manager

OTHERS PRESENT:
Jan Parker Wiessner, Ramsey County Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER:
Cox called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Library Administrative Offices, 4570 North Victoria Street in Shoreview.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
Anderson made a motion to approve the Library Board minutes of February 18, 2004 as amended to reflect the next steps in the Strategic Planning process. Wolsfeld seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:
Carlson’s written report for March 2004 was mailed to the Library Board prior to the meeting. In addition to the written report, Carlson noted that

- The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) has voted to purchase the former library facility in North St. Paul, bringing the sale one step closer to completion.
- The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners approved the sale of bonds for the Maplewood and Roseville projects on March 16, 2004.
- The Internet filtering bill in the State Legislature was pulled after the Minnesota Library Association lobbyist found prior legislation regarding unfunded mandates. Carlson’s testimony before the legislature was discussed briefly.
- Carlson will develop talking points for Library Board members regarding outreach initiatives, and she will also update the Board on increasing security at the libraries following the incident at Maplewood.

MELSA REPORT:
Commissioner Wiessner reported that the MELSA Governing Board did not meet this month.

FRIENDS OF THE SUBURBAN RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARIES REPORT:
Weltzin will assume her duties as liaison to the Friends, since her tenure as interim president has concluded with the return of the Arnold and Mary Anne Lindberg. She reported that the Friends are busy preparing for their Annual Luncheon on April 24.

RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARY FOUNDATION REPORT:
Kessel noted that the Foundation held its Annual Meeting on March 16, 2004. Peter Hilger and Sharon Klumpp were elected co-presidents for 2004. Peter Pearson of the St. Paul Friends has agreed to assist the Foundation and Friends in their merger talks, in return for a small donation to the St. Paul Friends.
FACILITIES PLANNING UPDATE:
Carlson reported that Jolly Mangine, Ramsey County Property Manager, has agreed to manage the RFP process for the design phase at Maplewood. She also noted that steps to acquire the land north of the Library in Roseville via eminent domain will resume now that the sale of bonds was approved. Carlson has met with DSGW Architects, the architects for the North St. Paul Community Center expansion and remodeling. Norrgard indicated an interest in serving on the RFP committee.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS:
Carlson received proposals from Bruce Miles of Big River Consulting Group and Sue Hall of the Milestone Group, which were distributed to the Library Board members for consideration. Big River’s fee would be $3,470, and Milestone’s fee would be $1,500. In addition, Milestone has extensive experience with libraries, having worked with MELSA, Metronet, and the St. Paul Public Library.

Wolsfeld made a motion authorizing the Library Director to contract with The Milestone Group for a maximum cost of $1,500.00, and to determine a date for the next Library Board workshop. Wolsfeld also moved that step one in Milestone’s proposal be amended to reflect Library Board participation in the preliminary meeting with the consultant. Weltzin seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

ONLINE CLASSIFIED ADS ON THE RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARY WEBSITE:
Library staff have been discussing a project for several months that would explore using community ad space to increase the value of the Library website to its customers, while providing a potential source of revenue for the Library.

Chuck Wettergren, Automation Services Manager, and Lynn Wyman, Public Services Manager, have developed a proposed pilot project with a duration of six months to create online classified ad space available to registered Library card holders, 18 years of age and older. Ads posted would be for legally owned personal property and garage sale listings.

All ads would be submitted using a form on the Library website and posted the next business day. Ads could not exceed two lines of text. The proposal includes a promotional kickoff for the first month, waiving the charge to place the ad, limited to one free ad per customer during this month. After the first month, rates would be $5.00 for 14 days. This rate equals the maximum outstanding balance allowed to be carried on a customer’s library record. Customers would be allowed to place a maximum of two ads at one time without exceeding the maximum outstanding balance allowed. To place additional ads, or have access to library services, their balance would have to be paid down to or below $5.00.

Fees would be added to a borrower’s record via a special block in Horizon, the Library’s online system. Payment of fees could be made in person at any of our locations. Fees collected would be tracked separately and could be used to create the classified ads as a self-supporting service.

An evaluation would be conducted at the end of the six month pilot project; success would be measured by comparing costs, including staff, software and hardware, with the outcomes of fees collected, web traffic and customer feedback.

The Library Board discussed the proposal, particularly whether this service would enhance the Library’s mission. Kessel made a motion to approve the six-month pilot project which would allow staff to create a classified ad area for the public on the Library’s website. Wolsfeld seconded the motion, which was approved by majority vote, with Anderson, Cox and Norrgard dissenting.

2005 BUDGET OVERVIEW AND PRIORITIES:
The 2005 levy target for Ramsey County departments is a 1% increase over the 2004 approved levy. For the Library, this amount equals $66,329.
On March 15, 2004, the Library received our projected Administrative Overhead expense for 2005. The amount is $204,467, a decrease of $118,111 from the 2004 budget. Combined with increased revenue from library fines and the Environmental Health Dept. lease at Maplewood, the library will be able fund operations at six libraries. Additionally, the $50,000 cut from the 2004 salaries budget could be restored for 2005, and book cart revenue could be eliminated from the projected operating revenues, allowing it to once again be used for enhancements for the public beyond the capacity of the operating budget.

In addition to the levy target budget, departments may request that programs or services not included in the levy goal be funded. Potential priorities above the 1% levy goal include operating funds for a new or existing library facility, restoring the substitute staff budget, restoring funding for books, and funds to purchase filtering software.

The Library Board discussed the need to ensure adequate operating funds for the new library in North St. Paul, and the option to reduce hours across the system or close one library, in order to meet the target levy. The Board members requested additional time to consider their budget options, and asked Carlson to contact the Ramsey County Manager to postpone submission of the Library’s budget.

If a postponement is not possible, Anderson made a motion, seconded by Kessel, to approve the following priorities for the 2005 budget:
   1. Hours/services
      • North St. Paul
      • Arden Hills
      • Hours across system
   2. Books
   3. Substitute staff

The motion was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION REGARDING THE RETIREMENT OF DIANE BRUTON:
Norrgard made a motion to approve the Resolution Regarding the Retirement of Diane Bruton, and to authorize the appropriate signatures on the document. Anderson seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION REGARDING THE RETIREMENT OF DONNA RINES:
Norrgard made a motion to approve the Resolution Regarding the Retirement of Donna Rines, and to authorize the appropriate signatures on the document. Wolsfeld seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

NEXT MEETING:
The Library Board’s next meeting will be held Wednesday, April 21, 2004, in the Meeting Room of the Ramsey County Library in Maplewood, 1670 Beam Avenue, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:
Cox adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Larson
Library Board Coordinator