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

STAFF PRESENT:
Susan Nemitz, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Lynn Wyman, Deputy Director; Julie Neville, Library Facilities Manager; Bill Michel, Roseville Library Manager; Sandy Walsh, Deputy Director; Meg Robertson, Arden Hills Library Manager; Kristi Saksvig, Communications Manager; Carol Jackson, North St. Paul Library Manager

OTHERS PRESENT:
Bryan Olson, North St. Paul resident; Arnold & Mary Anne Lindberg, Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries

CALL TO ORDER:
Williams called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the North St. Paul Community Center, 2290 North 1st Street.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
Bryan Olson, North St. Paul resident, asked the Library Board about the City of North St. Paul’s request to increase hours at the library in the Community Center, and the petition signed by residents.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:
Lamb made a motion to approve the agenda for May 20, 2009, and the minutes of April 15, 2009, as presented. Rapheal seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

DONATION OF VOIP TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT:
Ramsey County Library applied for and received a Cisco telephone equipment grant request that will allow the Library to expand its use of voice over Internet protocol (VoIP). The grant was for equipment used at the Republican National Convention, and includes a central call management device (capable of running multiple locations), five Cisco 7936 conference phones, 100 Cisco 7961 phones, and a router to provide voice connectivity at one remote location. The estimated retail value of this equipment is approximately $100,000. This equipment, combined with VoIP funding received from Ramsey County in 2008, will allow the Library to move forward with the replacement and standardization of phone services. The Ramsey County Attorney’s Office has reviewed the online Equipment Donation Agreement.

Lamb made a motion to accept the donation of telephone equipment from Cisco Systems, Inc. valued at approximately $100,000, and to authorize the Automation Manager to complete the online acceptance forms on behalf of the Ramsey County Library. Rapheal seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

ROSEVILLE UPDATE:
Wyman and Michel updated the Library Board members on use of the temporary Roseville site during the first two weeks of operation. The interim library is already serving about 112 people per hour, and circulating more than 1,000 items per day, a little more than half the business of the permanent site, and business is growing every day. Customers are still finding their way to the temporary library on Arthur Street, which is not a major thoroughfare in Roseville.

Concerns about the temporary site include placement of road signs, finding the site, and the speed of traffic on County Road C. Nemitz will contact Ramsey County regarding road sign placement. Several activities are planned to draw customers to the temporary site, including a Dunn Bros. grand opening celebration, Summer Reading Program events, storytimes, and computer classes.
Demolition has begun on the interior of the Hamline Avenue site.

**NORTH ST. PAUL UPDATE:**
The Ramsey County Library in North St. Paul reopened in 2005 after a fiscal crisis in 2003 forced the closure of the previous library in the community. The new facility provides services in some fundamentally different ways than many of the smaller Ramsey County libraries. The Library is very successful in terms of both use and cost to the taxpayer. The City of North St. Paul made a significant contribution to the long-term success of the Library on this site.

Nemitz, along with Ramsey County Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt and Library Manager Carol Jackson, attended the North St. Paul City Council on March 3, 2009. The City is looking for an increase or change in public hours. Nemitz shared the presentation she gave to the City of North St. Paul, which showed the successful collaboration between the City, Ramsey County, and the Library, to provide library service in North St. Paul in a cost effective manner.

Following the City's request for added or changed hours, the Library developed a survey to learn which hours were most favored by North St. Paul residents. The top request was Friday afternoons, although a variety of hours and days received votes.

Jackson distributed a written update on the library in North St. Paul, highlighting community outreach, library programs, and partnerships with the local schools and within the Community Center.

**ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE POLICY:**
As part of the Library’s 2009 Workplan, a draft accounts receivable policy has been developed to formalize the Library’s practices for managing its receivables and collection of past due debts. The draft policy includes write-off procedures for uncollectible debt, a process that has not been done on a large scale for many years. The draft policy, which has been reviewed by the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office, is scheduled for approval at the June Library Board meeting.

**2010-2011 BUDGET:**
Nemitz stated that potential unallotments in local government aid will be devastating to libraries around the State. The Ramsey County Commissioners have been very supportive of the libraries, investing heavily in improved library facilities over the past five years. Nemitz indicated that she is trying to avoid layoffs in addressing the budget reductions. Norrgard noted that he is also opposed to layoffs, a sentiment echoed by Williams.

The Library Board reviewed the immediate policy changes proposed by Nemitz. The changes would impact workflow for library staff, and impose or increase fees in several areas. The proposed changes include:

1. Close one day each quarter for staff training and to address shelving backlogs
2. Reduce requested items limit from 75 to 25
3. Reduce ILL request limit from 20 to 10
4. Institute a $15 processing fee for customers entered into the Revenue Recapture program
5. Discontinue refunds for lost items paid for and later found by customers
6. No longer accept replacements in lieu of payment
7. Require lost items be returned within 6 months to reduce charges to late fees
8. Disallow Internet use if account in Revenue Recapture
9. Increase black and white printing to 15¢ per copy and color printing to 75¢
10. Charge $25 for returned checks
11. Increase fee for replacement library cards to $2
12. Require library card be presented for checkout and Internet privileges.

Lamb stated that the Library should aggressively raise revenue to preserve access to library services. He suggested that basic services such as checking out materials and Internet access continue to be free, while premium services are offered for a fee. Nygren agreed that the Library shouldn’t avoid difficult decisions in addressing the budget situation.

Rapheal made a motion to approve the immediate policy changes proposed by staff, effective September 1, 2009. Nygren seconded the motion.
The Library Board discussed the suggestion that a $1 lookup fee be added to the list of immediate changes. Patrons who do not have their library cards with them would be charged $1 if staff has to look up the barcode for checkout or Internet access purposes.

MELSA funding was also discussed. The Metropolitan Library Service Agency is a state-funded organization, and subject to potential unallotment. To date, no reductions in MELSA funding have been proposed.

Aplikowski made a motion to call the vote on Rapheal’s motion. The immediate policy changes were approved by majority vote, with Norrgard and Weltzin dissenting.

Nygren made a motion to amend policy change #7 from 6 months to 4 months. Aplikowski seconded the motion, which was approved by majority vote, with Weltzin dissenting.

Nygren made a motion to institute a $1 lookup fee for patrons utilizing library services without their card present. Lamb seconded the motion, which was approved by majority vote, with Aplikowski dissenting.

Nygren questioned whether the Library Board would be able to complete its budget discussion by the 8:30 end time of the meeting, and made a motion to extend the meeting to 9 p.m. Norrgard seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Nemitz outlined several proposals to move the Library closer to meeting the levy target. Among the reductions or accounting shifts recommended were:

1. Materials Budget Reduction $300,000
2. IS Funding Transfer $100,000
3. Intermittent Staff Budget $44,000
4. Transfer Severance to Reserve $35,000
5. Administrative Target $100,000

Norrgard stated his opposition to cutting the materials budget or reducing hours. Nemitz indicated that without cuts to the materials budget or reducing hours, RCL would need to close 2-3 libraries to meet the levy target. Aplikowski spoke in favor of the staff’s recommendation, while Lamb was opposed, noting that the Library Board should go through the budget proposal line by line to aggressively seek revenue sources. He felt that the Library was jumping too quickly to reduce hours or closing libraries as a potential solution, and suggested that the Library create new revenues by charging fees to library customers who reside outside suburban Ramsey County. Nemitz noted that increasing fines and fees would not generate the $1 million dollars needed by 2011 to meet current budget projections.

Aplikowski made a motion to approve the proposed budget reductions and accounting shifts for the 2010-2011 budget. Nygren seconded the motion. Lamb urged the Board members to vote against the proposal, stating that it would move the Library closer to reducing hours or closing facilities. Aplikowski called the questions on her motion, which passed by majority vote with Lamb dissenting.

The Library Board discussed the proposed options to meet the target budget. The four options presented included closing one or smaller library branches, reducing hours at the larger branches, creating portal libraries in the communities with smaller facilities, and exploring regional consolidation. Nemitz noted that the figures presented represent direct costs at each location during 2008, which may not translate to exact savings if implemented. She indicated that selling the smaller buildings could finance portal libraries in multi-use facilities. Weltzin noted that the Library’s successes at North St. Paul and Roseville have demonstrated that multi-use facilities are feasible. Nemitz recommended that the Library Board not adopt a particular strategy immediately, but instead work with the County Board to develop strategies for meeting the target budget amount.

Nygren made a motion to approve the proposed options outlined in Attachment V for submission to Ramsey County as part of the Library’s 2010-2011 Budget. Aplikowski seconded the motion, which was approved by majority vote with Lamb dissenting.
Nygren noted that the evening’s discussion really focused on preserving hours of service. The Board members discussed the negative consequences of reducing hours, particularly at the smaller libraries. No savings are realized from facilities costs or reductions to the book budget. Aplikowski indicated that patrons would still use the libraries with reduced hours.

The Board discussed holding a special meeting to consider Lamb’s suggestion of increasing revenues by charging for premium services, or charging based on residency guidelines. They agreed to call a meeting for June 3, 2009, in the Administrative Conference Room beginning at 6:30 p.m.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:
Nemitz’s May 2009 report to the Library Board was mailed prior to the meeting. She noted that RCL will be the recipient of a $50,000 grant from the Watershed District for the Roseville project.

MELSA REPORT:
No MELSA report.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT:
No Friends report.

NEXT MEETING: June 3, 2009, RCL-Shoreview, 4570 North Victoria Street, 6:30 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson,
Library Board Coordinator