LIBRARY BOARD PRESENT:
Beverly Aplikowski, Paula Mielke, David Norrgard, Janice Rapheal, Roberta Weltzin, Lori-Anne Williams

LIBRARY BOARD ABSENT:
Matthew Anderson

STAFF PRESENT:
Susan Nemitz, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Lynn Wyman, Deputy Director; Sandy Walsh, Deputy Director; Meg Robertson, New Brighton Library Manager; Kristi Saksvig, Communications Manager

CALL TO ORDER:
Norrgard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Program Room of the Ramsey County Library in Maplewood, 3025 Southlawn Drive.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
No public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:
Williams made a motion to approve the agenda for November 16, 2011, as presented and the minutes of October 19, 2011 as amended to note under Benchmarking that RCL staff is significantly more productive on virtually every measure relative to its peer libraries and has been for many years. Aplikowski seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

GIFT ACCEPTANCE:
The Friends of the Ramsey County Library launched a capital campaign for the Ramsey County Library in New Brighton, with the goal of raising $100,000 for amenities not included in the project budget. The Capital Campaign committee has been very successful, raising over $85,000 to date toward their goal. Another recent gift for $15,000 for amenities exceeds the $5,000 threshold and requires Library Board approval.

Williams made a motion to accept the New Brighton Capital Campaign donation of $15,000 from the Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries for library amenities. Aplikowski seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

PC REPLACEMENTS:
Ramsey County Library has a five year computer replacement cycle. This timeline is increased if systems are capable of reliable use. The cycle length was determined by the following factors:

- **Age** - as computers age, repairs tend to get more expensive and downtime lengthens because technology becomes outdated.
- **Efficiency** - newer computers tend to be more energy efficient.
- **Productivity** - requirements for current software keep increasing. Older computers can decrease staff and customer productivity as they slow down. This not only relates to office applications like word processing, but antivirus and security software as well.
- **Environment** - a business or public environment with heavy use tends to negatively impact the life of a computer.
The Library’s inventory has grown to over 500 computers (including laptop labs). Automation Services staff is planning to replace 91 computers purchased between 2003 and 2006. In some cases, existing monitors will be kept if in good condition. Newer systems being installed will be 10% or more energy efficient compared to the existing models.

Funding has been designated for the annual maintenance/replacement of computers. Computers will be purchased using the best pricing available through County/State master contracts. Typical configurations are $700-$875 per unit, depending upon whether a monitor is required.

Williams made a motion to approve spending approximately $75,000-$80,000 for PC replacements for 2011 utilizing existing County/State master contracts. Aplikowski seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

INTERNET ACCESS POLICY:
In 2006, the Library Board updated the Library’s Internet Access Policy to include language related to filtering on all computers accessing Library-provided Internet resources. This filtering was installed to conform with the provisions of the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

During the past five years, filtering has shown not to be a barrier to accessing resources through the Library, and the number of requests to unblock sites has been very small. Because requests to unblock sites are rare, log sheets provide for staff to record these requests have not been maintained, making detailed statistics unavailable. Most recently, the Library’s Management Team has been discussing procedures around children’s use of the Internet. Issues discussed included proper notification to parents and minors without library cards.

Nemitz noted that the most frequent complaints from patrons involve photographs viewed on social networking sites. Staff is not having difficulty enforcing policies when complaints are received.

Norrgard reported that a lawsuit was filed several years ago by librarians at Minneapolis Public Library alleging pornographic images on library computers accessed by patrons created a hostile workplace. The lawsuit was settled on the librarians’ behalf, costing MPL a significant amount. State and federal legislation were later introduced requiring filters on publicly funded computers accessible by children.

The library staff recommends that the Internet Access Policy remain unchanged and that future reviews of this policy be on an “as needed” basis. Weltzin made a motion to approve continued use of the Internet Access Policy. The motion was seconded by Mielke, and approved by unanimous vote.

PLANNING PROPOSAL:
The Library Board members discussed the draft survey questions, which will focus on the user’s experience at RCL, and made several suggestions. Norrgard recommended that the Library Board hold a review session for the Master Plan.

Nemitz indicated that she is creating an advisory committee to steer the 2012 planning process, and asked for a Library Board member to serve as representative to the committee. Williams volunteered to serve as the representative.

Williams made a motion to approve the questions for the telephone survey as amended. Rapheal seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

NEW BRIGHTON GRAND OPENING:
Over 1,500 people came through the doors of the newest branch of Ramsey County Library during the Grand Opening celebration on October 29. Library Board members joined Ramsey County Commissioners Jan Parker and Tony Bennett, New Brighton Mayor Dave Jacobsen, New Brighton City Manager Dean Lotter, and members of the New Brighton City Council. The Friends of the Library, Capital Campaign members, Arden Hills Task Force members, HGA architects and A&P project managers, Library and County staff and New Brighton Community Center staff, and children and adults from the community rounded out the audience for the opening speeches and ribbon cutting ceremony that opened the doors to the sparkling new space.
Music in the reading rooms provided a celebratory atmosphere as patrons explored the space and the collection. Many entered a drawing for prizes donated by New Brighton Parks and Recreation. Comments written in the notebook commemorating the closing of the Arden Hills branch and the opening of the New Brighton branch included these first impressions:

“Nice Location. Appropriate for family gathering.”

“Thanks for keeping literacy alive and exciting.”

“Incredibly light, airy and comfortable! Well done!!”

The Capital Campaign Committee took in more than $2,400 in donations on Grand Opening Day bringing the total raised so far to more than $85,000.

Over 2,500 items were checked out opening day and after one week open 4,600 additional items have been checked out. The branch is seeing daily visitor numbers ranging from 380 to 580. The first story time was attended by over 90 people and the community found their way to computer classes held for two weeks at the NBCC beginning the week before the library opened. Computer class instructors reported that class attendance built over the two week period as word-of-mouth led to walk-in students. Many were shocked that the classes were offered for free. Computer use at the New Brighton branch during the first week totaled around 223 hours with the 6 computers in the Community Center accounting for about half of that usage. Computer use is building daily as people discover this resource in and outside of the library. The collection has been a highlight, and staff is busy explaining the portal concept to new customers.

The community is lining up for tours with a Mounds View School District class of 50 adult ELL students coming on November 10 and preschool groups and the Cable TV show New Brighton NOW! expressing interest in exploring the new library.

The goal of providing access to the new library as early as possible has been achieved, but there are several issues awaiting resolution. The exterior book drop to be located within the community center should be arriving in the next two weeks and regulation of the fireplace heat output continues. Shades were installed on November 8, and remaining furniture for the children’s and adult reading area is expected to be delivered by the end of the month. One damaged light fixture awaits replacement and additional internal signage needs are being assessed. Artwork remains in development and the literacy kiosk and panels are not yet installed. Use patterns, shifting days of operation, and a new model of sorting materials are open to continuous review.

The Library’s hours have been the chief complaint. The New Brighton Community Center is open more than 100 hours per week, while the Library is open just 35.

Nemitz thanked the Library Board members for the leadership during the development process for the new library.

2012-2013 BUDGET UPDATE:

Ramsey County Manager Julie Kleinschmidt submitted her 2012-2013 Proposed Biennial Budget to the County Board on July 26. After budget hearings with each county department, the County Board directed Kleinschmidt to identify additional savings in her proposed budget to lower the proposed maximum tax levy from a proposed 2.7% to a 1.7% levy increase over 2011.

After reviewing preliminary estimates against actual proposed costs for 2012-2013, Kleinschmidt has determined that the levy reduction can be achieved through lower negotiated health insurance premiums. Based on her budget addenda submitted to the County Board, the Library’s 2012-2013 budgets will decrease to reflect the lower costs, as will the levy dollars provided by Ramsey County for these expenses.
Also in her budget addenda, Kleinschmidt is recommending a reduction in the vacancy factor from 1.5% to 0.5%. For many years, the County has required all departments to include a vacancy factor reduction in their personnel budgets to account for the lag time between an employee leaving Ramsey County and their replacement being hired. However, severance costs can be substantial for long-term employees, fewer employees are leaving due to the economy, and the need to backfill employees significantly reduces the actual savings for many departments where minimum staffing levels are required, including the Library, the Care Center, Community Corrections, and the Sheriff’s Department. The Library deliberately keeps several vacancies unfilled to ensure that the vacancy factor reduction is achieved each year. Kleinschmidt’s proposal would give the Library an additional $57,000 per year in personnel funding, which could be used to fund intermittent staff. If approved, the change would be effective January 1, 2012.

The Budget Committee of the Whole will hold a public hearing on Nov. 28 at Roseville Area High School at 6:30 p.m. before final budget approval by the County Board on Dec. 13. The stadium issue will likely increase attendance at this event even though this issue will not be decided by the Ramsey County Commissioners.

MANAGER TRAINEE PROGRAM:
The Library implemented a Manager Trainee Program in 1998 to provide management experience and training for Librarian 2s. Manager Trainees are selected through an application and interview process and typically serve a three-year term. Manager Trainees are sent to Ramsey County supervisory and management classes and attend at least one national library conference. Library managers Jeff Eide and Therese Sonnek and Technical Services Manager Nicole Herold are all former Manager Trainee participants.

The Library has received an opinion from Ramsey County Human Resources and the AFSCME Local 8 Professional Union that Manager Trainees are not eligible for union membership while they are participating in the Manager Trainee Program. The opinion was based on the definition of a Supervisory Employee in the Public Employment Labor Relations Act. This will affect the union seniority of current and future Manager Trainee participants.

The Library has decided to discontinue the Manager Trainee Program. Staff is working with Ramsey County Human Resources to identify an appropriate management solution for Mounds View, New Brighton, and North St. Paul, the three libraries currently being managed by Manager Trainees.

LAKE ELMO LIBRARY UPDATE:
The City of Lake Elmo has continued their separation from the Washington County Library system. Representatives from the City met with Chris Olsen, the Director of MELSA and Nancy Walton, the State Librarian. The City sent a letter requesting MELSA to mediate a session between the City and County. The County is not willing to meet at this time unless the City is open to ideas other than a traditional library. The City is not interested in other alternatives at this time. The City has formally requested Associate Library status from the County. The County is unlikely to grant it.

The City of Lake Elmo has advertised for a library management consultant, staff and donated books. A library board has been announced and will hold its first meeting November 9.

Based upon the Ramsey County Library Board discussion in September, the RCL director requested guidance from MELSA on Lake Elmo resident issues. The MELSA Advisory Board recommended to the Board of Trustees that they take a vote to recommend that all local library jurisdictions increase their nonresident library card fee to a uniform rate of $60. The Trustees discussed the issue and decided not to take a stand until more information is known. Anoka County recently raised their nonresident card to $60 as of January 1, 2012. A Washington County nonresident card is $60. All other libraries are at $45. Chris Olsen, MELSA Director, believes that the State Librarian will be sending out a letter to public libraries clarifying their service responsibilities to Lake Elmo residents.

The Library Board discussed the City of Lake Elmo’s offer to purchase non-resident library cards for its citizens in 2012 while the new city library is under development. The disparity in non-resident card fees creates issues, as does the value of library services provided versus the card fee. Based on the Joint Powers Agreement, RCL and other MELSA libraries may be forced to cancel current library cards from Lake Elmo residents currently registered in our systems.
LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND SALARY REVIEW:
Norrgard indicated that appraisal forms have been sent to each trustee, which must be returned to Ramsey County Human Resources by December 2. HR Director Gail Blackstone will have a summary of the information prepared for the Library Board’s December 14 meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:
Nemitz’s November 2011 report to the Library Board was mailed prior to the meeting. (Available upon request.) She noted that Property Management Director Jolly Mangine will be retiring in January. RCL’s membership in the Urban Libraries Council, purchased by MELSA, will not be renewed for 2012.

MELSA REPORT:
Norrgard’s last meeting as MELSA Governing Board Trustee was November 8. Commissioner Jan Parker will be completing the remaining two years of Norrgard’s term on the MELSA Board.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT:
The Friends received over $2,400 in capital campaign donations at the New Brighton Grand Opening. The campaign will run through June 30, 2012. Donations, pledges and in-kind gifts total over $85,000 so far.

Library Board members are invited to a reception from 5:00 to 6:00 pm on Friday, Dec. 2 for the dedication of the large painting in the atrium by Jim Dryden and funded by Kerry Kleyman in memory of her husband, Brian Curry.

The Friends raised nearly $7,000 at the October Book Sale held at the Roseville Library. The next sale will be in April 2012.

The Friends received a grant of nearly $1,700 from the City of Maplewood charitable gambling funds to be used for a literacy-building interactive panel in the preschool children’s area in the Maplewood Library. A plan for additional furnishings and equipment is being developed and the Friends will seek funding for the entire project.

Comcast Internet Essentials will be donating $5,000 to sponsor the winter quarter computer classes previously sponsored by the Friends. This will enable RCL to increase the number of class offerings.

In October, the Friends were certified by the Minnesota Charities Review Council as meeting all twenty-seven Accountability Standards and were awarded the “Meets Standards” seal. The Charity Review Council reviews nonprofit organizations in four areas: Public Disclosure, Governance, Financial Activity, and Fundraising. The review works to ensure that an organization’s operations, structure and policies meet widely accepted standards for accountability and transparency. The awarded “Meets Standards” seal shows our commitment to accountable and ethical practices. The Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries is now listed as a reviewed organization on the Council’s Smart Givers Network and the Smart Giver newsletter distributed to households, businesses and nonprofits.

The Friends currently have 660 member households.

NEXT MEETING: December 14, 2011, Administrative Offices, 4570 North Victoria Street
5:30 p.m. - Reception for David Norrgard
6:30 p.m. - Business Meeting

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson,
Library Board Coordinator