LIBRARY BOARD PRESENT:
Matthew Anderson, Beverly Aplikowski, Paula Mielke, Janice Rapheal, Kim Vanderwall, Roberta Weltzin, Lori-Anne Williams

STAFF PRESENT:
Susan Nemitz, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Sandy Walsh, Deputy Director; Lynn Wyman, Deputy Director; Bill Michel, Maplewood Library Manager; Jeff Eide, Roseville Library Manager; Griffin Hughes, staff

OTHERS PRESENT:
Ginny Belden Charles, Strategic Planning Consultant; Chris Olson, MELSA Executive Director

CALL TO ORDER:
Mielke called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Program Room of the Ramsey County Library in Roseville, 2180 Hamline Avenue North.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
No public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:
Nemitz pulled the February 15, 2012 minutes from the consent agenda due to a correction made by staff to the Mounds View branch report. Williams made a motion to approve the agenda for March 21, 2012, as presented. Aplikowski seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

ANNUAL REPORT TO STATE:
State Library Services, a division of the Minnesota Department of Education, coordinates a statistical survey on library usage, collection size, staffing distribution, etc. for every library in Minnesota each year. Libraries are required to submit their annual data to the State Library Services Office no later than April 1.

Policymakers, library administrators and the general public can use the statistical data to plan and evaluate library development and services. Data for public, academic and state library agencies is available from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Williams made a motion to authorize the Library Board Chair and Library Director to sign and submit the 2011 Public Library Annual Report to the Office of State Library Services as mandated. Aplikowski seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

REVISED FEBRUARY 15, 2012 MINUTES:
Vanderwall made a motion to approve the revised minutes of February 15, 2012 as amended to include the corrected Mounds View branch report. Williams seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

MELSA OVERVIEW:
Chris Olson, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA), was present to give the Library Board an overview of MELSA’s role in Twin Cities’ library services. MELSA, one of twelve regional library systems in Minnesota, is funded primarily by the State. A reciprocal borrowing agreement encourages cooperation and collaboration. In rural areas of the State, the regional library system is the administrative structure for the local libraries and in many cases operates a shared online system. Metro libraries started digitizing services earlier, and operate independent online systems.
MELSA has a staff of 6.5FTE that works closely with staff from the Twin Cities metro library systems via teams, interest groups and task forces. The five teams include circulation, electronic resources, youth services, promotions, and technology. MELSA is governed by a Board of Trustees with representatives from the seven metro counties and the City of St. Paul. Ramsey County’s current representative is Commissioner Jan Parker. An Advisory Board comprised of the metro library directors makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

A recent strategic planning process led to five areas of focus for MELSA:

- Jobs and Small Business Initiative
- Early Literacy
- Homework Help
- Technology Literacy
- Lifelong Learning

Collaborative purchasing and technology are two of MELSA’s largest expenses. Most systems hold technology funds in reserve at MELSA and withdraw them for large purchases. MELSA provided almost $1 million dollars in direct allocations and collaborative purchases.

**MN PUBLIC LIBRARIES RETURN ON INVESTMENT STUDY:**
The Library Board discussed the report “Minnesota Public Libraries Return on Investment” issued in December 2011. The study was completed over two years by the University of Minnesota Duluth through the Labovitz School's Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) and funded by a Library Services and Technology Act grant. RCL has adopted a more direct study as part of its budget process, with a higher dollar benefit.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**
Nemitz’s March 2012 report to the Library Board was sent prior to the meeting. (Available upon request.)

**MELSA REPORT:**
No report.

**FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT:**
On March 2, the Friends entertained 230 major and loyal donors and their guests with a program of self-guided tours of the unique works of art, opportunities to meet the artists, introductions by Kerri Miller, door prizes, and refreshments. This event enabled the Friends to launch the new Leave a Legacy of Literacy promotion.

Upcoming events include:

- **Semi-annual Book Sale**
  April 11 – 15 at Roseville Library
  We need volunteers and shoppers.

- **Annual Luncheon**
  April 28 at North Oaks Golf Club
  Speaker is John Coy.

- **BookIt 5K Walk/Run**
  May 19 at Roseville Library
  We need volunteers, sponsors, and participants!

**STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS:**
At the Library Board’s meeting in February, Board members and senior staff discussed library trends, achievements, and opportunities. After a review of that discussion, Belden Charles asked the Board members to consider several questions.
What items are missing from the opportunities list?

- Recreational/entertainment needs of individuals
- How people learn (not just youth)
- Patron participation important to collaboration
- Computing centers are tools
- Early literacy and youth engagement
- 24/7 libraries
- Digitization as part of curation

Belden Charles asked the Board members to share the opportunity they are most excited about:

- How people learn/future environment
- Intersection of local and global resources
- Early literacy/partnerships
- Social safety net
- Partnerships/resources, need places to meet in community
- Partnerships
- Services outside library walls/targeted groups

Which of these raise concerns/fears?

- Not spreading self too thin
- Overuse of staff
- Getting off mission
- Never enough spaces to meet in community
- Quiet space and small group work space in highest demand

Which of these seems to be the furthest stretch from where you are now?

- Imbedding: going out to other institutions, i.e. Senior Centers
- Partnering with schools; don’t see ourselves as partners
- Social safety net, i.e. transportation, delivery, other mechanisms
- Capture more of volunteer's skills
- Collaborative content creation; space needed, training staff to teach use

How do these opportunities clarify or fit with the VISION, MISSION, and IDENTITY of RCL?

- Flexible, entrepreneurial, generous
- We don’t define what people do
- We allow people to learn at their own place
- Freedom of inquiry
- Our relationship is not “client”— it’s “my library”

What can we learn from the past to help in making future strategic shifts?

- The shift to capital funds was very strategic given where the resources were at the time
- We raised money beyond taxes; got community buy-in
- What drove our past strategy; buildings, capital funding and donors
- Today we need to broaden access for partners
- Must lead in partnership with the schools; finding and building relationships
- How do we be a better partner?
- My rules, your rules: Can we revisit these?

**KEY OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Broaden/provide more services and hours
2. Learning Tools
3. Build capacity/partnerships, including input and output across the county
4. Anticipate needs
Nemitz stated that she is daunted by the lack of growth in financial resources. Anderson noted that collaborations allow the Library to provide more resources. In response to lack of growth in operating funds, RCL shifted its focus to capital expenditures including buildings and technology to add capacity. Volunteers and partners also add capacity, as did industrial engineering. Libraries used to be about transactions, not about relationships with the community.

The Library Board reviewed upcoming steps in the planning process, including the staff in-service day on March 29, the community input process, and the April Board meeting. Nemitz invited all Board members to attend and participate in the staff planning session.

**NEXT MEETING:** April 18, 2012, RCL – North St. Paul, 2300 North St. Paul Drive, 6:30 p.m.

**MEETING ADJOURNED:** 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson,
Library Board Coordinator