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; Kristi Saksvig, Communications Manager; Chuck Wettergren, Automation Services Manager

OTHERS PRESENT:
Jan Parker, Ramsey County Commissioner; Ginny Belden Charles, Strategic Planning Consultant; Nancy Guerino, Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries

CALL TO ORDER:
Mielke called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. in the Fireside Room of the North St. Paul Community Center, 2300 North St. Paul Drive.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
No public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:
The topics North St. Paul Update, Theft at Libraries and Commissioner Update were added to the agenda. Williams made a motion to approve the agenda for April 18, 2012, as amended and the minutes of March 21, 2012 as presented. Anderson seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

LIBRARY GOLD CARD:
Williams made a motion to award a Library Gold Card to Ellie Nicklawske as a symbol of appreciation for her contributions to the Ramsey County Library as a member of the Friends of the Library. Anderson seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

2012 FIRST QUARTER REPORTS:
The Library Board reviewed the first quarter workplan, financial report, statistics, and incident reports.

NORTH ST. PAUL UPDATE:
Nemitz reported that the City of North St. Paul is facing financial cutbacks due to reductions in State Aid. The City is already collaborating with the City of Maplewood to run parks & recreation programs. An architectural study has been commissioned by the City to determine the feasibility and costs of converting the North St. Paul Community Center into a school for children with emotional or behavioral disorders. The facility would be leased to the local school district, which currently pays another district for these services. The Library would remain in the facility, but a private entrance and restroom facilities would be created. Nemitz noted that the lease with the Community Center was never fully executed. Nemitz and Commissioner Reinhardt will meet with City officials.

THEFT OF LIBRARY MATERIALS:
Last week, library staff stopped a patron at the library in White Bear Lake who was attempting to leave the building with a reference book. The item was recovered and the patron left the facility after staff verified that all other items in their possession had been properly checked out. A subsequent conversation between staff at Roseville and White Bear Lake revealed that similar reference books had been stolen from Roseville that day.
Staff used patron records to track the items that had been checked out, and compared security footage at both locations to determine which individuals were implicated in the thefts. Staff obtained permission from Nemitz to block these patron accounts based on the suspicious activity. After consulting with the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office, this information was shared with the other MELSA libraries, which had also had many items stolen. A report was filed with the Ramsey County Sheriff’s Department, and subsequently reports were also filed in four other counties. One of the suspected thieves was arrested at Washington County’s Woodbury Library on May 15. The suspect is cooperating with police, as is a local used bookstore that was buying the books and selling them online.

Nemitz indicated that library staff will examine current policies and procedures to determine if changes are recommended. She noted that the current practices worked well, helping staff detect and track down the individuals involved.

COMMISSIONER UPDATE:
Commissioner Parker reported that Bev Aplikowski will be receiving the Distinguished Leadership Award from the North Suburban Gavel Association on May 16, and recommended that the Library Board meeting scheduled for that evening be postponed or canceled so that Aplikowski and other Board members may attend the dinner. Parker nominated Aplikowski for the award based on her long history of public service.

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE:
Ramsey County Library maintains a technology plan that supports strategic initiatives and operational requirements. It also qualifies the Library to seek state and federal technology funding, including the E-rate program which provides significant discounts for telecommunications. With the current technology planning cycle ending, a new one will be developed later this year to support updated initiatives identified during the Library’s strategic planning process.

The current plan, published in early 2009, identified goals, objectives and strategies in the area of web services, phone systems, network infrastructure, building projects, inventory control (radio frequency identification), and general expansion of many technologies used by the Library. The presentation highlighted several technology initiatives and their impact on staff and library services.

LIBRARY CHECKOUT LIMITS:
There is a disparity in the number of items that can be checked out from libraries in the MELSA area, ranging from 30 in Hennepin County to no checkout limits in Carver County. Ramsey County Library’s limit of 150 is consistent with the checkout limits of the St. Paul Public Library. There are several item-type restrictions within RCL’s total limit of 150 items. Those limits are:

- 20 DVDs
- 20 CDs
- 10 Rental DVDs
- 2 Video Games
- 2 Rental Video Games

Nemitz noted that other MELSA libraries have lowered their checkout limits to ensure adequate resources for all patrons. She recommended further discussion of the limits at the May Library Board meeting, and will ask circulation supervisors to identify the pros and cons of the current limits.

PLANNING UPDATE:
At the Library Board’s March meeting, Board members and senior staff discussed opportunities generated at the February retreat. A summary of that discussion was distributed to the Library Board, along with a copy of the current mission and vision of Ramsey County Library.

The Library’s staff in-service day was held March 29, 2012, at Roseville. Approximately 125 staff and Library Board members listened to a presentation on library trends by Kit Hadley, St. Paul Public Library Director; participated in small group discussions and interviews; and envisioned RCL five years in the future. Summaries of the themes, insights & reactions, and discussions of the small groups were distributed for the Board’s information.
Patron input in the strategic planning process is underway via surveys and interviews at each branch. Nemitz and Walsh have spent two hours at each location distributing surveys and talking with patrons. Nemitz is also meeting individually with each Ramsey County Commissioner to review the strategic planning process and obtain their input and reactions.

Belden Charles noted that several themes emerged from the staff in-service day:

- Collaborations & partnerships
- Staff dedication
- Community necessity
- Alternate sources of revenue to do more
- Connecting with the community
- Outreach
- High-performing
- Cutting edge technology
- Communication

Since it is not possible to do everything, the Library Board and staff must decide where to focus their energies. Will individuals or groups be the top priority? Working with schools has been problematic in the past, but is still a desirable goal.

Belden Charles asked the Board members for the impressions of the current mission and vision statements. She suggested having the strategic planning subcommittee drafts a new mission, vision, tagline and initiatives, for the Library Board to review in May.

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET PROCESS:
Nemitz met with County Manager Julie Kleinschmidt to discuss the 2013 supplemental budget process. The Library currently has an unrestricted fund balance of about 5%; the County target is 7.5%. Kleinschmidt indicated that any planned use of the unrestricted fund balance would require a timeline for replacing the dollars used.

The lease with Cravings for the coffee shop at Maplewood expires this year, and a request for proposals for a new vendor will be issued. Any loss of income during this process could be covered by fund balance. Nemitz also suggested that the Library Board could modify the fines & fees structure around DVDs and make the fees more consistent. The Board members did not see a problem with the current fee structure and declined to address the issue.

Nemitz will return in May with the draft performance measures required for the 2013 budget process. No supplemental request will be submitted to the County Commissioners.

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

MELSA REPORT:
No report.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT:
Guerino reported that the Friends sold $7,830 worth of books at the semi-annual held April 11-15 at Roseville Library, and added 43 new memberships. She thanked the Library Board members who helped with the sale, referred people to it, or bought books.

Reservations are being taken through April 20 for the Friends Annual Luncheon with speaker John Coy at the North Oaks Golf Club on Saturday, April 28.

The Friends are recruiting volunteers and participants for the third Annual BookIt 5K Walk/Run being held at 9 am on May 19 at the Roseville Library. Please encourage your friends, neighbors, relatives, and co-workers to participate in this fun fundraiser for the 2012 Summer Reading Program.

NORTH ST. PAUL LIBRARY UPDATE:
STATISTICS
- North St. Paul's circulation per FTE remains the highest in the system. Circulation in 2011 was 180,210, a slight decrease from 2010, but up 8% since 2008.
- Visits in 2011 are up 14% from 2008. Community Center events such as Fare for All, voting and the fitness partnership with the City of Maplewood continue to bring new patrons into the library.
- Due to RFID tagging, express checkout usage climbed from 29% in 2010 to 58% in 2011. DVD theft is almost completely eliminated.
- Internet public workstation usage is very high (due to the computers located in the Community Center). Our wireless usage continues to grow exponentially, with an increase of 56% from 2010 to 2011.

PROGRAMMING
- Children's Librarian Tami Lee continues to offer creative and engaging storytimes that draw a crowd, including a visit to the new North St. Paul Public Works building. Attendance at children's programs increased from 2,744 in 2010 to 3,581 in 2011 (an increase of 30%) and continues to grow. We recently had to move storytime to a larger room to accommodate the growing numbers!
- Summer Reading Program participation increased greatly in 2011, with pre-schoolers up 45%, elementary readers up about 34% and teen reviews up an impressive 84%. The Fireside Room was packed for Summer Reading Programs such as Brodini, Schifffely Puppets and Magical Mia.
- Local author and resident Tony Ducklow came to the library in September 2011 to discuss his children's book about growing up in North St. Paul, The Summer of the Crows.
- The two book clubs, daytime and evening, continue to draw in patrons for stimulating, well-attended book discussions. The Library offered 23 adult programs to 214 attendees in 2011.
- The community volunteer-led Comic Book Club has disbanded, but RCL Teen Librarian Amy Boese has stepped in and offered monthly programs with a technology focus to North St. Paul teens. In 2011, 199 teens attended 34 programs at North St. Paul.
- A partnership with the North St. Paul Historical Society resulted in The Founding of a Village: North St. Paul's Early Days. This program, presented in February 2012 by Paul Anderson, brought in a full house of 62 attendees on a Saturday afternoon. The city of North St. Paul went above and beyond to promote this event, including giving it front page coverage on their website!

STAFF AND COMMUNITY CENTER
- North St. Paul staff continues to provide great personal service to Library patrons, and works hard to ensure that items are readily available for the browsing public. It can be a struggle to manage a collection in a building the size of North St. Paul, but staff is always willing and able to shift, rearrange and weed in order to keep the collection vital and attractive to patrons.
- In 2011, North St. Paul and Maplewood signed an agreement to share recreation services, which means that the City of Maplewood is taking over scheduling of meeting rooms and housing some programs at the North St. Paul Community Center. Despite busier schedules, the City of Maplewood has been very accommodating with rooms for Library programs and events.

NEXT MEETING: May 23, 2012, Administrative Offices, 4570 North Victoria Street, 6:30 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson,
Library Board Coordinator