LIBRARY BOARD PRESENT:
Matthew Anderson, Beverly Aplikowski, Jeff Johnson, Paula Mielke, Janice Rapheal, Kim Vanderwall, Roberta Weltzin

STAFF PRESENT:
Susan Nemitz, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Bill Michel, Maplewood Library Manager; Lynn Wyman, Deputy Director; Sandy Walsh, Deputy Director; Therese Sonnek, White Bear Lake Library Manager

OTHERS PRESENT:
Sue Gehrz, Mary Carter, Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries

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 White Bear Lake, 4698 Clark Avenue.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
No public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:
Mielke noted that the location of the July Library Board meeting was listed incorrectly in the minutes. Aplikowski made a motion to approve the agenda for August 21, 2013 as presented and the minutes of July 17, 2013 as amended. Johnson seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

FRIENDS ADVOCACY COMMITTEE REPORT:
The mission of the Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries is to strengthen, support, and advocate for the Ramsey County Library system in order to enrich the lives of our library users, to promote literacy and education, and to foster community. On July 22, 2013 the Friends Board of Directors adopted a Strategic Plan for 2013 - 2015. The goals and strategies reflect an emphasis on advocacy, increased funding and expansion of the Friends staff. A new Advocacy Committee was organized in May 2013 to coordinate activities that help educate and equip targeted audiences to communicate the impact and value of public libraries. The committee chair is Mary Carter, and its other members are Paula Mielke, Lori Anne Williams, Julia Loupe, Susan Nemitz, and Sue Gehrz.

The committee members felt strongly that they should work as a team with Library staff and the Library Board, and obtain Library support for its activities. Goals identified for the first two years include:

Year One – Create a presence by attending public budget hearings and Library Board meetings and inviting elected and appointed officials to major events sponsored by the Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries.

Year Two – Align activities with the Library Board, develop impact statements, help Friends members articulate why the public libraries are important to them, and encourage members to meet with their legislators in March during Library Day on the Hill.

PROTESTED MATERIALS OVERVIEW:
The Protested Materials Committee provides the Library’s principal means of assessing and resolving formal complaints against Library materials. If staff cannot informally satisfy a patron who has concerns about specific materials owned by the Library, the person is invited to fill out a Request for Reconsideration Form, outlining specific complaints.
This Reconsideration form goes to the Protested Materials Committee, an ad hoc committee of librarians, which reviews the work in question and prepares a written report to the Library Director. The written report contains a recommendation as to whether the Library should remove, reclassify or retain the work. If the Director concurs with the Committee’s recommendation, a copy of the report is sent to the patron. The patron then has the right to appeal the Library’s decision to the Library Board, or even in rare cases, beyond that level to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners.

The Committee regards its reports as an educational opportunity to explain the Library’s philosophy of inclusion and breadth of collection. It also strives to personalize the Library’s message of service. No individual item in the collection will satisfy every Library patron, but each Library patron is entitled to staff respect and advice when it comes to choosing materials that conform to his or her tastes and values.

Over the past year, there were three formal protests lodged against books. Contrary to the experience of previous years, no complaints against DVDs, CDs or websites were received. Two of the year’s protests have been resolved, and the third is currently being reviewed by the committee.

**MASTER PLANNING FOR SHOREVIEW AND WHITE BEAR LAKE:**
The owner of the corner property on Highway 96 and Victoria Street has decided not to sell. The Library is investigating alternate sites within the Shoreview civic campus. The ice arena site across the street has been suggested for the library. It has potential, but Ramsey County Parks and Recreation is not interested in giving up the site at this time.

The Library met with representatives from Lakeshore Players and the City of Shoreview to discuss the possible purchase of the current library building for a theater facility. Lakeshore Players is interested, and will consider hiring an architectural firm to do a feasibility study.

The property owner nearest the library in White Bear Lake has decided not to sell. That property is not essential to the project, which can go forward as planned, keeping in mind that the property may someday be available.

An RFP is being written to choose a design/build team for the project. It is hoped to have a design team under contract by the beginning of 2014 to achieve a mid-summer construction start date and to have the building fully enclosed by fall. Nemitz asked for a Library Board volunteer to serve on the selection committee for the design/build team.

**2014-2015 BUDGET UPDATE:**
Ramsey County Manager Julie Kleinschmidt submitted her 2014-2015 Proposed Budget to the Board of Commissioners on July 23. Her proposal includes a 0% levy increase for both 2014 and 2015. A total budget increase of $12.5 million in 2014 and $7.6 million in 2015 would be financed with increased Federal funding, State aids, County program revenues and strategic budgeted reallocations. 15 FTE positions will be reduced by the end of the biennium, with most reductions achieved through attrition.

The Library’s proposed budget includes funding for negotiated salary increases and health insurance premiums, and no reductions in FTE. Both library facilities projects were funded; White Bear Lake in 2014 and partial funding for Shoreview in 2015, with the remainder of the Shoreview funding to be included in the next biennial budget.

Paula Mielke, Matt Anderson, and Kim Vanderwall attended the Library’s July 30th budget hearing with the County Board, along with Susan Nemitz, Sandy Walsh, Lynn Wyman, and Mary Larson from Library staff. Sue Gehrz, Executive Director of the Friends, also attended with several members of the Friends’ Advocacy Committee.
Nemitz gave a PowerPoint presentation, which was followed by a discussion with the Commissioners on the Library's performance measures and critical success indicators. Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire stated her desire to increase library hours, particularly at the smaller libraries that are currently open just 35 hours per week. Nemitz noted that the Library is planning to bring a request for additional staffing to increase hours with the 2016-2017 budget request, but would be willing discuss other scenarios if funding was available earlier.

The Ramsey County property tax levy will be certified on September 10, 2013, and the final budget will be approved on December 17, 2013. The Truth in Taxation Hearing will be held on November 25.

**WHITE BEAR LAKE LIBRARY REPORT:**
Therese Sonnek, manager of the library in White Bear Lake, updated the Library Board on activities during the past year. Programming highlights were discussed, along with participation in the 2013 Manitou Days Parade. Sonnek also reported on the White Bear History Challenge, a Legacy-funded partnership with the White Bear Lake Area Historical Society that gives prizes to patrons who locate geocaches or munzees at historical White Bear Lake locations. Customers can borrow a GPS from the Library or use their smartphones to locate the caches. Staff is preparing for the upcoming expansion and remodeling of their facility.

**READ IT DOWN PROGRAM SUMMARY:**
As part of a pilot project for kids and teens, Ramsey County Library invited patrons to participate in Read Down Your Fine events one Saturday each month from May through August. Patrons earned a $1 coupon for every 15 minutes they spent reading (or being read to) in the library. Read It Down was available during all open hours at all seven Ramsey County libraries on these days:

- Saturday, May 18
- Saturday, June 8
- Saturday, July 13
- Saturday, August 10

To participate, patrons:
- Signed in at the beginning of their reading time and signed out at the end.
- Read for 15 minute increments.
- Read in the library.
- Read print media only. Time spent being read to also counted.
- Earned $1 for every 15 minutes of reading.

The fine print:
- No cash value for the coupons.
- Leftover amounts cannot be applied to future charges.
- Coupons were non-transferable. (They can’t give them away.)
- Participants had to bring their coupons to the circulation desk the day they read.
- Coupons were applied to any non-rental fines on children and teen cards.
- Coupons could also be applied to any non-rental fines on children or teen materials on the card of an accompanying adult.

The first program date had a modest turnout, but subsequent dates attracted higher numbers of patrons. Advertising was included in the Summer Reading Program Bookawocky brochure, and on a banner on the RCL website. Almost 300 patrons participated, with an average of $5.44 in fines waived per account (equivalent to about 1.3 hours of reading).

The Library’s Management Team reviewed the pilot program results, and voted to continue the Read It Down program on an ongoing basis year round. The program will be offered on the first Saturday of each month, starting in November 2013.

Managers reported that having the program as an option was helpful in dealing with customers unhappy with fines on their children’s accounts.
DIRECTOR’S REPORT:
The library in Mounds View will be closed August 26–31 for remodeling. The library in New Brighton will be closed September 1–6 for community center annual maintenance.

The Summer Reading Program will end August 18, 2013. Prizes will continue to be provided after that date while supplies last. Participation in the program has been strong. Children’s librarians were successful in visiting 52 schools promoting the importance of summer reading to 3,200 second grade students. Promotional fliers were sent to 19,000 children’s homes. During the twelve weeks of summer, RCL has planned over 428 summer literacy events, nearly 35 a week. The Grammy Award-winning Okee Dokee Brothers performed at Roseville and Maplewood to standing room only crowds. Participants have responded positively to the move from hours spent reading to written and drawn book reviews. These programs would not be possible without the generous support of the Friends of the Library and the MN Arts and Cultural Heritage fund.

Ramsey County Library, in partnership with the St. Paul Public Library, Ramsey County Law Library and LawHelp Minnesota, has begun offering Ramsey County LawHelp. Ramsey County LawHelp provides information about self-help legal resources available to residents, links to nonprofit legal aid and court programs serving Ramsey County, and workshops and other resources available at your local library. The website is available at [http://www.ramseycountylawhelp.org](http://www.ramseycountylawhelp.org).

The Ramsey County Correctional Facility library reopened in May 2013. Ramsey County Library was able to offer surplus furniture, fixtures, and collections to improve accessibility to inmates. Library staff worked with correctional staff to weed and arrange the collection. RCL is also assisting with volunteer recruitment for the Correctional Facility.

MELSA REPORT:
MELSA will sponsor Read and Ride Day at the Minnesota State Fair. Public library card holders will receive discounted admission ticket price on Wednesday, August 28, 2013. MELSA will host a variety of activities under the tent in Carousel Park.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT:
Upcoming events:
- Tuesday, September 24 - Brenda Langton, author and restaurateur, will be featured in the Community Program Room at the library in Roseville from 7 to 9 pm.
- October 23 through 27 – Friends Spooktacular huge used book sale at the library in Roseville. Volunteers are needed.
- October 28 – Friends Board of Directors meeting at 6:30 pm in the library in Roseville.
- February 1 – 6:30 to ? GREAT GATSBY GALA – Fundraiser for the library collection. Break out your fishnet stockings, feather boa and anything with fringe or your gangster duds. Help us raise $20,000 to add 1,000 new items to the library collection. Donations of auction and raffle prizes and volunteers are needed. This fun event will be held at the library in Roseville.

Strategic Plan
- The Friends’ new Strategic Plan was adopted by the Board of Directors on July 22.

NEXT MEETING: September 18, 2013, RCL –Maplewood, 3025 Southlawn Drive, 6:30 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson
Library Board Coordinator