LIBRARY BOARD PRESENT:
Matthew Anderson, John Hakes, Paula Mielke, Jan Rapheal, Kim Vanderwall, Tou Xiong

STAFF PRESENT:
Susan Nemitz, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Bill Michel, Maplewood Library Manager; Kristi Saksvig, Communications Manager; Sandy Walsh, Deputy Director; Lynn Wyman, Deputy Director; Judy Woodward, Protested Materials Chair

OTHERS PRESENT:
Mary Jo McGuire, Ramsey County Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER:
Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Administrative Conference Room of the Ramsey County Library in Shoreview, 4570 North Victoria Street.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
No public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:
Vanderwall made a motion to approve the agenda August 27, 2014 and the minutes of June 20, 2014, as presented. Rapheal seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

AUTOMATION SPENDING APPROVAL:
The Library is planning to enhance technology throughout the library in White Bear Lake, with an emphasis on expanding the number of public computers to 38 and updating audio visual technology. Much of its existing equipment is being repurposed to update the remaining branches in support of the Library’s technology replacement cycle. MELSA Phase Funds have been designated for this project, and technology will be purchased using the best pricing available through Ramsey County and State of MN master contracts.

Vanderwall made a motion to approve spending of $87,000 from 2014 MELSA Phase Funds for technology in the expanded and remodeled Ramsey County Library in White Bear Lake, scheduled for re-opening in 2015. All purchases will be made utilizing existing Ramsey County/State of Minnesota master contracts and purchasing procedures. Rapheal seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

GIFT ACCEPTANCE:
The Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries have a capital campaign goal of $200,000 for amenities for the library in White Bear Lake. As of July 29, the Friends have raised $42,366 in cash and $5,000 in pledges. The Friends have given $7,195 in capital campaign funds to the Library, including $5,000 in 2013, leaving a balance of $35,171.

At the July 21, 2014, Board of Directors meeting, the Board approved a loan of $12,000 to this capital campaign to enable the Friends to fund two of the highest priority structural amenities—the fireplace ($18,000) and the sliding glass room divider ($30,000), for a total cost of $48,000. These items must be included in the early construction phase, and cannot be added later without incurring significant additional cost.

The Friends donated $43,000 to the Library to fund these amenities, to be combined with the $5,000 gift donated in 2013.
Vanderwall made a motion to accept the Friends of the Ramsey County Library capital campaign donation of $43,000 to be added to the $5,000 given in 2013 for a total of $48,000 to be used for the fireplace and the sliding glass room divider at the Ramsey County Library in White Bear Lake. Rapheal seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

2014 SECOND QUARTER REPORTS:
The Library Board reviewed the second quarter workplan, financial report, statistics, and incident reports.

LIBRARY MATERIALS CONTRACT:
Ramsey County Library obtains the bulk of its books through a primary library materials vendor, currently Ingram Library Services, Inc. The term of Ingram’s current contract expired on July 31, 2014, prompting a review of library materials vendor services.

In accordance with Ramsey County solicitation policies, Library staff prepared a request for bid for the services of library materials vendors. The RFB was reviewed and approved by the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office. Responses were due on July 24th, and bids were received from four vendors:

1. Baker & Taylor
2. Brodart
3. Ingram Library Services, Inc.
4. Scholastic

An analysis completed by library staff included reviewing discounts on materials and costs for processing. The lowest responsive and responsible bidder was Ingram Library Services, Inc.

Mielke made a motion to award the contract of primary library materials vendor to Ingram Library Services, Inc., with contract period to commence August 1, 2014 and run through July 31, 2015, with an option to renew on an annual basis up to four additional years. Motion subject to the approval of the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office. Vanderwall seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

WRITE-OFF OF UNCOLLECTIBLE DEBT:
According to the Library’s Receivables Policy, approved 7-15-09, when an account is determined to be uncollectible, the account may be written off the Library’s financial accounting records and no longer recognized as an account receivable for financial reporting purposes. The write-off of a receivable should be considered only when one or more of the following criteria have been met:

- At least six years have elapsed since the debt was incurred;
- All reasonable and appropriate collection efforts have been exhausted;
- The Library determines that further collection efforts are not in the best economic interests of the County;
- No reasonable expectation of payment can be expected.

The Library shall obtain approval from the County Attorney’s Office to write-off uncollectible accounts of less than $1,000. The Library shall document the reasons for the write-off and make such documentation available for review by the County Attorney’s Office. Write-off of debts $1,000 or more must be approved by the Library Board.

The Library identified 7,476 accounts meeting the criteria for write-off, totaling $102,493.22. None of these accounts exceed the $1,000 threshold requiring Library Board approval, and nearly two-thirds are $10 or less. They will be forwarded to the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office and Finance Department as outlined in the Library’s Receivables Policy.
PROTESTED MATERIALS UPDATE:
The Protested Materials Committee provides the chief avenue to assess and resolve complaints about 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.

The 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 has the right to appeal the Library’s decision to the Library Board, or in rare cases, beyond that level to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners.

The Committee regards the reports as an educational opportunity to explain the Library’s philosophy of inclusion and breadth of collection, and strives to personalize the 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.

Last year, the committee received complaints against a DVD from the general collection, a children’s picture book, and the works of an author named Tom Knox, who writes adult thrillers. Complaints centered on excessive violence in the case of the writer and the DVD. The children’s book was a picture book on sex education that the complainant wished to have relocated in the collection.

The committee recommended that the picture book be retained and reclassified, and that no action be taken in the case of the other two protests and that the materials involved be retained in their present status. The committee’s reports were in all cases accepted by the patrons involved, and no protest was appealed beyond the level of the Library Director.

LIBRARY BOARD VACANCIES:
This fall, the Library Board will need to fill two vacancies following the resignation of Jeff Johnson and the move by Matt Anderson outside the suburban Ramsey County service area. Ramsey County is currently accepting applications through September 5 to fill these vacancies.

To ensure that the vacancies are filled with qualified people representing a broad spectrum of age, race, gender, professional background, and skill sets, Nemitz developed a matrix to determine the Board’s priorities as it moves forward to fill the open trustee positions. The Library Board members suggested modifications to the document, which will be completed by each member.

Library Board Trustees Jan Rapheal and Kim Vanderwall have terms expiring at the end of this year, and both are eligible for reappointment. The current vacancies are in Ramsey County Commissioner Districts 2 and 7.

RAMSEY COUNTY BRANDING INITIATIVE:
Kristi Saksvig, Library Communications Manager, served as a department representative on the Ramsey County Branding Committee. The Library Board discussed the new logo and the proposed brand architecture at its June meeting, and requested additional information on branding practices in the metro area.

After contacting other metro counties about their brand, Library staff has found that libraries and parks & recreation are typically the only departments that have separate logos. These unique logos generally fall into the specific county’s architecture with modifications to make it their own.

Nemitz recommended that the Library Board follow this standard, utilizing a slightly modified version of the Ramsey County brand. The Library could continue to use the ‘coffee guy’ and other doodles to maintain whimsy and creativity on the website and in the newsletter and other publications. The Library Board discussed the recommendations, and decided to table the issue until the next meeting.
NORTH ST. PAUL UPDATE:
The City of North St. Paul signed a lease agreement with Ability Academic and Athletic, LLC on 8/19/14. The tenant will rent about 26,000 square feet of the community center (79%) for a 3rd thru 12th grade school and athletic training facility named Bauer-Emerson Preparatory Academy.

The lease runs for five years, with an option for an additional five years. The school will build bathrooms in the former Polar Den to serve library patrons, and the rest of the building will be closed off to the public. Remodeling is currently underway, with classes starting September 2.

WHITE BEAR LAKE PROJECT UPDATE:
The Phase II contract with Knutson Construction and Bentz/Thompson/Rietow has been signed. A groundbreaking ceremony was held on July 18. Vanderwall, Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt, White Bear Lake Mayor Jo Emerson, and Friends Director Sue Gehrz all spoke about the importance of libraries and the future of library service in the White Bear Lake area. The event was attended by about 100 people.

A group of 68 volunteers from Medtronic helped pack the collection. They managed to pack 95% of the collection in just two hours. The collection is being stored in rental units offsite; shelving and other items to be re-used were placed in a pod in the library parking lot.

The Friends sale of used books and furniture was a great success, making more than $13,000. Almost all the furniture and equipment was sold.

The White Bear Lake Planning Commission voted to approve the rezoning of the property at 2180 - 2nd Street to public use and to approve the Library’s revised conditional use permit (CUP), which incorporates the adjacent property in to the library site. The revised CUP was approved by the White Bear Lake City Council on August 11. The request for rezoning had its first public hearing that evening as well. The final decision on rezoning will occur in at the White Bear Lake City County meeting in September. The acquisition of the extra property and the timeline required for a new CUP and rezoning has extended the project timeline. The schedule now calls for substantial completion of the building by February 24. This moves the likely opening date to sometime in March.

The newly adjacent neighbors at 2192 - 2nd Street have met with Library and County staff to discuss the driveway easement and screening of their property. The neighbors are interested in purchasing the Library’s half of their driveway to eliminate the easement. They would also like to purchase one additional foot of property along the driveway to build a fence to strengthen the barrier between their property and the parking lot. A purchase agreement has been sent to the neighbors by the County.

Bids are being sought for various aspects of the project. The steel, site work and demolition packages came in as budgeted. The final, comprehensive bid package will be issued the week of August 25 and be due September 9. Hazardous materials are being removed from both the library and the property at 2180 - 2nd Street. Demolition is expected to begin the week of August 25.

The Library in White Bear Lake is being assigned a new address, 2150 - 2nd Street. The new address will be effective as of September 1, 2014.

White Bear Lake staff has been reassigned to other libraries. Both Shoreview and Maplewood have noticed increased business.

The Friends are proceeding with the White Bear Lake capital campaign. Members of the campaign committee met with library staff, the project architect, and the landscape architect to discuss preliminary plans for the reading garden along Clark Avenue.
Work has begun on the interior design. Finishes have been specified and furniture and millwork are being chosen and/or designed. Sue Gehrz, Friends’ Executive Director, will participate in the meetings to coordinate library needs and Friends fundraising efforts. The Friends have approved funding for the fireplace and the sliding door in the community program room.

**SHOREVIEW PROJECT UPDATE:**
Ramsey County closed on the property at the corner of Highway 96 and Victoria Street. Elements of the property are being salvaged. When that process is complete the buildings will be demolished.

The City of Shoreview has executed a purchase agreement for the remaining residential property within the City campus area of Highway 96; the City Council approved the purchase. Closing will occur sometime between October 31, 2014 and April 30, 2015, after the former home owners have made alternate living arrangements.

The Library met with Commissioner Huffman, Commissioner McGuire, Shoreview Mayor Sandy Martin, Shoreview City Manager Terry Schwerm, and County Property Management Director Bruce Thompson to discuss the possibilities at the Shoreview site. New opportunities have opened up with the acquisition of both properties along Highway 96. The group discussed building an entirely new library closer to the corner and potential re-uses for the existing building. The City and County would have to agree on the joint use of the two residential properties.

Since the Shoreview Feasibility Study was completed before the adjacent properties were purchased, it did not address the current scenario. It was agreed that a pre-design should be undertaken to explore all the options for a relocated library, including grade level changes, parking, and the ultimate location for the Library’s Administrative Offices and Technical Services.

The Library is in the process of hiring HGA to develop the pre-design under a professional services contract. Their findings should be available in late 2014.

At the Library’s budget hearing with the County Commissioners, Nemitz explained the opportunities afforded by acquiring additional property along Highway 96, and that the budget request for the Shoreview project may need to be adjusted. There will be two separate bond sales for Shoreview, one in 2015 and one in 2016. Since the 2016 budget is part of the next two-year budget cycle, the Library could request additional funding at that time, if necessary.

**ETHICS ISSUE:**
Nemitz reported that she was recently accused of an ethics violation stemming from outside consulting work she occasionally performs. She sought a legal opinion from the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office before accepting her first consulting position, and donated the payment she received for the work to the Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries. Library Board Chair Matt Anderson sent a letter to Ramsey County Manager Julie Kleinschmidt supporting Nemitz, noting that the Library Board has encouraged her to expand her skill set as a library director.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**
The Library’s budget hearing with the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners took place on August 12. Library Board member John Hakes attended as well as a large group from the Friends of the Library. The Commissioners were pleased with the performance measures and the recommendation is to include funding for the library in Shoreview in the 2015 budget.

White Bear Lake staff, volunteers and Friends marched in the Manitou Days parade on June 20.

Packing up the library in White Bear Lake was aided by a group of employees from Medtronic. They packed more than 56,000 items; nearly 2,500 boxes of materials.
The ground breaking for the library in White Bear Lake took place on July 18. A large group showed up to celebrate the project. Board member Kim Vanderwall emceed the event.

The Library hired a commercial real estate agent, Jeff Salzbrun of Essence Real Estate Services, to market the coffee shop space at the library in Maplewood

Wednesday, August 27, is the Minnesota State Fair discount day for library users. Anyone showing a library card at the ticket booth will receive a discount. As part of the celebration there will be a Read & Ride library event in Carousel Park (in front of the Grandstand) from 9:00am-5:00pm with free family activities.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT:
To date, the Friends have raised $45,000 toward the White Bear Lake capital campaign goal of $200,000. The sale of books and furnishings netted $13,726. Five foundation grant applications have been submitted, 12,000 flyers have been distributed, a campaign booth was manned at Market Fest, and the Friends are busy planning future activities to raise awareness and private donations.

The Friends Board of Directors authorized a loan to the Capital Campaign that enabled the Friends to provide a total of $48,000 to fund the fireplace and sliding glass room divider. These amenities must be included in the construction plans and could not be added at a later time.

An energetic, enthusiastic planning committee is working on making the Feb. 7, 2015, Great Gatsby Gala a wonderfully successful fundraiser for the library collection. The goal is to add 1,500 additional items to the collection by netting $30,000. Please reserve that date on your calendar.

A delegation from our Board of Directors attended the August 12th Budget Hearing and greatly enjoyed Susan Nemitz’s presentation and the responses from the County Commissioners.

This month the Friends launched a new web site at www.rclfriends.org. The Friends greatly appreciate all the help from Chuck Wettergren in making this happen.

The first Great Gatsby Gala has been selected as one of three finalists for the Best Friends Project of 2014 by the Minnesota Association of Library Friends (MALF). The Friends will be making a presentation about this project at the Minnesota Library Association Conference on October 9 in Mankato.

From 4:30 to 8:30 on Monday, September 15, the Friends will host a MALF-sponsored program at the library in Roseville called, “Ten things I know to be true. . .” This program is for Friends members throughout the metropolitan region. The speaker will be Melissa Brechon, Director of the Carver County Library.

NEXT MEETING: September 17, 2014 – RCL-New Brighton, 400 10th Street NW, Room 209, 6:30 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson
Library Board Coordinator