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

LIBRARY BOARD ABSENT:
Jan Rapheal

STAFF PRESENT:
Susan Nemitz, Library Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Bill Michel, Maplewood Library Manager; Kristi Saksvig, Communications Manager; Sandy Walsh, Deputy Director; Meg Robertson, New Brighton Library Manager; Jason Lyons, Digital Literacy Coordinator

OTHERS PRESENT:
Mary Jo McGuire, Ramsey County Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER:
Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the New Brighton Community Center, 400 – 10th Street N.W.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
No public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:
Mielke made a motion to approve the agenda for September 17, 2014 and the minutes of August 27, 2014, as presented. Hakes seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

STATE LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION GRANT APPLICATION:
The State of Minnesota offers the opportunity to compete for Library Construction Grants. The 2014 Minnesota Legislature allocated a total of $2,000,000 to the program, with $570,000 for the city of Jackson, $257,000 for the city of Perham, $50,000 for the city of Bagley, and remaining funds for competitive grant awards. An estimated $1,123,000 in state funding is available to award approximately five grants.

Ramsey County Library would apply for an Improvement Grant. These grants are available for projects that renovate or expand an existing building or to construct a new building. Renovation may include projects that remediate conditions that are hazardous to health or safety. The maximum grant award is $1,000,000, or 50% of approved costs for the entire project, whichever is less.

Library Construction Grants require a dollar for dollar local match from non-state funds. Projects may not have started prior to the enactment of the 2014 bonding bill. The Minnesota Department of Education will not reimburse any costs incurred prior to execution of the grant agreement, which is expected to occur in late January 2015. If the Library ever sells the building in White Bear Lake the State may claim up to the grant amount of the proceeds.

Minnesota Statutes 16B.335 requires projects with a construction cost of $1,500,000 or more to submit a pre-design package to the Minnesota Department of Administration, which will review and make a recommendation within ten business days. RCL submitted a pre-design package on September 11, 2014. The grant period is anticipated to start January 2015, and projects must be completed by June 30, 2019.

Vanderwall made a motion authorizing staff to submit an application for a State Library Construction Grant in the amount of $200,000 for the White Bear Lake project. Paula seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.
ELECTION OF OFFICERS:
With Anderson leaving the Library Board this fall, a new Chairperson must be elected to serve for the remainder of 2014. Additional officer vacancies that may result after the new Chair is elected must also be filled.

Anderson nominated Vanderwall as Chairperson, Rapheal as Vice Chair, and Hakes as Secretary, and moved their election as officers for the remainder of 2014. Xiong seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

DIGITAL LITERACY PROJECT UPDATE:
Since the birth of the Digital Literacy Project in early 2006, Ramsey County Library has continued to make digital literacy training a priority. As public demand has increased, the number of digital literacy related programming has grown. In 2006, the project started with curricula for three classes. As of today, there are curricula written for 49 different digital literacy related classes. 2013 was the busiest year to date as Ramsey County Library offered 443 digital literacy programs to 2,769 students. This growth was made possible by sponsorship from the Friends of the Library (who provide financial help and volunteers) and additional instructors from outside organizations and partnerships.

As technology changes, so has the need to update curriculum and resources. Ramsey County Library currently has five mobile computer labs (each containing 15 laptops) that have recently been updated from Window XP to the Windows 7 Operating System. In response to the need for instruction using the Windows 8.1 OS, the library purchased a Windows Surface tablet containing the Windows 8.1 OS to use for instruction. Navigating Windows 8 has been the most attended class through the first 2 quarters of 2014.

3D printers that were originally purchased for young adult programming created a surprising interest to adult learners. In response, youth curriculum was modified for adults and 3D Printing has been one of the most popular adult classes over the past year.

As more users move to mobile devices to access information, programming has changed to reflect this. New classes were designed after the library purchased two mobile iPad labs to be used for instruction for all ages. In addition, a variety of mobile devices were purchased including a Kindle Fire, Nook tablet, and a Samsung Galaxy tablet for staff use to learn the skills needed for public instruction. Ramsey County Library continues to offer basic skills classes (computer basics, internet basics, word processing), but the library’s response to new technologies keeps digital literacy programming fresh and new.

In 2012, The MELSA Jobs and Small Business Task Force allocated resources to build job readiness skills metro-wide, these funds were used to contract with the Science Museum of Minnesota to offer a variety of Microsoft Office classes. Since then, the Science Museum has offered 69 Microsoft Office classes (Basic Word, Basic Excel, and Basic PowerPoint) to 648 students. RCL continues to average the highest attendance of all MELSA library systems offering classes instructed by the Science Museum.

In addition to the Science Museum, in the fall of 2014, MELSA also began contracting with Twin Cities Media Alliance (TCMA) to instruct digital literacy related curricula at metro library systems. Twin Cities Media Alliance has help broaden the variety of digital literacy classes offered at the libraries. Ramsey County Law Librarian, Sara Galligan, routinely offers class on finding legal information on the web at various Ramsey County libraries.

Recently, the library partnered with Minitex to instruct Ramsey County Library patrons on state funded digital library resources that include magazine and newspaper databases and the newly funded LearningExpress Library that features nearly 1,000 online tutorials and practice tests to help users in the areas of job search, exam prep, and workplace skills improvement.
The Friends of the Library continue to work with Comcast Internet Essentials on class sponsorship. Thus far in 2014, Comcast has sponsored 12 classes providing $6,000 to help fund the project.

In addition to offering structured digital literacy programs in a classroom environment, Ramsey County Library continues to offer one-to-one tech help where patrons are free to walk in for individual help without need of registration. The tech help sessions are usually staffed by both librarians and AmeriCorps CTEP members.

Starting this September, three CTEP members will be serving at Ramsey County Library. Keegan La Schiava will be working with Jason Lyons and focusing on adults and the Digital Literacy Project, Drake Myers will be working with Marcus Lowry at Roseville with youth and technology. And returning for a second year of service, Khou Yang will be working with Amy Boese at Maplewood with youth and technology.

With the addition of the increasingly popular eBook collection, patrons have been seeking help with various devices to access this new media. In response, Ramsey County Library continues to offer a separate one-to-one help lab devoted to using eReaders and downloading eBooks.

NEW BRIGHTON BRANCH UPDATE:
TRENDS IN THE SERVICE AREA:
• Cardiovascular Systems, Inc, a New Brighton medical device manufacturer, is building a $30 million headquarters on the NW corner of 35W & 694 and doubling its workforce.
• The Mounds View school district’s Early College program has been recognized as the top local government innovation in the state by the Humphrey School of Public Affairs.
• Mounds View school district consistently reports scores above the national or state median. However, fewer than half (44%) of 3rd grade readers are meeting or exceeding standards.
• The American Community Survey 2010-2012 reports a poverty rate in New Brighton of 11.8%. Of these residents, 22.4% are under age 5.
• Almost one third of households are considered cost burdened—paying 30% or more of income for monthly housing costs.
• Families with children account for only 29% of households in New Brighton and average household size is 2.34.
• 70% of Mounds View public school district residents do not currently have students in the schools.
• The New Brighton Community Center is doing well—visits have increased from 345,000 in 2010 to 475,000 in 2013. A Subway restaurant opened a year ago and construction will be starting soon on a restroom/locker room renovation project and will last through the winter.

LIBRARY ISSUES AND SERVICE TRENDS:
• Circulation is down at New Brighton as it is at all RCL branches. New Brighton circ has seen a slightly larger decline—averaging a 10% loss in the first two quarters of 2014.
• Visits are also down an average of 5% in the first two quarters of 2014.
• Programming turnout is a challenge at the New Brighton location. The music series done jointly with the NBCC had moderate attendance, New Brighton Historical Society programs have been well attended, baby storytime attendance is uneven and some programs that require registration (adult computer programs and Artsy Smartsy as well as kids summer programs) end up with far fewer attending than registered.
• The fireplace has a screen and is ready for winter. Magazine use and reading room use have gone up.
• The non-requestable collection remains popular with library patrons although the demand for fiction is not as strong as it is for DVDs and for popular nonfiction.
• Ebook reader device checkout has declined.
• The Library continues to add commissioned artwork. A project by artist Nick Legeros is underway for the children’s collection room, and storytime quilts created for New Brighton are in use at baby storytimes as well as hanging in the children’s area.
INNOVATION-RCL AND CORRECTIONS:
- Children’s librarian, Tami Lee brings a Parent Read and library information to the Ramsey County Correctional Facility. The programs are monthly, with RCL staff alternating with SPPL staff.
- Met with SPPL librarian Sheila Winderlich and John Menke, assistant director of Ramsey County Community Corrections to plan for a joint library information brochure for use in the probations department.
- Coordinated a Capstone project for St. Catherine’s library school students to develop a selection policy for the Ramsey County Correctional Facility.
- Presenting at Minnesota Library Association conference with Martha Riel, Washington County Library, on Public Library connections with Corrections.

RAMSEY COUNTY BRANDING INITIATIVE UPDATE:
Library staff met with John Siqveland, the recently-hired Communications Director for Ramsey County, to discuss the new brand architecture and the implementation schedule adopted by the County. Nemitz noted that the Library Board, as the independent governing board for the Library, has the authority to adopt its own brand architecture. Siqveland recommended that the Library discuss its intent with County Manager Julie Kleinschmidt.

The Library Board discussed metrics for measuring the success of a brand, as well as their thoughts on the Library brand as determined by the County. The Board members had some concerns, primarily with the logo for library facilities versus the logo on letterhead, business cards, etc.

Nemitz asked the Library Board to postpone any official voting on the brand issue until she can speak with the County Manager. The Library Board concurred.

WHITE BEAR LAKE PROJECT UPDATE:
On September 9, the White Bear Lake City Council formally approved the rezoning of the property at 2180 – 2nd Street to public use and the Library’s revised Conditional Use Permit (CUP), which incorporates the adjacent property into the library site. 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.

Ramsey County has delivered a purchase agreement to the neighbors at 2192 – 2nd Street to eliminate the driveway easement and allow the building of a screening fence on their property.

Library, County and Knutson staff met with the library’s immediate neighbors to discuss construction plans and identify people to contact in case of problems.

Final bids for the project have been received and they are on budget. A fence has been erected around the work site and demolition work has begun inside the library building. Workers found more hazardous material in the house at 2180 – 2nd Street than was expected. This has forced a delay in the demolition of the house.

The Friends are proceeding with the White Bear Lake capital campaign. Grant applications have been submitted to three local foundations; grants are expected to be announced in November.

Work has begun on the interior design. The next design meeting is scheduled for September 17. Interior finishes and samples will be brought to the Library Board in October.

SHOREVIEW FACILITIES PLANNING UPDATE:
With the upcoming retirement of Sandy Walsh in February 2015, Bill Michel will be taking over project management responsibilities for the library in Shoreview.

Salvage activities at the house on the corner of Highway 96 and Victoria Street continue.
The Library has a contract with Hammel, Green & Abrahamson (HGA) to develop a pre-design for the Ramsey County Library in Shoreview. A team consisting of Susan Nemitz, Sandy Walsh, Lynn Wyman, and Bill Michel from the Library and Bruce Thompson from Ramsey County Property Management has begun meeting with a team from HGA. The pre-design is expected to answer the following questions:

- Is an “assembled” site of the existing library along with the two residential properties large enough for a new single-level 28,000 square foot library? A 38,000 square foot facility with both a library and administration?
- How could the significant variations in elevation on the assembled site be managed?
- Could a new library along highway 96 be supported by adequate parking without removing the existing library building?
- If the existing building is maintained and a new library is constructed along the highway, which is the better location for the Library’s administrative functions?
- What are the major costs associated with developing this assembled site?

A final report is due Dec. 1. Hakes volunteered to serve as the Library Board liaison to the planning group.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**

The staff In-Service Day will be held Monday, October 13, 2014. The libraries will be closed.

Several staff members traveled to Wisconsin to explore the Bubbler @ Madison Public Library. The Library as learning center is taken to a new level with this program. It offers animation, screen printing, music composition, clothing design, dance, painting and other workshops using local experts and artists. The library provides public studio and media lab space and offers an artist in residence program. RCL staff came back with many great ideas.

Each branch has been hosting volunteer recognition parties over the last few months. Volunteers have greatly improved the quality of services that the Library can provide patrons. Nemitz recognized the branch volunteer coordinators and Heidi Holland, the system coordinator, for their efforts.

The Library’s Management Team continued its racial equity training with Heather Hackman. Kim Vanderwall from the Library Board has joined the training as well.

Much discussion has occurred around the staffing consequences of Sandy Walsh’s retirement in February 2015. The decision has been made to move to a one deputy director model. Sandy’s responsibilities for facility project management are being shifted to Bill Michel, the Maplewood Branch Manager. Bill will immediately take over the management for the Shoreview project.

Nemitz met with Carrie Watts, the North St. Paul branch manager and Tom Forsythe, one of the owners of the Bauer-Emerson Preparatory Academy, to discuss the opening weeks of sharing the joint facility. The school has around 90 students at this time and expects to grow to 180. The teen space is heavily used and the comfortable seating seemed greatly appreciated. Work on new restrooms should begin soon.

Nemitz was nominated to serve on the Minitex Policy Advisory Council as the representative for the metropolitan area Minnesota public libraries. The first meeting is scheduled for December 5.

The Northtown Library in Anoka County reopened after a four-month interior remodeling that cost just over $1 million.

Nemitz reported on two incidents that occurred recently at the Ramsey County Library in Roseville. A patron was gravely injured after falling down the staircase in the library’s atrium. A partial power outage caused damage to some equipment.
FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT:
The Friends have received $48,133 from donations and the sale of books and furnishings for the White Bear Lake Capital Campaign. Checks totaling $48,000 were issued to RCL for the fireplace and sliding glass room divider. Donations are coming in slowly; hopefully the pace will pick up once construction actually starts.

One of the most important positions in the Friends organization is the volunteer Treasurer. Doug Smith recently retired after serving as Treasurer for nine years. The new Treasurer is Greg Bromen, a former CPA who lives in Roseville and practices law in Minneapolis.

The next semi-annual book sale will run from October 22 through 26 at the library in Roseville.

The 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). Gehrz will be making a presentation about this project at the Minnesota Library Association Conference on October 9 in Mankato.

NEXT MEETING: October 15, 2014 – RCL-Maplewood, 3025 Southlawn Drive, 6:30 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson
Library Board Coordinator