RAMSEY COUNTY Library

Minutes of the Ramsey County Library Board
March 15, 2017

LIBRARY BOARD PRESENT:
Marisol Chiclana-Ayala, Craig Klausing, Paula Mielke, Kim Vanderwall

LIBRARY BOARD ABSENT:
John Hakes, Janice Rapheal

STAFF PRESENT:
Jill Boldenow, Library Director; Lynn Wyman, Deputy Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Jeff Eide, Policy & Planning Manager; Bill Michel, Facilities Planning Manager; Monica Stratton, North St. Paul Library Manager

OTHERS PRESENT:
Mary Jo McGuire, Ramsey County Commissioner; Cyndi Cook, Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries Director; Les Sipkema, Shoreview Resident

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CALL TO ORDER:
Vanderwall called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Teen Room of the Ramsey County Library in North St. Paul, 2300 North St. Paul Drive.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
Les Sipkema, Shoreview resident, discussed his research into flight crashes and investigations.

INTRODUCTIONS:
Cyndi Cook, the new Executive Director of the Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries, was introduced to the Library Board members. Cook has held leadership roles in both nonprofit organizations and state government, including serving as the executive director of Praxis International and the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women. Cook started with the Friends in February 2017.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:
Mielke made a motion to approve the agenda for March 15, 2017 and the minutes of January 18, 2017, as presented. Chiclana-Ayala 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. Ramsey County Library is currently in the process of gathering the required data for submission.

Policymakers, library administrators and the general public 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).

Mielke made a motion to authorize the Library Board Chair and Library Director to sign and submit the 2016 Public Library Annual Report to the Office of State Library Services as mandated. Chiclana-Ayala seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

The Library has launched a new campaign on the theme **All Are Welcome Here**. RCL branches are displaying these signs. This month, additional signage in branches and on the website invites customers to take an online survey (available at www.rclreads.org/Welcome) to tell us how we can do even better at welcoming and serving everyone.

One of RCL's guiding principles is to provide services to the whole spectrum of the community. At this time, due to threatening public policy proposals and acts of hate against certain groups, some community members may not feel safe at every government agency. Staff want the public to know that they are welcome and safe at the library. **All Are Welcome Here** was created by a group of designers in Minnesota. Thousands of these signs are now all around the state, in people's lawns, in offices and businesses, and online. RCL is excited to join this effort to emphasize respect and inclusiveness in our community. Many library colleagues across the country are sharing similar messages.

For the past two years, Library staff have participated in a Racial Equity Book Club—discussing select titles at staff in-service days. At the April 6 training, staff will discuss the YA book, *See No Color*, by Shannon Gibney. We are pleased that Gibney, a local author, will join us for the sessions. Previous Racial Equity Book Club titles are: *A Good Time for the Truth*, ed. by Sun Yung Shin; *Between the World and Me*, by Ta-Nehisi Coates; *Waking Up White*, by Debby Irving; and *Citizen*, by Claudia Rankine.

Boldenow attended Minnesota Library Association Legislative Day on Feb. 22 with RCL librarians Amy Boese (current MLA President), Therese Sonnek, Monica Stratton, Ann Wahlstrom, and Frances Veit. They visited several legislators whose Ramsey County districts are served by our libraries, and discussed funding for regional library systems, Legacy-funded arts and cultural programming, and broadband and telecommunications aid.

RCL children's librarians and other staff held a very successful Kindergarten Card Party on January 21 at Roseville Library. They gave 329 kindergartners their first library card at the event, which was attended by 1,000 friends and family. (A total of 1,552 card applications was processed.) Newbery Honor Winner and National Book Award Finalist Grace Lin gave a fantastic presentation—reading and illustrating for the attendees.

On January 28, we hosted a festive grand opening at Shoreview Library. We welcomed 4,100 visitors, checked out 5,500 items, and gave out 3,000 cookies. Thank you to all of the Library Board members for celebrating with us, especially Kim Vanderwall and John Hakes for speaking at the program along with Commissioner Huffman, Sue Gehrz, and City Councilmember Cory Springhorn. Customers gave glowing reviews, and we saw how well the library accommodates many different activities. Kudos to all of the staff who planned and contributed to this project, staff who worked at the grand opening, and to everyone across RCL who has supported their colleagues throughout. RCL has completed a 10-year facility master plan and introduced a fabulous new library.

Library staff are working toward the April 10 deadline to deliver a target 2018-2019 budget to the Ramsey County Finance Department.

Library IT staff have submitted surveys of work roles and responsibilities to the County IS Department. County and Library staff will use the survey data to inform the direction of IT consolidation plans.

FRIENDS OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARIES REPORT:

After nine years of exceptional leadership, Sue Gehrz has retired as the executive director of the Friends. Cyndi Cook came on board as the new Friends executive director in February 2017. Cyndi brings a proven record of accomplishment in effective leadership, fundraising, and community engagement, as well as a deep commitment to working with communities in ways that account for race, age, gender, and class inequities in society and the institutions that serve communities.

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She has held leadership roles in both nonprofit organizations and state government including serving as the Battered Women's Program Director for the State of Minnesota and as the executive director of Praxis International and the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women. A resident of Roseville, Cyndi is passionate about the role that the seven suburban Ramsey County libraries serve as community builders and looks forward to taking up the Friends mission to strengthen, support and advocate for the Ramsey County Library system in order to enrich the lives of library users, to promote literacy and education, and to foster community.

Donations and pledges made so far to the Shoreview Capital Campaign total $193,296. There has been tremendous community support for this new regional library, illustrated in part by the many plaques that acknowledge major gifts from individuals, community service organizations and foundations, and local businesses. The Friends are very grateful to the local Chinese community for raising more than $12,800 since the Shoreview Library grand opening at the end of January. $8,000 will go toward naming rights for the interior oak bench created from trees reclaimed from the new library site and $5,000 is dedicated for a major art piece by a local artist.

Join the Friends on April 1, 2017 from 6:30-9:30 p.m. to have fun and support a great cause at the annual gala, *"Kids at Heart-a night to support the Ramsey County Libraries and celebrate Children's Literature."* More than 250 people have attended past galas and this year the Friends hope to raise $30,000 to add 1,500 new items to the library lending collections in Maplewood, Mounds View, New Brighton, North Saint Paul, Roseville, Shoreview, and White Bear Lake. Live music, hors d'oeuvres, wine, costume contest, silent and live auctions, games and prizes. Please visit **rclfriends.org/gala2017** to register.

Thanks to generous donors, members, volunteers, event sponsors, and bookstore sales in 2016, the Friends were able to provide $300,817 in direct grants to the Ramsey County Library to support vital programs and resources and add $87,165 worth of donated books to the library collection. In addition, Friends volunteers contributed more than 7,000 hours of volunteer time last year, worth over $176,000. Members, donors and volunteers are always finding new and creative ways to contribute their ideas, talents, money, and time to support the wonderful libraries in suburban Ramsey County.

The Friends book sales are on hiatus for 2017, as they no longer have the storage space to accumulate books for the semi-annual book sales. The Friends are currently exploring storage and shipping options for possible future book sales. In the meantime, they are working with an international online book re-seller, Thriftbooks, to sell the books unable to sell through the Friends library bookstore and cart locations. Books are shipped to them, sold online, and the Friends receive a percentage of the profits.

The Book It! 5K Walk/Run will be held at 9:00 am on Saturday, September 16, 2017 at the Roseville Library. Runners, walkers, strollers, volunteers, children, and library lovers are all invited to participate in this family-friendly fundraiser. Proceeds will support the Summer Reading Program for children and teens at all seven Ramsey County Library locations.

The Friends Annual Luncheon will be held on Saturday, October 14, 2017 at the North Oaks Country Club. The program will feature both celebrated mystery writer Erin Hart and her husband, Irish musician and author Paddy O'Brien. Join us for a delightful morning of traditional Irish music and discussion of Hart's archaeological crime novels set in the mysterious boglands of Ireland. All members of the Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries will receive a reservation flyer in the mail prior to the event.

2016 FOURTH QUARTER REPORTS:
The Library Board reviewed the fourth quarter workplan, financial report, statistics, and incident reports.

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YEAR END RESERVE LIST:
At the end of each budget year, all Ramsey County departments are required to submit a list of unpaid obligations and planned expenditures. Because Library funding is restricted for Library use by State Statute, a separate fund balance is maintained. This fund balance covers operating expenditures during the first half of each year until property taxes are received and distributed. As the Library's budget grows, the fund balance must also increase to maintain adequate cash flow. For the 2016 reserve list, several projects were identified, with the balance of unexpended funds designated for the Library's fund balance.

Klausing made a motion to approve the 2016, 2015, and 2014 year-end encumbrances as proposed. Mielke seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

BUDGET TIMELINE:
Jill Boldenow and Mary Larson attended the 2018-2019 budget kickoff meeting held on February 1, 2017. At the meeting, the timeline for the upcoming budget cycle was shared, along with instructions to complete a budget prioritization exercise that includes a 2.5% decrease in the tax levy for each year in the two-year budget. The timeline for this year's process is outlined below:

- Budget Kickoff Meeting: February 1, 2017
- Target Budgets due to Ramsey County Finance: April 10, 2017
- EGCI Service Team/Library Budget Meeting with County Manager and Finance Director: April 17, 2017
- Preliminary Proposed Budget set by County Manager: June 5, 2017
- County Manager Presents Proposed Budget to County Board of Commissioners: August 8, 2017
- County Board Budget Hearings on Proposed Service Team Budgets: August 15-September 12, 2017
- County Board Certifies Maximum Property Tax Levy: September 19, 2017
- Public Hearing on County Budget: November 28, 2017
- County Board Adoption of 2018 & 2019 Budgets And 2018 Property Tax Levy: December 12, 2017

2018-2019 BUDGET OVERVIEW AND PRIORITIES:
Jill Boldenow and Mary Larson attended the 2018-2019 budget kickoff meeting held on February 1, 2017. At the meeting, County Manager Julie Kleinschmidt asked all departments to complete a strategic prioritization exercise with this year's budget process, to optimize programs and services that contribute to a vibrant community where all are valued and thrive. All departments were asked to collaborate within their service teams in preparing the 2018-2019 budget requests.

As part of the strategic exercise, all departments were directed to submit a levy target budget with a 2.5% decrease for 2018, and an additional 2.5% decrease for 2019, for a total levy decrease of 5% over two years. Departments must also absorb decreases in outside revenues, as well as increases in costs for County services such as property management costs, IT services and administrative overhead.

Operating cost increases include salary steps and career development increases; additional costs for fiber services at several locations previously served by the I-net at no cost; operating costs for the Library's ILS, including the new cloud-hosting agreement and costs related to the AMH at Shoreview; and typical inflationary increases. Library Fines, MELSA Revenue, and Buildings & Structures Revenue projections were reduced to reflect actual revenues received in 2015 and 2016.

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If additional funding were available for the 2018-2019 budget cycle, Library staff recommended the following priorities for new programs or services:

- Increase the library materials budget
- Add Tuesdays at Mounds View
- Establish a Refurbishment Line Item

The Library Board discussed the requested increases and options for meeting the levy target, such as reducing hours, locations or services.

Mielke made a motion to authorize staff to continue with the budget preparation process based on the Library Board's approval. The motion was seconded by Klausing, and unanimously approved.

SHOREVIEW PROJECT UPDATE:
The grand opening of the new facility was held January 28, with more than 4,000 people attending. The new building received glowing reviews from the public and media who toured the facility.

The Library and Property Management are working to complete the many items left unfinished at opening. The artwork for the Teen Wall has been installed. The literacy interactives donated by the Rotary Club of Arden Hills/Shoreview have arrived and been installed in the Children's area. The first piece of art purchased with capital campaign funds has been installed in the lobby area. The art film has been installed in the Administrative Offices and will soon be installed in the Book Club Room and the Conference Room windows. The quartz tops on the public service desks have arrived and been installed. Adolfson and Peterson (A&P) is slowly working through the various punch list issues identified by the Library and HGA.

Property Management is working to close out the project in the near future. This would allow A&P to release leftover contingency funds back to the County to allow the Library to purchase additional furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E) items.

The Library is working to close out the State Library Construction Grant, which will allow the State to release the $806,500 grant funds to the County. The grant allowed the Library to acquire an AMH and other technology, to purchase the DIRTT system for the Administrative offices, and to augment the FF&E budget.

As a part of the design process, the project participated in Xcel Energy's Energy Design Assistance Program. The recommendations from that program added $297,000 to the cost of the project, but they will allow the Library to achieve the goals of MnB3. Xcel issued a rebate check for $57,727 as a partial offset to those added costs. That money will be added to the Project balances, which will go into the Library's Facilities Fund for future capital projects.

For the first full month of operation, the Library achieved a 10% increase in circulation over the same month last year.

NORTH ST. PAUL BRANCH UPDATE:
<u>Trends in the Service Area</u>

- Population in North St. Paul has remained somewhat static over the past year. July 2016 reports the population at 12,039. Predictors indicate a flat increase in population over the next few years (increase of 1.1% from 2015-2020).
- Demographics indicate a predominately white (80%) population with approximately 25% under the age of 18.

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- The population is relatively stable with most homeowners staying in their residences (83%) within the last five years. About 2/3 of the population in North St. Paul own their residence. The remainder live in rental housing, Section 8 housing or senior housing.
- The medium household income remains firmly planted in the lower middle-class bracket, averaging at $52K per annum in the last five years.
- Despite the fact that the census indicates the overall population in North St. Paul is ~80% white, the ISD622 demographics indicate that the student population is only 52% white suggesting that perhaps Maplewood and Oakdale are contributing to the more diverse student population. 51% of the ISD622 student body receive free/reduced lunch services. More than 50 non-English languages are spoken in the households of ISD622 students.
- A new charter elementary school opened in September 2016. This school (named North Metro Flex Academy: http://northmetroflex.com) is designed to provide flexible and blending learning experiences for K-4 students. The school is located across from City Hall on Margaret Street in downtown North St. Paul. Initial observances have indicated that the student body is predominately children of color and/or recent immigrants.

Library Issues and Service Trends

- North St. Paul continues to offer laptops as an option for patrons requiring Internet access. Wireless use has slightly increased over the last year indicating that more patrons are entering the building with a device of their own.
- Circulation staff hours have adjusted with the hire of a new staff member. Some hours were shifted to other branches in the system as it was deemed unnecessary to keep North St. Paul at the hourly rate it had previously held (due to circulation and foot traffic).
- Manager Monica Stratton filled in as the Branch Manager of Maplewood from November through January allowing Bill Michel to focus his energy on the new Shoreview building. In her absence, substitute librarians Jenny Jackson and Kay Jacobson served as librarian.
- Allowing more access to gaming in the teen room when available has resulted in a significant increase in use of the Xbox. Librarian Charles Mosner has been tracking these stats and has seen an increase of over 50% in gaming at North St. Paul.
- A meeting with the City of North St. Paul has resulted in what we hope are answers to ongoing cleaning issues at the library. Scott Duddeck of the city was made aware of the lack of cleaning at the library and will take steps to provide us with city cleaners rather than relying on the hockey school to clean the building. This continues to be a work in progress.

NEXT MEETING: April 5, 2017, RCL-Shoreview, 4560 North Victoria Street, 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:
The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson
Library Board Coordinator

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