

## Minutes of the Ramsey County Library Board June 21, 2017

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**LIBRARY BOARD PRESENT:**

Marisol Chiclana-Ayala (left at 8:15), Hector Garcia (left at 7:50), John Hakes, Craig Klausing, Paula Mielke, Janice Rapheal, Kim Vanderwall

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Jill Boldenow, Library Director; Lynn Wyman, Deputy Director; Mary Larson, Library Board Coordinator; Jeff Eide, Policy & Planning Manager; Therese Sonnek, White Bear Lake Library Manager; Peter Hedberg, Maplewood Circulation Supervisor

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Mary Jo McGuire, Ramsey County Commissioner; Cyndi Cook, Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries Executive Director; Les Sipkema, Shoreview Resident, Bryan Olson, Falcon Heights Resident

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**CALL TO ORDER:**

Klausing called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Program Room of the Ramsey County Library in White Bear Lake, 2150 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Bryan Olson, Falcon Heights resident, made a public data request regarding staff training attendance. Les Sipkema, Shoreview resident, followed up on his comments from May, when he discussed his research into flight crashes and investigations, and made suggestions regarding the Library Board minutes and the donor plaque for the Eilenne Boder room at the Ramsey County Library in Shoreview.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:**

Vanderwall made a motion to approve the agenda for June 21, 2017, and the minutes of May 17, 2017, as presented. Chiclana-Ayala seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

**ART POLICY:**

In April 2017, the Library Board approved revisions to the Library Board Policies and Gift Policy, which raised the Library Director's threshold for making purchases and accepting gifts to \$25,000.

With the Art Committee selecting art for the new Ramsey County Library in Shoreview, and to be consistent the Library Board Policies and Gift Policy, staff is proposing that the Art Policy be amended to include the \$25,000 threshold for accepting donations of art and commissioning artworks.

Vanderwall made a motion to approve the recommended changes to the Art Policy. Chiclana-Ayala seconded the motion, which was approved by unanimous vote.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

**Important Dates:** All libraries are closed July 4. RCL migrates its ILS to SaaS June 27 & 28; some services will be limited. The County Board hearing of the Library's service team budget is August 15, 1:00-4:00.

**Summer Reading Program**—SRP kicked off with a bang at the June 10<sup>th</sup> *Make It Festival* for kids and teens. Kudos to the RCL Children's Team and Teen Services staff who have produced a bounty of opportunities all summer for kids and teens to read, explore, and create. Thanks to Pa Na Lor and Kristi Saksvig for designing the dynamic SRP catalog, reading records, and activity booklets. We look forward to seeing the libraries teeming with kids, teens, animals, performers, and more this summer!

**MN Writes, MN Reads**—With MELSA support, RCL and other metro libraries have launched MN Writes, MN Reads. This online platform fosters self-publishing and reading of e-books by Minnesota authors. It provides tools to design and publish e-books that are accessible locally and nationally.

**Meal Program at MP**—Maplewood Library is a site for the USDA Summer Food Service Program. Children 18 and under may have a cold lunch and/or an afternoon snack. Meals are provided through an agreement with Youthprise, a nonprofit organization working with youth in the Twin Cities.

**Shoreview Library**—The Art Committee has selected and installed new art for the library with funding from the Friends' capital campaign. Pieces include a landscape photograph near the entrance, by Jim Radford; pottery near the reference desk, by Paul Gaston; paintings in the children's area, by Emmy White; and a painting in the community program room, by Yudong Shen. There will be more art to come, as well as a final order of furnishings and supplies that will move this project closer to completion.

**Capital Planning**—Boldenow discussed with the County Manager the Library's intent to develop a 5-year capital plan. She will work with Property Management and Library staff to explore options for hiring a consultant to develop this plan. The Library will bring a proposal to fund a consultant's work to the Capital Improvement Program Citizen's Advisory Committee (CIPAC) and the County Board. A timeline, process, and team to guide this work will be proposed at a future library board meeting.

**IT Consolidation**—Ramsey County Human Resources is finalizing new job descriptions to present in the first week of July to Library staff who are currently responsible for IT functions.

#### **FRIENDS OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARIES REPORT:**

Summer Reading Program Kickoff Celebration: Friends volunteers Diane Hoon and John W. Harris and staff Caitlin Carroll and Cyndi Cook jumped in to support the Bookawocky Make-It Festival for Kids and Teens on Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup> at the Roseville Library. They joined Ramsey County Commissioners Victoria Reinhardt and Mary Jo McGuire in greeting library patrons and directing them to a wide range of fun and educational events and activities and hosted the Scavenger Hunt Table, cheering on participants as they read through their clues and located different items in the Children's Garden area. The library was a hub of activity with families playing and learning together all day.

Shoreview Library Volunteer Appreciation: Friends staff participated in the Shoreview volunteer appreciation luncheon on June 7<sup>th</sup> to meet and greet the many volunteers who work diligently to keep the library humming. Kudos to the Shoreview library staff for hosting a lovely event with good food, fun games, and great company! The Friends are pleased to be able to provide funding support for the Ramsey County Library volunteer appreciation events each year.

Shoreview Library Capital Campaign: The garden benches lining Highway 96 have now been enhanced with brushed metal donor and memorial plaques. The Friends would like to thank the Shoreview Community Garden Club, the John W. Harris Family, Sandy Martin, Barbara Wegleitner and the family of Julie Krenn for their generous contributions. In addition, plaques have been installed next to the flagpole in the outdoor garden area and over the interior fireplace. The Friends extend their sincere thanks and appreciation to the Daughters of the American Revolution, Harriet G. Walker Chapter for donating the flagpole and to the North Oaks Community Foundation and the family of Adeline and Albert Kuske for donating the fireplace. The garden pavers have also arrived with installation scheduled for June 19<sup>th</sup>.

Legacy of Literacy: The Friends shared an exhibition booth at the Minnesota CLE Probate and Trust Attorney's Conference June 12-13 to promote planned giving to benefit libraries, both in Ramsey County and throughout the state. They requested a booth next to the Animal Humane Society as the "canine ambassadors" at their

booth really helped to bring conference participants our way. The Friends had the opportunity to talk with dozens of attorneys about the different ways that their clients can help to ensure vibrant and sustainable library systems through legacy bequests.

#### Upcoming events

- Friends Board of Directors meeting July 24, 2017 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Roseville library.
- Book It! 5K Walk/Run at 9:00 am on Saturday, September 16, 2017 at the Roseville Library.
- Friends Annual Luncheon on Saturday, October 14, 2017 at the North Oaks Country Club.

#### **2018-2019 BUDGET UPDATE:**

On May 31, 2017, Ramsey County Manager Julie Kleinschmidt shared her proposed Ramsey County budget for 2018 and 2019 to County departments. She recommended that Ramsey County Library receive a 3.31% budget increase for 2018, and a 1.14% budget increase for 2019, for a two-year total levy increase of 4.49%. The proposed budget includes the following changes:

- Maintain current public service hours and FTE at all seven libraries;
- Include base funding for New Brighton hours (FTE added in 2016 budget);
- Increases in Administrative Overhead and Ramsey County IT costs;
- Increase collections budget by \$225,000 from use of fund balance (with plan to put in tax levy base in 2021);
- Establish a refurbishment budget of \$100,000 per year to be funded from contingency balances in the Shoreview Library Construction budget;
- Full funding of \$150,000 for substitute staff in 2018, reduced by \$60,000 in 2019;
- Additional hours at Mounds View not funded.

The County Manager will share her proposed budget with the County Board of Commissioners on August 8, 2017 in a Budget Workshop. The Library's budget hearing with the County Board will be held on August 15, 2017, from 1:00-4:00 p.m., as part of the Economic Growth & Community Investment Service Team hearing. The County Board will certify the levy for 2018 on September 19, 2017, and will vote on the final budget on December 12, 2017.

Mielke made a motion to authorize Library staff to submit the proposed budget documents to Ramsey County Finance on June 22, 2017 as directed. Chiclana-Ayala seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

#### **SKILLS FOR LIFE UPDATE – SOCIAL SERVICES AND HEALTH ACCESS:**

Health Access has been a library partner for almost 5 years. Their staff provides MNsure navigation services to the library public free of charge. They help the uninsured and underinsured sign up for improved medical coverage. Pete Hedberg, Maplewood Library Circulation Supervisor, was asked to manage this program Watts about a year and a half ago. After the open enrollment period is over each year, Health Access remains at both Roseville and Maplewood but reduce their hours from full to part time to reflect the seasonal fluctuations in business. Even so, last year they remained quite busy during their post peak months. The uncertain status of impending state and federal legislation regarding health care has had very real effects on our Health Access partners.

During 2015, Health Access staffed 221 sessions between Maplewood and Roseville and had 888 attendees. During 2016, they hosted 180 sessions at the same two sites and worked with 936 visitors. In addition, through May 2017 they have served an additional 606 individuals.

The Community Resource Advocate program started in fall 2015 as a pilot project at Maplewood, linking an array of family services and community outreach resources to the public library setting. The start-up included working with the director of the Suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative. Her networking and organizing skill led to a couple of well attended planning sessions in the area and a host of partners willing to help staff a program at Maplewood on Tuesday afternoons from 1:30-3:00. From its inception, 2-10 individuals attended the program every week and it has led to numerous instances of concrete and life changing assistance for folks in need of help. The answer to the question about how much unseen need there was in our midst is sobering in retrospect: there was - and there remains - plenty of need in the first ring suburban library setting. A partial list of the types of issues that advocates help visitors with ranges from homelessness, unemployment, and mental health, to childcare, transportation, food assistance, and more.

Partners in the program have included People Incorporated, Keystone Community Services, Salvation Army, Tubman Center, School District 622, Ramsey County Child and Teen Checkups, and Resource, Inc.

The success of the program resulted in expansion to Roseville on Wednesdays from 1:30-3:00. The Roseville program has just reached its first anniversary. After a less consistent turnout in the beginning, the sessions have grown increasingly busy in recent months.

From January through May of 2017, Maplewood had 129 visitors to its weekly program. During the same time, Roseville had 68 visitors.

The Library Board discussed food shelf referrals, and other potential partner agencies.

#### **SKILLS FOR LIFE UPDATE – ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY:**

In January 2017, Life Skills programming was broken up into smaller pieces. Therese Sonnek assumed responsibility for programming related to environmental and sustainability issues, with the seed library at White Bear Lake seen as one program to fill those goals.

#### The Seed Library

The Seed Library provides vegetable, flower, and native plant seeds that are GMO-free. Patrons check out seed packets and return seeds at the end of the growing season. One full year is completed and the second year is underway. The Library had many donated seeds, and volunteers packed them into small packets.

Seed packets added in 2017 through May: 1,590

Seed packets borrowed in 2017 through May: 712

There is no longer a limit in the number of packets that one patron can check out.

Two seed-starting classes were taught by the founder of the Seed Library in May at White Bear Lake and Roseville and had good attendance. Two more classes are scheduled for September at White Bear Lake and Shoreview about collecting seeds from plants for next season.

The Library Board discussed the possibility of expanding the seed library to another location. Sonnek noted that a strong volunteer partner would be needed to package and organize the seeds each year.

#### Fix-it Clinics

Ramsey County Environmental Health organizes the events and brings in many talented volunteers who fix electronics, small appliances, clothing and other gadgets in order to make them usable again and keep them out of the landfills. Six events throughout 2017 are booked.

Three clinics held at White Bear Lake, Shoreview and Roseville in 2017 had:

Number of people helped: 159

Number of items fixed: 201

Number of pounds kept from landfills: 1,449

Local cable created a short video of the program: <https://youtu.be/8YYDsJRWtBc>

Feedback from surveys has been fantastic.

Coming in July and August: "SPOILER ALERT! Is that food safe to eat?" A new Food Safety and food stretching program taught by Dr. Joellen Feirtag, Food Safety Specialist, University of Minnesota. Attendees will learn about "Best by" dates and what they mean. Much food is thrown out that is perfectly fine to eat.

Future program ideas: Composting; Reduce, Reuse, Recycle ideas; Leave No Trace philosophy while outdoors.

#### **RACIAL EQUITY UPDATE:**

Ramsey County Library identifies the promotion of "economic prosperity and racial justice" as strategic priorities. This focus is aligned with the fundamental values of the American Library Association to uphold equity, diversity, and inclusion.

The Library also joins with Ramsey County colleagues in recognizing that county residents experience significant racial disparities in poverty rates, employment, and household income. These disparities highlight the need for access to the Library's resources supporting education, employment, and economic development.

In 2016, the Library's Racial Equity Leadership Team developed a "Racial Equity and Inclusion Statement" and a set of principles for implementing a racial equity vision in Library programs and initiatives.

Using that framework, the Library developed a 2017 racial equity plan that distributes responsibilities for implementation throughout the Library. The plan weaves racial equity within collection development, facilities and programming, policy development, partnerships, hiring and training, and communications.

The Library Board reviewed data on Ramsey County racial disparities; the Library's Racial Equity and Inclusion Statement; and an update on the Library's 2017 Racial Equity Work Plan.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE:**

Two years ago, Ramsey County Library was coming out of multi-year staffing cuts and was grappling with a lack of diversity in library staff, long tenure and low turnover, a large number of part-time staff and the challenge of staffing seven sites with evening and weekend hours.

The library has made progress on some of these issues. Public services staffing has increased through the added hours at New Brighton and Shoreview. The library has worked through the hiring and training associated with the retirements of several key staff.

Progress is being made in hiring staff who reflect the diversity of the community. According to annual Ramsey County Workforce Statistics Reports, as of January 1, 2014, 95% of permanent library staff were white; as of January 1, 2017, 88% of permanent library staff were white. The 2017 Ramsey County report mentions the library as a department with significant diversity in new hires. The library continues to use the Student Worker job classification to provide work opportunities for youth, particularly for youth of color.

Ramsey County Human Resources manages job postings, applications, and background checks for all County departments, including the library. The library interviews candidates from HR certified eligibility lists.

Most library staff are in union positions. Circulation staff is in the AFSCME Local 8 general unit. Librarians are in the AFSCME Local 8 professional unit. The library participates in bimonthly Labor Management Committee meetings with representatives from the Local 8 professional unit. The library also participates in Ramsey County's Interest-Based Bargaining process. Current Local 8 contracts will expire this year. A new bargaining process will begin later this summer.

#### **LIBRARY FUND AND CAPITAL FUND:**

Ramsey County uses a two-year (biennial) operating budget. Staff are currently in the process of developing the 2018-19 Library budget. This involves the Library and other County departments submitting operating budget documents to the Finance Department to inform the County Manager's proposed budget. The Library Board approves the operating budget that the Library Director submits to the County Manager. The County Manager and departments present to the County Board. The County Board certifies the maximum property tax levy and holds public hearings. The County Board adopts the biennial budget and the property tax levy. The library fund is supported by a suburban-only property tax levy, because our service area is suburban Ramsey County.

Minnesota Statutes establish how public library service is supported by a city or county library fund created by a property tax. Statute 134.07 describes the county board's role in levying the tax. Statute 134.11 describes the library board's role in having control of the expenditure of library fund money.

The library fund supports the operating budget. The County also invites departments, on a biennial basis, to propose projects requiring capital funds for facility, equipment, and infrastructure needs. The County uses a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to prioritize and budget capital funds for projects, and it is similar in many respects to the biennial operations budget process described above.

One significant difference is that the CIP asks departments to project their capital funding needs over the next six years. While the CIP keeps an eye on the County capital needs over a six-year span, the County only budgets funds for the first two years of the CIP plan.

A second distinction of the CIP process is that it involves a Capital Improvement Program Citizens' Advisory Committee (CIPAC) consisting of up to 14 citizens appointed by the County Board, along with County staff. The CIPAC reviews all CIP requests and makes recommendations to the County Board. The County Board determines what capital projects are approved and issues bonds to fund the plan. Any subsequent adjustments to the plan for using capital funds are brought to the CIPAC and the County Board.

Previously, the Library has received capital funds through the CIP process to support several Library construction projects. In 2017, the Library made a request for a new CIP allocation of \$100,000 to support furniture refurbishment needs at two libraries. The County recommends that the Library use Shoreview construction contingency funds rather than new CIP funding for this purpose. As part of the current biennial budget process, the County Board will be asked to approve allocating \$100,000 in contingency funds each year (for a total of \$200,000) to support furniture refurbishment needs throughout the Library system.

The Shoreview Library capital project is expected to come in under budget, and there are some construction contingency funds that were not used. The exact balance is not yet known. The Library may bring a proposal to CIPAC and the County Board to use these capital funds for developing and/or implementing a new capital plan.

#### **MINNESOTA OPEN MEETING LAW:**

As a public body, the Library Board follows the Open Meeting Law, which is detailed in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13D. To inform the Board about the law, the Board members viewed an information video by the Information Policy Analysis Division of the Minnesota Department of Administration. The video is found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jler3r-7ROs>.

**NORTH ST. PAUL BRANCH UPDATE:**

Boldenow reported that she is working with staff from the City of North St. Paul to address issues at the library in the former Community Center. She noted that the future of the Bauer-Emerson Prep Academy is uncertain. City staff have stated that the Library remains a priority.

**WHITE BEAR LAKE BRANCH UPDATE:**Trends in the Service Area:

- Rush Line BRT-Future Light Rail planning in public comment phase and final route selected – construction possible circa 2024 – St. Paul to White Bear Lake.
- Water level rising on White Bear Lake.
- Ramsey County Beach reopened after 9-year closure due to low-lake levels.
- New Commercial growth along Centerville Rd near I-35E and White Bear Ave near I-694.
- According to 2015 American Community Survey data, the Asian population in the city of White Bear Lake went down from 5.94% to 3.88% and the white population went up from 86.81% to 88.18% over the 2014 data (this is close to 2010 levels). Total population estimates rose slightly from 24,424 to 24,811. Other racial groups remained about the same.

Library Issues and Service Trends:

- Overall circulation is down slightly, less than 2% over 2014 and 2016 first quarters.
- Visits are up 3%.
- Children's use is strong – both with collections and programming.
- Staff continue to field patron complaints about noise as traditional views of a quiet place clash with programs to attract young families.

**NEXT MEETING: July 19, 2017, RCL-Mounds View, 2576 Mounds View Boulevard, 6:30 p.m.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Larson  
Library Board Coordinator