Evanston Public Library
Board of Trustees
Wednesday, April 19, 2006
7:30 p.m.
Library Board Room

Approved May 17, 2006

Members Present: Maidel Cason, Dona Gerson, Lynette Murphy, Brooke Roothaan, Ellen L. Schrodt, Marybeth Schroeder, Christopher Stewart, Susan Stone, and Karen Terry

Staff Present: Neal Ney, Paul Gottschalk, and Kate Todd
Chris Diez, Circulation Manager
Jan Bojda, Head of Children’s Services

Call to Order

President Schroeder called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes

Trustee Terry moved and Trustee Gerson seconded,

MSP – Approval as written of the March 15, 2006, minutes of the Library Board

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Report on Circulation Department

Chris Diez presented a report on the current state of the Circulation Department, with special emphasis on the increase in interlibrary loans and transfers of materials due to Evanston’s joining the CCS library consortium. Evanston sends out the largest amount of materials of any other consortium member. While staff had anticipated some increase in interlibrary loans, no one had predicted the high level currently being processed. Mr. Diez praised his staff for taking on the additional workload. Mr. Diez believes the new consortium environment is certainly an improvement for patrons, who are able to access materials much quicker than before.

Old Business

Youth Services Project Update

Mr. Ney reported that the contract with Nagel, Hartrey, Danker, Kagan, McKay, Penney, Architects, Ltd. for construction drawings had been authorized by the City Council. The first meeting of the Campaign Steering Committee is planned for April 26, 2006. It is
hoped that all members of the Library Board will be donors to the project. Karen Terry and Lynette Murphy have agreed to serve as liaisons to the Campaign Steering Committee, and will keep the Board informed as the fund raising project moves forward.

President Schroeder’s Report

President Schroeder asked trustees to sign up to work at the spring book sale this coming weekend, April 21-23. She also offered congratulations to Blanche Gildin, who was chosen as one of 5 community members to be honored at Northwestern next week for her volunteer work with the book sale.

Trustees were reminded to mail their evaluations of Neal Ney, the Library Director back to President Schroeder by May 12, 2006.

Trustees discussed recent suggestions that a branch library be incorporated into the low-income housing development being planned for Church and Darrow. The Board had concerns about funding such a project and about whether this would be the best use of new funds if they were available. The Board thought that the Library could partner with other agencies to provide outreach service at that location. The Board directed President Schroeder to draft a letter to the City Council summarizing its concerns. The letter is to be circulated to the Board for comments before being sent. President Schroeder noted that this site is only 8 blocks from the Main Library. Board members wanted to respond positively to an increase in library services, but feel any increase in services must include increased funding. Trustees also asked to have available the detailed report of Outreach Librarian, Rick Kinnebrew’s activities.

Financial Report

Mr. Gottschalk referred trustees to the cover page of the financial statements. He announced that the Investment Committee will meet on Monday, April 24, 2006.

Library Director’s Report

Mr. Ney informed Trustees that a Library patron has again asked to be allowed to remove her shoes in the Library based on her doctor’s note. The City’s Law and Disabled Services departments do not think her condition warrants this allowance.

The falcon cam is up and running. Four eggs are in the nest.

The Main Library has a new phone system. Benefits include: voicemail availability; after-hours messages; and significant cost savings. As staff work out the kinks in the new system, people are asked to notify us of any difficulties they experience.

In response to a question, Mr. Ney explained that “cbl” in his report refers to “child book links,” which is the number of children multiplied by the number of stories they heard at a program.
New Business

Appointment of Nominating Committee

Trustee Roothan agreed to chair the Nominating Committee and trustees Stewart and Gerson will also serve. The nominating committee will report at the May meeting. The election will be held at the June meeting, and the new officers will take office on July 1, 2006. Trustee Stewart moved and Trustee Murphy seconded,

MSP – Approval of the Nominating Committee as above.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Approval of Local Use Fee

Trustees approved increasing the Local Use Fee from $110 to $120 as set forth in Mr. Ney’s April 9, 2006, memo. Trustee Gerson moved and Trustee Stewart seconded,

MSP – Approval of the Local Use Fee of $120 effective May 1, 2006.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Approval of Annual Report

Trustees approved a resolution authorizing the Library Director to complete and submit the annual report to the Illinois State Library. Copies of the final version of the Annual Report will be forwarded to all trustees in the next Board packet following the submittal. Trustee Cason moved and Trustee Gerson seconded,

MSP – Approved of the Annual Report Resolution.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Review of Special Funds Policy

Mr. Ney asked Board members to defer consideration of the Special Funds Policy until later this year. The upcoming campaign for the youth services project will entail adding a major gifts acceptance policy and donor recognition policy. These will be brought to the board in the near future for consideration and amendment to the Special Funds Policy upon recommendation of the Campaign Steering Committee.

Review of Benchmarking Data
Trustees discussed benchmarking data that the Library Director had prepared at the request of the Board president. The data compares the annual reports for the Arlington Heights, Oak Park, Skokie, and Evanston public libraries. The data shows substantially lower library funding in Evanston than in the other communities. This has impacts on the collection, staff size, and public use. The Board requested some additional data and the creation of graphs to better display and explain the data. At the May meeting the Board will discuss how to share the data with the City Council.

**Hirshfield Poetry Awards**

Trustees received a list of the winners of the 2006 Hirshfield Poetry Awards. The awards presentation is scheduled for Sunday, April 30 at 2 p.m. in the Community Meeting Room.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Catherine A. Todd, Executive Secretary
Evanston Public Library