Evanston Public Library  
Board of Trustees  
Wednesday, January 17, 2007  
7:30 p.m.  
Library Board Room  

Approved February 21, 2007

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

Members Absent: Brooke Roothaan and Marybeth Schroeder

Staff Present: Neal Ney, Paul Gottschalk, and Kate Todd, Administrative staff

Call to Order

Vice-President Stewart called the meeting to order at 7:43 p.m. The North Suburban Library System representative was unable to attend this meeting.

Approval of the Minutes

Trustee Gerson moved and Trustee Terry seconded, 

MSP – Approval of the November 15, 2006, minutes of the Library Board.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Old Business

Library Budget

Library Director Neal Ney reported on the City Council budget process. Budget Reviews are scheduled for the following dates: Saturday mornings, January 20, 27, and Wednesday evening, January 31. A Public Hearing on the Budget is scheduled for Monday evening, February 5. Board members wish to be kept informed and plan to send observers to all meetings.

Trustee Gerson noted that she was sorry to see the evening hours for South Branch were not included in the budget, especially considering the new construction in the area served by South Branch.

Youth Service Renovation Project Update

Director Ney asked for Board ratification of the contracts with Hallett Movers and the General Contractor, W.B. Olson. The contracts had been approved previously by the
Library Board’s Executive Committee, so that the contracts could be forwarded to the City Council for approval. Trustee Gerson moved and Trustee Terry seconded,

MSP – Ratification of the contracts with Hallett & Sons Expert Movers and General Contractor W.B. Olson, Inc.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Paul Gottschalk explained the process of moving the collections from the first floor during the week of January 22, when the Library will be closed to the public. Hallett Movers have already begun preparing the collection for the move. The Library’s basement garage will lose some parking spaces to make room for a storage area to house furniture and materials during construction.

A special effort has been made to notify the public and especially the schools of the week-long closing. Mr. Ney noted that no overdue fines will accrue during the time we are closed, although staff will be working, and books left in the book drops will be checked in. Both branches will be open their normal hours, with the assistance of additional staff from Main.

Trustee Stone inquired about the budget for public art in the new Children’s Room. The Art Committee has selected an original illustration by Kristina Swarner for purchase. Swarner is a children’s book illustrator who lives in the Chicago area. Trustee Gerson moved and Trustee Terry seconded,

MSP – Approval of the purchase of an original illustration from artist Kristina Swarner at a cost not to exceed $1,400.

Passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

The Campaign to raise private funds for the new Children’s Room is doing very well. The Committee is still in the quiet phase, but will go public soon.

Vice-President’s Report

In the absence of President Schroeder, Vice-President Stewart thanked Kate Todd for organizing the January 12th Donor Event. Approximately 70 guests attended an evening coffee and dessert program with best-selling novelist Audrey Niffenegger.

Financial Report

Mr. Gottschalk noted that the Technical Services Department expenses are below budget due to a staff reorganization, which resulted in lower salary costs.
Mr. Gottschalk and Mr. Ney explained the changes in the Library’s hiring process. The Library can accept applications for open positions only, and all hiring, including part-time, is handled in the same fashion through the City’s Human Resources Department.

Library Director’s Report

Mr. Ney referred Trustees to his written report for November and December 2006, and mentioned that the Hirshfield Poetry Awards are slated for Sunday, May 6, 2007.

David Jordan, Head of Periodicals, is working with City staff on a new design for the Library’s website. Trustees also asked about Internet usage statistics, and Mr. Ney will consider adding them back into his report.

New Business

Approval of the 2007 Holiday Closing Schedule

Trustees reviewed Director Ney’s recommendations and approved the following closing dates: Sunday, April 8 (Easter); Sunday, May 27 (Memorial Day weekend); Monday, May 28 (Memorial Day); Wednesday, July 4 (Independence Day); Sunday, September 2 (Labor Day weekend); Monday, September 3 (Labor Day); Thursday, November 22 (Thanksgiving); Monday, December 24 (Christmas Eve); Tuesday, December 25 (Christmas); and Tuesday, January 1, 2008 (New Year’s Day). In addition the Library will be closed for two moves. The first is scheduled for January 22 through 26. The second is tentatively schedule for August 20 through 24. Trustee Gerson moved and Trustee Murphy seconded,

MSP – Approval of the Library’s 2007 closing schedule.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Review of Library Board’s Bylaws and Rules

Trustees discussed and approved a minor editorial change in Rule 2.2, that made reference to “copies” in the policy manual. Trustee Terry moved and Trustee Stone seconded,

MSP – Approval of deleting the words “copies of which are included in this manual” from Rule 2.2.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

No changes in the Bylaws were made. Trustees agreed it is important to have a seat at the table whenever selection of a new Library director is made. This is an area where Illinois Library law conflicts with City of Evanston procedures.
Resource Sharing Report

Trustees reviewed a report on resource sharing. Mr. Ney explained the issues involved in Reciprocal Borrowing. One reason Evanston residents borrow so heavily from our nearest neighbors, Wilmette and Skokie, is the strength of their collections. Mr. Ney will share his report with librarians at Wilmette and Skokie and let the Board know of their response.

Approval of South Branch Lease

Trustees discussed a 5-year extension of the South Branch lease. Trustee Cason moved and Trustee Gerson seconded,

MSP – Approve renewal of the South Branch lease.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote. This will now be forwarded to the City Manager’s office for consideration by the City Council.

Acceptance of Art Donation

Trustees considered the donation of a painting “Poplars” by Evanston artist, Amy O. Woodbury. Trustee Stone moved and Trustee Terry seconded,

MSP – Approved acceptance of the donation of a painting “Poplars” by Amy O. Woodbury.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Trustees wondered if there was anything that could be done about the large number of dealers who seem to overwhelm the first few hours of the Library’s major book sales. Staff agreed the first few hours are extremely busy, but given the significant revenue earned by the book sales this is not something we want to discourage.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Catherine A. Todd, Executive Secretary
Evanston Public Library