Evanston Public Library
Board of Trustees
Wednesday, February 17, 2010
7:30 p.m.
Library Board Room

Members Present: Gail Bush, Lynette Murphy, Brooke Roothaan, Christopher Stewart, Susan Stone and Karen Terry.

Members Absent: Dona Gerson, Diane Allen Jacobi, Susan Newman

Staff Present: Mary Johns, Library Director; Connie Heneghan, Branch Manager; Paul Gottschalk, Administrative Services Manager; Marcia Mahoney, South Branch Assistant

Guests Present: Trish Stieglitz, Michael Tannen, Ellen Newcomer, Mary Alice Ball, Kevin O’Connor, Bill Smith

Call to Order
Karen Terry called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes
Christopher Stewart moved and Brooke Roothaan seconded,

MSP – Approval of the January 20, 2010 minutes of the Library Board.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Comments from Citizens
Ellen Newcomer described her experience as a Library Board member at a time when there was beautiful new building with many empty shelves. At that time, the Board began a major fundraising campaign to support collection development (now known as the Fund for Excellence). She spoke of the efforts to build the endowment for long-term, sustainable support of the Library and strongly discouraged the Board from using income from the endowment to support on-going branch operations. She is troubled by the significant cuts to collections in the proposed general operating budget.

Michael Tannen said that the Library’s endowment policy is clear that funds are not to be used for on-going operations as they should “never diminish” operating support from the City’s budget. He felt that there would be a huge loss to the community if the branch libraries were closed.

Mary Alice Ball said that there could be excellent opportunities for the Library if the City was selected to participate in the Google Fiber Network Project.
Information
Karen Terry said that Board members were needed for the Library Investment Committee, the Board Nominating Committee and as the Library’s representative to the North Suburban Library System.

Old Business
Staff is working on a suitable recognition for a major donor to the Fund for Excellence Campaign.

Mary Johns recommended changing the date of the Staff Development from March 19th to April 16th.

Gail Bush moved and Brooke Roothaan seconded,

MSP – Approval of the change in the Staff Development date from March 19th to April 16th.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

President’s Report
Karen Terry discussed the NSLS Legislative Breakfast and the severe impact the State’s budget crisis will likely have on Illinois library systems. Also, the Evanston Public Library Friends are rejuvenated and will be reincorporating as a non-profit to support the Library.

Financial Report
Paul Gottschalk reported that expenditures were well below budget because of the spending and hiring freezes. Philip Farish made a significant bequest to the Endowment for the Evanston Public Library. Mr. Farish and his wife Peggy were long-time Library supporters.

Director’s Report
- Mary Johns reported on status of the budget. Staff is preparing for the anticipated transitions in Technical Services and the branch libraries. Regular hours will be restored at the Main Library.
- Library staff participated in the City’s Affordable Living Fair at Fleetwood-Jourdain.
- Library managers from Evanston, Zion-Benton and Des Plaines will be having a joint meeting with James LaRue, the Director of the Douglas County (CO) Library, to consider the “big picture” of library services.
- On March 7th, the Childcare Network of Evanston will be recognizing the Library for its support of early childhood education.
- Annual library-wide circulation is approaching 1,000,000 items for the first time.

New Business
Use of Endowment Funds
Karen Terry said the Board had been asked by a City Council member to consider using income from the Endowment for the Evanston Public Library to support operating expenses of the branch libraries during this difficult budget cycle.
Christopher Stewart moved and Lynette Murphy seconded,

MSP – That the Library Board consider using endowment funds to support the branch libraries.

After discussion about the intent of the motion, a new motion was made.

Christopher Stewart moved and Brooke Roothaan seconded,

MSP – That the Library Board will not consider using endowment funds to support the branch libraries.

Lynette Murphy said that the Board should consider the request to use endowment funds to support the branches as a matter of courtesy; however she thought the endowment funds should be used for collection development and that operational support is not the purpose of the endowment. Gail Bush said that the endowment was not intended to support ongoing operations and that this was not an appropriate use of the endowment. Christopher Stewart thought the endowment income should be used for collection development, particularly in light of the significant cuts to the operating budget.

After clarification of the motions on the floor, the Board voted unanimously to reject the first motion to consider using endowment funds to support the branch libraries.

Susan Stone moved and Gail Bush seconded,

MSP – The Library Board reaffirms its support of the existing policy on the endowment.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

**Task Force on Sustainable Funding**

Karen Terry reported that the Task Force on Sustainable Funding for the Library is researching all options for stable, long-term Library support.

**Tele-attendance Policy**

Karen Terry recommended that the Board establish a policy to permit Board members to be able to participate in Board meetings if they are unable to attend the meeting in person. This is permissible if the Board member has a personal medical condition, is out-of-town on a business trip, or has a family emergency.

Gail Bush moved and Lynette Murphy seconded,

MSP – Approval of the policy to permit tele-attendance at Board meetings if a Board member is unable to attend due to a personal medical condition, being out-of-town on business, or has a family emergency.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.
Financial Support of the Branches
Karen Terry suggested the possibility of re-purposing a gift of $25,000 towards support of the branch operations. This gift was made to support branch renovations and the donor has agreed that it may be acceptable to use these funds for branch operations.

Susan Stone moved and Gail Bush seconded,

MSP – Approval of the reallocation of a $25,000 gift for branch renovations to branch operating support, if necessary.

Passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Paul Gottschalk, Administrative Services Manager
Evanston Public Library