MEETING MINUTES
EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Wednesday, January 19, 2011
6:30 PM
Evanston Public Library, 1703 Orrington Avenue, Community Meeting Room

Members Present: Sharon Arceneaux, Gail Bush, Dona Gerson, Lynette Murphy, Susan Newman, Christopher Stewart, Susan Stone

Members Absent: Diane Allen, Mildred Harris

Staff Present: Mary Johns, Paul Gottschalk, Beth McGuire

Presiding Member: Christopher Stewart, President

Declaration of Quorum
With a quorum present, President Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.

CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA
President Stewart advised that there would be a change to the printed Agenda.

CITIZEN COMMENT
Several citizens spoke to the need for a branch library to remain in the vicinity of Evanston's Main/Chicago corridor, and to the importance of the South Branch Library as a special community space, especially for special needs groups like the Albany Care and Park School communities.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES
With two corrections, the minutes of the meetings on November 13th, 18th, and December 8th, 2010 were approved.

INFORMATION/COMMUNICATIONS
None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
None

COMMITTEE REPORTS
Friends of the Library
Ellen Newcomer and Marcia Mahoney presented the Friends report. Ms. Newcomer read her letter to the Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees which included two options of support for future services relating to the South Branch. The first was to build out and pay rent for a transitional Library Outpost in the Main/Chicago corridor. With the second option, the Friends would rent and manage their own storefront as a separate entity from the Library.
Fund for Excellence
Chairperson Gerson reported that this year’s Fund for Excellence Campaign has raised over $77,000 from 519 donors to support and improve the Library collections.

Strategic Planning
Chairperson Newman stated that the planning group is in its initial stages. The committee includes Library staff members Connie Heneghan, Lesley Williams, Mary Johns and Paul Gottschalk as well as community members Michael Tannen, Leora Siegel, and Trustee Gail Bush. The search for consultants included a number of highly regarded firms. The committee selected Miriam Pollack + Associates as the best fit for the Library’s needs.

Local Library Act Transition Committee
President Stewart reported that he and Diane Allen met with City of Evanston staff members Joellen Earl, Marty Lyons, Grant Farrar, Louis Gergits, Brandon Dieter and Library staff members Mary Johns and Paul Gottschalk to begin work on the transition to the Library Fund and full implementation of the Illinois Local Library Act. The meeting was productive; items discussed included labor relationships, Board of Trustees terms of service, Library Operating and Debt Service Funds and the Board adoption of City of Evanston policies. All meeting attendees shared a common goal: to make the transition as efficient for the Library, the City and tax payers as possible.

Ad Hoc South Branch Transition Committee
Ms. Gerson reported making several contacts with Senator Schoenberg about sharing space with IDES. She visited the Evanston Township office to see if that space was a possibility. She met with the Friends who made two offers of assistance as delivered in their earlier report. Ms. Gerson believes the Friends understand the predicament of the Board. She also stated the Board doesn't want to act precipitously. Ms. Arceneaux and Ms. Gerson met to discuss the Friends' offers and said they preferred the second option for the Friends to occupy their own storefront for a temporary time period, allowing the Board the time to do the Library Fund work. This storefront could provide a model for future services. There are still more questions regarding hours of operation and staffing. D. Gerson recommended that the Friends meet with staff and try to answer some unanswered questions.

Ms. Arceneaux discussed the procedure for closing the South Branch location at 949 Chicago. Collections will be added to the Main, North and outreach collections. Staff is currently determining the condition of some materials and what should be offered to non-profits. Saturday February 26th, 2011 is the last day of operation of the South Branch at 949 Chicago.

STAFF REPORTS

Financial Statements
Paul Gottschalk discussed the Financial Statement for the ten month period ending December 31, 2010. With the spending and hiring freeze, the Library came in $250,000 under budget.

Endowment Presentation
Mr. Gottschalk presented an overview and background information on the Endowment for the Evanston Public Library.
NEW BUSINESS

South Branch Transition Discussion

President Stewart thanked the Board for their hard work. Gail Bush asked what the end goal of the discussion tonight would be as there was no motion in the agenda. Mr. Stewart stated that according to parliamentary procedure, the Board can have a discussion of the Committee's report as the Committee has made its opinion known and issued a recommendation. The Board discussed the Friends' offers in great length. All Board members expressed their appreciation for the Friends and their work.

Ms. Bush viewed South Branch as a transition to a new location, favored continuity and therefore favored the Friends' offer of option one, a Library Outpost. Susan Stone expressed doubts about both options and requested that the Friends consider a third option, having the Friends invest the funds until a new branch is ready, preferably somewhere on the west side of Evanston. There may not be funds available for three branches at the present time. Susan Newman agreed with Ms. Bush's opinion of accepting option one. The people in the area of South Branch deserve to have a branch kept there and the Friends do not expect the Board to make a long term commitment to this space at this time. She sees the offer as an opportunity to experiment and find new ways to approach library services. At the end of one year, the Board can take a look at everything and decide how best to serve the community.

Ms. Gerson maintained that the Friends offered a gift and it was not the Board's role to alter the terms of that gift. She expressed concern about the unknowns (financial and otherwise) that could slow things down. She questioned what would be required from the City of Evanston's perspective. She said she believed the Board moved too quickly to a Library Fund model and that the cautious move would be to go with a Friends' storefront (option two).

Lynette Murphy said that the Board was thrust into the fund model and becoming familiar with the model will involve a big learning curve. It is a huge mission to look at the Library's vision and it is too hasty a move to accept option one. Ms. Murphy recommended option two while continuing to look at the vision and come up with a plan. Mr. Stewart asked Mary Johns about the issues with using a building as a municipal building in regards to option one. Ms. Johns responded by stating that initially we would want to talk with the City to find out if there are any legal ramifications. There would be staffing issues and she will check on liability issues. Ms. Bush asked why would it be any different than issues with the current South Branch? Mr. Gottschalk stated there are many questions and decisions to be made. Ms. Johns discussed the option of obtaining a memorandum of understanding.

Ms. Bush asked for clarification of the roles of the planning committee and the Ad Hoc South Branch Committee. Mr. Stewart responded that the Planning Committee has a long-term perspective and the Ad hoc South Branch Committee is working on the immediate transition of South Branch.

Mr. Stewart read a written statement submitted by Diane Allen.
Motion
Ms. Gerson moved that the Board adopt the second option offered by the Library Friends and that we ask the Friends to meet with staff to deal with any unresolved issues.
Ms. Murphy seconded the motion.
The motion was discussed, and Ms. Bush proposed an amendment to accept option one for further review. She said both offers from the Friends needed further review. She would support the motion on the floor if amended. Mr. Stewart determined this was not a friendly amendment as Ms. Gerson did not accept it. Ms. Gerson asked the Board to vote on the motion. Ms. Bush was uncomfortable voting one way or another. Ms. Stone stated she was unclear on the amendment and said she could not vote on either option right now.

Ms. Bush proposed a secondary amendment that the Board accept the Friends offer to explore alternatives for the South Branch with the understanding that after meeting with the staff there may be new information and new alternatives presented. Mr. Stewart reminded the Board this is an up or down vote and therefore this motion cannot be amended with Ms. Bush's amendment.

Ms. Gerson moves to end debate on the main motion. Ms. Murphy seconded.
A voice vote was taken to end debate on motion. The motion passed.

A voice vote is taken on the motion to accept the second option. By a 4 to 3 vote, the motion failed.

Motion
Ms. Bush moved to accept option one with changes as presented by new information with the understanding that the Friends will work with the staff and City as needed. Ms. Newman seconded.

Board members continued to discuss the merits and challenges with option one. Mr. Stewart read an excerpt from the Friends letter which defines option one. He stated that the question falls into the hands of the ad hoc committee. Ms. Murphy questioned the timing.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed. The Chair did not vote.

Recommendation for 2011 Endowment Expenditures
Ms. Arceneaux moved that the Board allocate up to $34,000 from unrestricted endowment funds for securing professional services (including legal, parliamentary, and planning consultation) to support activities and responsibilities during the transition period.
Ms. Bush seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken on the motion and it passed unanimously.

Recommendation for Securing Legal Counsel
Mr. Stewart reported that members of the Executive Committee had each separately completed reviews of proposals from three leading law firms specializing in Illinois library law (Ancel Glink Diamond Bush DiCianni & Krafthefer; Klein Thorpe and Jenkins Ltd.; and Peregrine Stine Newman Ritzman and Bruckner Ltd.) and that each member of the committee recommended securing legal counsel through the firm Ancel Glink.
Mr. Stewart recounted comments from Committee members Newman and Allen regarding Ancel Glink. The firm understands the Illinois Local Library Act and municipal law, and is widely known and respected across the Illinois library community. They are also familiar with challenges of the Library having worked on a pro bono basis for the past several months. In the interest of full disclosure, he stated that Ancel Glink partner Robert Bush is the spouse of Trustee Gail Bush.

Ms. Gerson moved that the Board accept the recommendation to secure legal counsel through Ancel Glink.
Susan Stone seconded the motion.

Ms. Murphy inquired how they were to be paid. Mr. Stewart responded the firm will be paid on an as needed basis.

A Roll call vote was taken and passed unanimously with Ms. Bush recusing herself from voting.

**Recommendation for Engaging Planning Consultant**
Ms. Newman moved that the Board accept the Planning Committee’s recommendation to engage Miriam Pollack + Associates as the planning consultant.
Ms. Stone seconded the motion.
Ms. Bush discussed the consultant and her history as a strategic planning consultant for libraries. Ms. Murphy asked whether the $34,000 would cover both legal counsel and the planning consultant. Mr. Stewart responded that it would cover both.

Roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

**Publicity for South Branch Closing**
Ms. Gerson wanted the public to be reassured about the fate of the South Branch collections. Ms. Johns stated some materials will come to Main and North, some will go to storage for summer reading, for outreach collections, and depending on what’s left, we can offer some to non-profits, schools, daycare centers and the Friends. Ms. Bush commented that it’s the same process you’d be going through if moving locations.

Ms. Murphy recommended that the Library Director write an essay in local news outlets talking about the current scope of Library services for outreach, etc.

Leora Siegel noted that merger efforts among regional library systems, including the North Suburban Library System were progressing. Mr. Stewart will make sure the NSLS report is included in future agendas.

**ADJOURNMENT**
The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth McGuire
Administrative Assistant, Library Administration