MEETING MINUTES
EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Wednesday, March 16, 2011
6:30 PM
Evanston Public Library, 1703 Orrington Avenue, Barbara Friedberg Room

Members Present: Diane Allen, Dona Gerson, Mildred Harris, Lynette Murphy, Christopher Stewart, Susan Stone

Members Absent: Sharon Arceneaux, Gail Bush, Susan Newman

Staff Present: Paul Gottschalk, Beth McGuire

Staff Absent: Mary Johns

Presiding Member: Christopher Stewart, President

DECLARATION OF QUORUM
With a quorum present, President Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

President Stewart indicated that if there were no objections, an addition to the evening’s agenda would be comments from Trustee Allen about a meeting at the Skokie Public Library with Illinois State Representative Daniel Biss. No objections were made.

CITIZEN COMMENT
Fran Seidman spoke during citizen comment.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES
The minutes of the regular Board Meeting of February 16, 2011 and of a Special Board Meeting of February 23, 2011 were approved by a voice vote. The vote was unanimous excepting only abstention by Trustee Allen who was not present at either meeting.

INFORMATION/COMMUNICATIONS
None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
None

COMMITTEE REPORTS
Strategic Planning Committee
Paul Gottschalk gave the planning report in the absence of the Committee Chair, Susan Newman. Mr. Gottschalk said the initial phase of planning is underway and includes reviewing relevant data, interviews, focus groups, and an analysis of the Library’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
Miriam Pollack, the Board’s planning consultant, will be conducting interviews with seven key individuals in the Evanston community and facilitating nine focus groups: seven relating to specific demographics in the city (African-Americans, Hispanics, small business owners, educators, cultural organizations, social service agencies, and library volunteers/teens) plus two focus groups open to the community at large. The two general focus groups will be held on April 27th, one at the Levy Center, Linden Room, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and one at the Main Library from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Ms. Pollack will also be attending the upcoming Library Staff Development meeting. Mr. Gottschalk also indicated that there will be an online survey to allow all residents the opportunity to provide input to the planning process. The strategic planning process is intended to identify key strategic initiatives, goals and objectives in order to fulfill the Library’s mission.

Trustee Stone asked who chose the invitees to the seven specific focus groups. She was advised that members of the Planning Committee along with library staff who work with the specific groups would identify the invitees. Trustee Murphy asked if the Committee would accept recommendations. Mr. Gottschalk assured her that recommendations were welcome.

Trustee Gerson expressed concern that the tone of the focus groups might become too general and might stray from library-related issues. Trustee Murphy added that the Evanston Community Foundation has already done an assessment of needs in Evanston and cautioned the Planning Committee to remain on task with library concerns. Trustee Murphy also asked that the Planning Committee include input from educators who work with adults.

Mr. Gottschalk indicated that the Planning Committee will have the first phase of the planning process completed by the end of April.

**Evansont Public Library Friends (EPLF) Report**
Marcia Mahoney reported that the EPLF outpost, called The Mighty Twig, would be opening on March 26th at 900 Chicago Avenue. Hours will be 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. There will be a sneak peak on the 24th from 5:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. and Library Board members are invited.

**STAFF REPORTS**

**Library Director's Report**
Library Director Johns was absent due to a family emergency. No Director's report was given.

**Financial Statements**
Mr. Gottschalk reported that FY2010-11 year end expenditures were under budget. This is due to the hiring and spending freeze imposed during the year. Mr. Gottschalk said that the City Council would hold its first planning session for fiscal year 2012 on March 22nd. He emphasized that the City has significant infrastructure and capital improvement needs. The Library is fortunate that capital funds were approved to install new air conditioning chillers and repair the front doors during fiscal year 2011.
Mr. Gottschalk shared his concerns over the City’s budget issues. The City may need to make further reductions in staff and services.

Mr. Gottschalk reported that much of the South Branch collection was relocated to the Main Library. The remaining books were given to non-profits, e.g. Shorefront, Fleetwood-Jourdain Center, EPLF and schools. Remaining books were picked up by Better World Books, an organization that supports literacy worldwide.

NEW BUSINESS

Introduction of Revised Bylaws
Trustee Allen gave a general overview of proposed changes to the bylaws. Most changes relate to the transition to the Library Fund and following the Illinois Local Library Act. The proposed bylaws would require the Board to elect a Treasurer and create two standing committees – a Management Committee and a Finance Committee.

Board members were asked to review the proposed bylaws and to contact Trustee Allen with any questions or comments prior to discussion and adoption of the bylaws at the next Library Board meeting.

Appointment of Liaison to the Library Friends
President Stewart proposed that Trustee Newman be appointed liaison to EPLF for the remainder of 2011 (Trustee Newman had agreed to the appointment). Trustee Allen moved that Trustee Newman be the liaison to EPLF for 2011. Trustee Gerson seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously confirmed the appointment.

Report on Meeting with State Representative Biss
Trustee Allen attended a meeting the evening of March 14th at the Skokie Public Library. The meeting was hosted by Illinois Representative Daniel Biss who represents a portion of Evanston and Skokie. He wished to hear about concerns relating to Library issues. Approximately 12 Library Directors and Board members from surrounding libraries were in attendance, including Glenview, Skokie, Morton Grove, Evanston, Glencoe, the Chicago Botanic Garden.

Rep. Biss began the meeting with information on bills in the Illinois House. Recently a bill was passed that permits libraries to retain records electronically. He indicated that a bill to allow public notices required from libraries to be given online was under debate. At present such notices are required to be given in print. Newspaper owners are pressing for continuation of printed notices. Rep. Biss also discussed the extreme pressure on property taxes and said that the House was considering other sources of income. Pension obligations remain a tremendous under-funded burden with no real resolution in sight.

General discussion covered concerns about lengthening the period during which taxpayers can contest property taxes. There is pressure from large landowners such as golf courses, railroads, shopping centers and large industries to extend that period to 13 years. Credits for overpayment would come out of a municipality’s current budget which would have a significant consequence on operations. One Library Director estimated the cost to her budget at approximately 4 percent.
Rep. Biss indicated that there is a move toward consolidation throughout government as a means to economize. Consolidation would include library systems, and he advised that every library should develop its own position on this matter for future discussion.

Resolution in honor of Dona Gerson
Trustee Dona Gerson has served on the Evanston Public Library Board since 2005, and this was the last meeting of her second and final term. President Christopher Stewart offered thanks and regards on behalf of the Library. He read a Resolution honoring Ms. Gerson. Several Board members and citizens also offered personal thanks for her service.

Trustee Gerson thanked all present and said that she has long been a firm supporter of the Library, particularly the South Branch which served the area where she resides. She praised the current Board for addressing difficult issues and believes the transition to a Library Fund is a good move. She encouraged the Board and the community to work together harmoniously in the face of very significant economic issues that are impacting all of Evanston.

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Allen
Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

THE NEXT LIBRARY BOARD MEETING WILL BE APRIL 20\textsuperscript{TH} AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM OF THE MAIN LIBRARY.