MEETING MINUTES
EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Wednesday, September 21, 2011
6:30 PM
Evanston Public Library, 1703 Orrington Avenue, Community Meeting Room

Members Present: Sharon Arceneaux, Diane Allen, Gail Bush, Sergio de los Reyes, Margaret Lurie, Susan Newman, Benjamin Schapiro, Susan Stone, Michael Tannen

Members Absent: none

Staff Present: Donna Dziedzic, Paul Gottschalk, Lesley Williams, Beth McGuire, Marianthi Thanopoulos

Presiding Member: Susan Newman, Vice-President

CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF QUORUM
A quorum was present and President Arceneaux called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. Susan Newman will chair the meeting.

OATH OF OFFICE
Trustees Sergio de los Reyes and Michael Tannen were given the oath of office by President Arceneaux.

CITIZEN COMMENT
Citizens spoke in favor of:
1. Paying reasonable taxes to support the library and building a library system that reflects the spirit of Evanston and which everyone can be proud of.
2. Considering a budget that reflects the entire community.
3. The North Branch Library as a good fit for the neighborhood, supports the business community and has the potential to be so much more especially if partnerships are formed with other businesses.
4. Fair and equitable neighborhood services reaching all of Evanston, not just the North side.
5. Adding a media lab similar to the one at the Skokie Public Library to emphasize student and community media participation.
6. Using resources wisely by adding a community engagement position. Branches do not seem as efficient a use of tax dollars.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES
Trustee Schapiro moved and President Arceneaux seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the special Board meeting held on August 17, 2011. Approved by a voice vote.
INFORMATION/COMMUNICATIONS
Interim Director Donna Dziedzic thanked the staff, board and citizens for their warm welcome and said she hopes to move the Library forward in a positive, service-centered manner.

Paul Gottschalk introduced Marianthi Thanopoulos, the Library’s new marketing and communications coordinator.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION
A. Review of “Governance and Administration” from Standards for Illinois Public Libraries
Paul Gottschalk discussed the following specific State standards with immediate relevance to the Evanston Public Library:
1. Having a Board approved mission statement and strategic plan (action item: the specific, measurable objectives for the plan are being developed by staff).
2. Systematic review of policies (action Item: staff will propose a schedule of policy review including the materials selection policy)
3. Effecting change to benefit libraries (e.g. Trustee Bush serving as ILA President)
4. Encouraging the Board to take on greater advocacy role at state, local, and national levels.
5. Board Orientation
6. Ongoing continuing education for the Board such as last year’s training sessions in the Board’s legal responsibilities as well as a proactive plan to help the Board better understand their roles and responsibilities.
7. Financial support for Board membership to ILA and ALA
8. Strategies for encouraging citizens to run for an EPL Board position

B. Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Overview (Gottschalk)

Vice-President Newman asked P. Gottschalk to bring this Act to the Board's attention.

P. Gottschalk explained FOIA’s purpose is to provide openness and transparency in government. It is a valuable law for helping to ensure good honest government. City Clerk Rodney Greene receives all FOIA requests and there is a 5-day response time. Gottschalk reminded the Board that any public communication about library business via e-mail is subject to FOIA.

C. Discussion of the Library Director Search
Vice-President Newman said she had asked Treasurer Allen and Trustee Lurie to be on the Search Committee. Director Dzeidzic finalized the search in Naperville for her own successor and has a great deal of experience in the matter.

Vice-President Newman said that timeliness is crucial as the Interim Director's contract ends February 29th. The entire Board will be involved in the selection process, but a small committee can move more quickly for certain pieces, including evaluating a search firm to work with. A search firm will be recommended at the October Board meeting.
Trustee Schapiro would like to see the search committee expanded to three people as there are a number of new members on the Board and broad representation of views is important. Trustee Schapiro also asked that the Board approve decisions or options laid out by the search committee and receive regular reports back from the committee even if the Board has to go into executive session. He maintained a timeline can be developed in which key decisions are made by the whole body.

Vice-President Newman thanked Trustee Schapiro for his opinion, but decided the committee would remain as a two member committee. She reiterated the search firm would be chosen by the next meeting and a considerable amount of communication would be involved between the Board and the committee regarding the matter.

Director Dziedzic said there may be wisdom to the small committee evaluating the firms then bringing their recommendations to the Board.

At the request of Trustee de los Reyes, Director Dziedzic will provide the full proposals from the search firms in the October Board packet.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
A. Discussion and Vote on the 2011-14 Strategic Plan
Trustee Bush moved that the Board approve the 2011-2014 strategic plan as presented. Trustee Schapiro seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

Director Dziedzic stated the Library Administrative team would meet tomorrow and begin developing the specific objectives of the plan.

B. Discussion and Vote on the FY2012 Budget
Treasurer Allen reviewed the three options discussed at the August 31st, 2011 meeting for the Board and opened the 2012 budget for discussion.

Trustee Lurie moved to approve Option A, with full funding of the North Branch and funding of a full-time Community Engagement Librarian. Trustee Tannen seconded the motion.

President Arceneaux spoke in support of Option B (funding the Community Engagement Librarian and closing North Branch) and stated no area of the community should have a special entitlement to branch services over other areas. She emphasized the need for equitable services throughout the community especially for minority children.

Trustee Schapiro agreed with President Arceneaux and supports Option B. He stated his issues were with equitable services and the significant increase of 6% in the Library’s property tax levy. He stated he had received a number of emails about the lack of services outside of certain neighborhoods. Trustee Schapiro continued, stating that library services should reflect the spirit of Evanston, namely the equitable distribution of services across the City. Option A is a commitment to one more year of one a branch
library, an ineffective way of providing services throughout the community. The Library cannot build enough branches to meet the needs of the community.

Trustee Tannen asked Gottschalk about using a metric per capita expenditure figure rather than percentage increase for the purpose of comparing the options. He asked what the estimated per capita cost to keep the North Branch open was and cited figures for each budget presented as follows:

- $65.25 per capita for status quo
- $66.40 per capita for Option A
- $63.61 per capita for Option B

Trustee Tannen also noted that $125,000 was added in personnel costs that were beyond the Board’s control. Trustee Tannen stated Option A would be an increase of $1.15 per capita for the citizens of Evanston, which is a very modest increase in his opinion and added that the Library had been underfunded for years. A false dichotomy had been advanced between brick and mortar and outreach/neighborhood services.

Treasurer Allen stated that when the Board decided on the Library Fund model they wanted control over the budget but did not know how it was going to go ultimately with the City Council. It was favorable for the Library when the Council approved the fact that the Board should be able to determine how to spend the money.

She continued stating the decisions are complicated and the Board needs to work with the City to keep the Library Fund and governance processes on track. During all of those City Council meetings the message was don’t raise taxes a penny. Treasurer Allen asked for the Board to look at property taxes. At the last meeting the City Manager said we should pass the status quo budget. The status quo is a 3.97% increase, so somewhere we’ve moved away from no increases to 4.5% is okay. She continued she cannot accept the status quo budget if it doesn’t include a community engagement position. The strategic plan just passed. Library services are for everyone and there are lots of venues to provide services throughout the City. The Library needs the leadership of a community engagement librarian. She stated she would support Option A.

Trustee Bush pointed out that not everyone wants a Community Engagement position filled. There could be many more books for collection development for the money being spent on a community engagement librarian and she was under the impression that 70% of the position’s workload is already being done by the staff and suggested staff could be reallocated or repurposed instead of filling a new position. Trustee Bush continued that the Library does not have a Director, so budgeting this amount of money to a single person is not reasonable at this time. The new Director could come to the position with a lot of great ideas and she would rather have that person make the decision. The Board should also go to the City Council with most reasoned budget which is the first step toward the Library Fund. She supported the status quo – base budget but would love to see additional options. Finally she stated the greater good would be supporting North Branch, so she would vote for Option A.
Trustee Stone expressed doubt about being able to vote for any of the presented budgets and suggested the Board could postpone the decision and come up with more options for a special meeting.

Trustee de los Reyes said he had listened to all of the arguments and recommended the Board commence with voting. He stated the equitable argument was a powerful one and that he would prefer Option B. He said it was the best way to get services where the kids are.

Vice-President Newman stated the North Branch, the Twig and the community engagement person were all important and after finishing the strategic plan process it is clear we need to do more community outreach.

Trustee Lurie reminded the Board that the Budget Committee and staff worked very hard on creating the budgets and that her motion was on the table.

Treasurer Allen agreed they had worked for months on the budget and she was troubled that a Board member requests more options at this time. There is no magical equation - there is only so much money. If the Library takes on another location, it won’t be covered by the new FTE position’s salary of $85,000.

Director Dziedzic suggested the Board assume there was a process by which the budget was discussed and that there was direction by the Board to the Budget Committee. Although the options are relatively infinite with regard to the budget, at some point, the Board has to make a decision.

President Arceneaux said that equitable means that everyone has same opportunity and reasoned the funds should be concentrated at Main until there’s money to provide to other areas.

The motion to approve Option A budget for 2012, a full year of funding of the North Branch and funding of a FTE Community Engagement Librarian position was put to roll call vote.


The Motion carried 5 to 3 with one abstention.

**BOARD REPORTS**

**A. Evanston Public Library Friends Report**

Vice-President Newman reported she had met recently with Marcia Mahoney and Jim Hughes. All parties hoped to start fresh and work together to dispel the misconceptions that had developed over the past couple of years and all had a good sense that this was possible. She was hopeful the next year could bring a reimagining of the relationship between the Friends, staff and Library Board.
STAFF REPORTS
A. Financial Statement – Six Month Period Ending August 31, 2011
There were no additional comments or questions.

NEW BUSINESS
A. Approval of the FY2012 Per Capita Grant Application

P. Gottschalk stated the FY2012 Per Capita Grant Application is due on October 15th, 2011. There is information still needed to be gather but the Board authorizes the application by this resolution.

Trustee Bush moved that the FY2012 Per Capita Grant be approved. Trustee Schapiro seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Resolution in Honor of Gail Bush

Trustee Stone read the resolution in honor of Trustee Bush, thanking her for her service on the Board.

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth McGuire, Administrative Assistant
Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees

THE NEXT LIBRARY BOARD MEETING WILL BE OCTOBER 19 AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM OF THE MAIN LIBRARY