MEETING MINUTES
EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Wednesday, October 26, 2011
6:30 PM
Evanston Public Library, 1703 Orrington Avenue, Community Meeting Room

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

Members Absent: none

Staff Present: Donna Dziedzic, Paul Gottschalk, Connie Heneghan, Rick Kinnebrew,

Parliamentarian Present: Joan Bundley

Presiding Member: Sharon Arceneaux, President

CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF QUORUM
A quorum was present and President Arceneaux called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. President Arceneaux welcomed new Board member Sandra Smith who then took her oath of office. Trustee Tannen agreed to serve as interim secretary.

CITIZEN COMMENT
Larry Rubin read a letter in support of Robert Huston whose library privileges had been suspended and whose appeal of that suspension was to be addressed later in the meeting.

Jeff Smith addressed the City’s proposed budget for EPL and that the City plans to charge EPL approximately $75,000.00 for EPL’s use of a building owned by COE. He stated that doing so would be akin to charging rent to the Fire Department.

Lori Keenan provided a chronology of events about EPLF’s efforts over the last several years and stated that EPL and EPLF had stood shoulder to shoulder during difficult times. She submitted an article on the topic she had written for the ILA journal.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
The minutes from the Board meetings of August 31 and September 26 were approved.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION
Recommendation of Search Firm for New Library Director
Margaret Lurie, who was on the search firm subcommittee, detailed the background for how the subcommittee located potential firms, winnowed the list down to three, and ultimately decided to recommend the Singer Group in Maryland. Trustee Newman
commented that she liked the fact that the Singer Group was not located in Illinois because she could conduct a national search. Ms. Dziedzic echoed this sentiment.

Trustee Schapiro asked the search committee about their views of the other two firms. Trustee Lurie said she was impressed with the Singer Group and that they had served 50 other libraries. She then made a motion to approve the engagement of the Singer Group, which was seconded by Trustee Newman. The motion passed unanimously.

**Mediation with EPLF**

Ms. Dziedzic introduced Rick Kinnebrew, who does community youth outreach and children’s story time throughout Evanston. Mr. Kinnebrew offered to be a mediator to address common goals and to improve the relationship between EPL staff, the Board and EPLF.

Trustee Tannen commented that whether it was called mediation, fence-mending, or bridge-building, such discussions were important and should occur. However, he questioned Mr. Kinnebrew’s role as facilitator, since, based on Mr. Tannen’s experience as a lawyer, a mediator is always a neutral third party.

Trustee Allen said that mediation was not needed between the Board and any outside groups, including EPLF since EPLF’s mission is to support EPL and that EPLF should approach the Board.

Trustee Schapiro suggested that the issue be tabled while the immediate issues of the budget and the hiring of the new director were addressed.

Trustee Stone disagreed and pointed to all that EPLF had done to support EPL and that it would not be helpful to the relationship to delay discussions.

The matter of delaying formal discussions with EPLF for three months was the subject of a motion brought by Trustee Schapiro and seconded by Trustee Allen. The matter passed by a 6-3 vote, with Trustees Schapiro, Allen, De Los Reyes, Lurie, Smith, and Arceneaux voting yes, and Trustees Stone, Newman and Tannen voting no.

**Book Drops in South and West Evanston**

Trustee Newman advised the Board that Marcia Mahoney, president of EPLF and the director of the Might Twig, had offered that the Twig could be a book drop for EPL. Ms. Mahoney mentioned that citizens often dropped EPL books at the Twig and that she returned them to EPL herself on a regular basis. Mr. Gottschalk advised the Board that a book drop costs approximately $5,000 and that there are costs associated with having an EPL employee picking up books at book drops each day.

Trustees Allen and De Los Reyes disagreed with the concept that the Twig be a site for book drops. Trustee Schapiro shared circulation numbers of EPL and surrounding libraries and the issue is not dropping off books; the issue was getting people to borrow books and using EPL’s services.
Trustee Tannen commented that the Twig was an appropriate place for a book drop since EPLF was offering the service free of charge, it was located near the closed South Branch, was in a commercial corridor, and near two train stations.

Trustee Schapiro made a motion to form a committee to explore the costs and possible locations of library owned and operated book drops. Trustee Stone offered an amendment, seconded by Trustee Tannen, to remove the words, “library owned and operated,” which passed by a 5-4 vote. The Board then voted unanimously on the amended motion to form the subcommittee. Trustees Schapiro and Smith agreed to serve on this subcommittee.

**Skokie Library Reduction of Borrowing Privileges for non-Skokie Residents**
Ms. Dziedzic discussed the recent letter from the Skokie Public Library to RAILS that Skokie had decided to limit the number of books non-residents could borrow. While the letter had mentioned Evanston and Morton Grove, Ms. Dziedzic said that the restriction applied to all non-residents. She also said that it was within the purview of any public library to enact such restrictions, and that indeed, EPL had once implemented such restrictions to Chicago residents. She also noted that Skokie could revisit the issue next year.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
**Amendment of the FY2012 Budget**
Trustee Allen moved to delay amending the EPL 2012 Budget until Ms. Dziedzic met with the City Manager about open issues, including the City’s request for North Branch rent in its proposed budget. All Board members agreed to discuss the budget and any amendments at the November 9 meeting. Trustee Tannen asked Mr. Gottschalk for clarification about how rent wound up in the City’s proposed budget.

**BOARD REPORTS**
**EPLF Report**
Trustee Newman introduced Marcia Mahoney, EPLF’s President. Ms. Mahoney reported that she had met with Trustee Lurie to coordinate EPL and EPLF fundraising to avoid confusion. She stated that the give a book/take a book concept at the Twig was working well and commented in her experience that the specter of fines kept some residents from borrowing books. She stated that EPLF was having a fundraiser for the Twig on 11/5 and she gave invitations to Board members.

**STAFF REPORTS**
**Summer Reading Game Report**
Jan Bojda gave a report about the 2011 Summer Reading Game. She commented that this summer was very successful and conducting the summer reading game in facilities like Robert Crown was helpful to parents. Trustee Schapiro queried whether a Winter Reading Game had ever been tried. Ms. Bojda said it had not. She reiterated that EPLF wanted to work with EPL.

**NEW BUSINESS**
The meeting schedule for EPL Board meetings in 2012 was approved. The next Board meeting is November 9.
Robert Huston presented his appeal of the six month suspension of his library privileges. He presented to the Board a large packet of materials, including police reports, letters, emails, and transcriptions of phone calls. His presentation lasted approximately 20 minutes wherein Mr. Huston primarily read verbatim from his written submissions. Mr. Gottschalk briefly recounted his role and knowledge of events surrounding the suspension of privileges.

Trustee Tannen told Mr. Huston that his written submissions and his reading of same to the Board was extremely well-organized and detailed, but that the Board had not had an opportunity to review it in great detail. He suggested, and the Board agreed, that Board members would review his voluminous submissions and that the Board would then rule on his appeal at a subsequent meeting.

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Tannen, Secretary
Evanston Public Library Board of Trustees

THE NEXT LIBRARY BOARD MEETING WILL BE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9 AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE BARBARA FRIEDBERG ROOM OF THE MAIN LIBRARY