



Approved – 4/18/2012

MEETING MINUTES
EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Wednesday, February 15, 2012
6:30 PM

Evanston Public Library, 1703 Orrington Avenue, Community Meeting Room

Members Present: Diane Allen, Sergio de los Reyes, Margaret Lurie, Susan Newman, Benjamin Schapiro, Leora Siegel, Sandra Smith

Members Absent: Sharon Arceneaux, Michael Tannen

Staff Present: Donna Dziedzic, Paul Gottschalk, Jill Skwerski, Beth McGuire, Rick Kinnebrew, Lesley Williams, Laura Antolin, Martha Meyer

Presiding Member: Susan Newman, Vice-President

CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF QUORUM

A quorum was present and Vice-President Newman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

CITIZEN COMMENT

No citizen comments

INFORMATION/COMMUNICATIONS

Evanston Community Foundation President and CEO Sara Schastok and ECF Board Member Burgwell Howard addressed the Board. ECF Trustee Howard presented the Library Trustees with a \$1,000 award and a certificate in honor of the foundation's silver anniversary. It was the first of 25 gifts to organizations that have had an enduring positive impact on the community with ECF support over the years. The \$1,000 award is an unrestricted gift.

Paul Gottschalk thanked President Schastok and Trustee Howard and stated the Foundation has been incredibly generous to the library from the start. The two organizations missions do similar work, especially the common goal of preparing kids for school and ready for life.

Vice-President Newman thanked President Schastok and Trustee Howard, and suggested informing the press about this surprise gift.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Strategic Plan Update

Vice-President Newman praised the staff for the incredible amount of work accomplished on fleshing out the new strategic plan. She said staff had done more than she expected at this point.

Paul Gottschalk explained the original plan was a skeleton with the beginning of objectives but measurable objectives tied to responsible parties on staff were needed.

He continued by stating teams were assigned to work on various aspects of the strategic plan including collections/circulation, neighborhood outreach, technology and youth services.

The staff decided to add one objective that wasn't in the original strategic plan, namely to increase circulation by 25% within two years. This can be accomplished in many ways. The budget for collections is 20% higher which will affect the quantity and quality of resources acquired. New merchandising methods can help including placement of new carts with recently returned items for increasing last minute circulation. The staff is considering other ways to increase circulation, as detailed in the board packet attachment.

Vice-President Newman asked if the increase includes electronic media circulated. Paul Gottschalk affirmed those resources are included in circulation statistics. He stated the Neighborhood Services team was led by Connie Heneghan and Lesley Williams, the Youth Services team was led by Jan Bojda and the Technology team was led by David Jordan and Karen Hansen.

With Neighborhood Services objectives, an emerging issue is expanding partnerships. Another is overcoming barriers to service by reaching out to under-served groups to find out what the barriers are and addressing them. Some examples of under-served groups are low income, small business, and people who live in shared community setting like senior housing, or low income housing.

For the Technology objectives, bringing the Library's technology up to date is crucial. He stated we have a long way to go with lots of basic things to improve upon.

For example, from 4-7 pm there is not enough broadband capacity because many people are using computers to watch videos. The Library should strive to double the bandwidth presently available. Another focus was on creating a digital media lab where teens can create music, videos and edit their creations. Finally mobile applications like Boopsie have lots of great functions for iPhones and Androids and are relatively inexpensive.

Paul reminded everyone this is a dynamic document with much more development to come and he is responsible for shepherding the plan along. Quarterly updates will be made to the Board.

The strategic plan includes many things the staff will be asking from the Board primarily related to funding and budget planning.

Trustee de los Reyes stated he had a number of questions about the plan.

Regarding objective 1.1.2 Trustee de los Reyes stated it is important to have a balance of serious books as the readership in town demands it. Paul responded the staff continually struggles with the question do you buy something really popular, meeting immediate demand or do you provide depth to the collection? He continued the Library needs to do a better job addressing what patrons want. Realistically, if a patron waits a long time for materials they might go elsewhere.

The Library tries to have a 4 to 1 ratio, that is, 1 copy on hand for every 4 copies on reserve. For example, we had many, many copies of the Girl with the Dragon Tattoo series, now most of the copies aren't needed because the demand has plummeted.

Trustee de los Reyes asked why the objective for a 25% increase in circulation was added and where it originated. Was it connected to removing bottlenecks and technical problems and marketing? He said he sees this as a response to a problem and is not sure what the problem is. Paul stated that circulation has gone down and circulation numbers demonstrate use of the collection. Paul wants the staff to focus on improving circulation for patrons and focus on all of the things we can do to make that happen. The Library is not a book store, but there are many things we can do.

Treasurer Allen asked if the Library does staff recommendations and Paul replied that has been in practice as long as he has been at the Library.

Trustee Schapiro addressed Trustee de los Reyes question about collection development. He stated one way to address it is to use online delivery as a way of buffering immediate demand for best sellers.

Trustee de los Reyes asked what was behind the plan for getting a technology bar and Paul replied a technology bar would enable people that don't have a new device to see how it works and show a lot people how to effectively use devices like Kindles.

Trustee de los Reyes asked why the Library even offers DVDs and suggested it was a poor use of tax dollars to compete with Netflix. He questioned the elimination of DVD rental fees. Paul provided background and stated when the popular media was VHS, the Library charged rental fees to cover the cost of purchasing the collection. Other area libraries that have eliminated their DVD rental fees have seen their fees for overdues on these items meet or exceed the revenue brought in before.

Additionally, some staff members think it creates barriers to access for certain population groups. Trustee Schapiro suggested charging a DVD fee after taxes amounts to double charging patrons and that overdue fines would more than make up for the loss of DVD rental fees. Circulation would also go through the roof. Circulation Supervisor Jill Skwerski stated the Evanston Public Library is the only library in the consortium that charges for DVDs. Director Dziedzic stated that Naperville did charge for DVDs and said she would investigate their policy and find out more.

Trustee de los Reyes related his experience with digital tech bars has been when someone shows you something they make it look easy. Each user has their own specific problems. Paul responded that the Library already does a lot of this kind of troubleshooting and many staff members have been trained in this area.

Trustee de los Reyes inquired about the new self-check machines, recalling the Library used to have them but took them out. He asked was wrong with those. Paul replied there were connection issues with the old ones and they couldn't process certain types of resources. He stated two self-check stations would be installed Friday, February 17th. There will be additional self-check stations in Children's and on the 2nd floor in Adult Services.

Trustee Siegel stated there is room for growth but she believes the strategic plan is a great document.

Relationship between the Library and the Friends

Director Dziedzic stated that the opinion on the Board had been divided regarding the relationship between the Library and the Friends. The staff needs clear direction from

the Board as to how we pursue a productive and collaborative relationship with the Friends.

Director Dziedzic stated the optimal solution is for the Friends and Library to work together for the enhancement and benefit of the community. Certainly there will be issues, but that's the point of collaboration.

Friends' President Marcia Mahoney and Director Dziedzic had met several times to try to lay out new material regarding possible collaborative events between the two organizations in the joint memo included in the board packet. She stated both parties would be happy to respond to any questions.

It was asked what kind of direction the Director and Friends were looking for from the Trustees. Director Dziedzic stated that they were interested in knowing whether they may pursue a relationship with the Friends or not. She continued stating the memo presented two potential areas where the two organizations could almost immediately begin to work together. Namely, the Summer Reading Game and Neighborhood Outreach services planning and programming.

Vice-President Newman asked for clarification as to whether they were looking for votes or a general consensus. Director Dziedzic replied they would like a consensus. The main reason being the staff is unclear on how to proceed and the Board's consensus would be helpful.

Trustee de los Reyes agreed with the memo and stated it would be good to cooperate on specific initiatives as long as those initiatives are covered by the existing budget. If there is an additional proposal that needs to go beyond that, the Board should be consulted.

Treasurer Allen stated she was uncomfortable with the Friends and how they have gone about things in the past. She was uncomfortable giving authority to another independent group not related to the Library and not necessarily doing what the Library does. She was also uncomfortable with them working with and directing staff. Treasurer Allen stated the Friend's marketing efforts have made the Board look bad in certain instances and have put the Board behind the eight ball repeatedly. She recommended the Friends approach the Board and ask, 'What do you want to do?' not approach us and say, 'Here's what we're going to do' and keep pushing the Board until we do it.

Vice-President Newman suggested it was time we made peace and that the two groups were at a crossroads. She asked Director Dziedzic to weigh in on the topic of who runs the show. Director Dziedzic stated she thought it would be useful to allow Marcia Mahoney to speak. She pointed out the memo states the Friends understand that the Board is responsible for policies and programs that support its strategic plan and mission.

Marcia Mahoney stated there has never been any question that the Board runs the Library. There are citizens and members of the Friends who have strong opinions, but the role of the Friends is to support the Library Board.

Paul stated the Library is part of a major municipal government with lots of guidelines to follow.

Marcia continued there are areas where the Friends can be and that fit with our skills. Right now, the Friends are best at bringing people together to solve problems. The

Mighty Twig runs on \$45,000 per year. It is not the Library, but the Friends are able to accomplish a lot with volunteer energy and time. She added volunteers can have opinions and that's exciting and fun in her opinion. She stated she hopes the two groups can have a good collaborative relationship.

Trustee Siegel stated she would like the Library and Friends to move forward immediately. It is vital that these two groups move forward with direction from the Board. The Friends group wants direction. Most of the current Trustees are new to the Board and it is a great opportunity to move forward. What happened before is water under the bridge. All good will is needed by the Library. Any good outcome outweighs the bad and it is always good to have volunteers and their groundswell of support for the Library. She stated the Board should take advantage of that and move forward.

Trustee Schapiro stated he felt the Library failed to step up to its responsibilities with the Family Focus Library project. He thanked the Friends for doing that in a vacuum. He insisted a public library can't exist without the support of friends groups. He stated that he agrees there have been tensions and the Friends need to recognize that public involvement means public liability. He agreed that we need to make sure there is oversight by library management. If the Friends are doing something with the Library's name on it, then the Library is responsible. Given that we're in directorship transition he suggested limiting the collaborative programs until the new director is installed. Trustee Schapiro also stated all volunteers need to be supervised and background checks need to be done with anyone working with children.

Trustee Lurie emphasized the need for collaboration with the Friends. She asked how the Board can reject the all of these volunteers with tons of energy. The summer reading game could use the volunteer support and could have more locations with them. She recommended welcoming and making room for them and understood the rift had been difficult for the staff.

Trustee Smith stated she didn't know what happened in the past but would like to see the two groups move forward and come to a happy medium. The Library should utilize the Friends.

Treasurer Allen affirmed the Library's need for volunteer organizations and would like to see an amicable volunteer group for the Library. She would be happy to see the Friends take the Board's lead and follow our direction. She suggested leaders of the Friends group can encourage their members to do the same and collaborations can unfold in meaningful way. She would like to see this happen, but hasn't yet.

Director Dziedzic assumed full responsibility for not moving forward with the Fleetwood Jourdain project. Her concern was there was no direction from the Board. Although she agreed it was appropriate personally, she was hesitant to move ahead without direction from the Board.

She encouraged the Board and the Friends to start small with a couple of small collaborations to establish good successes to build on. The groups can continue expanding collaborations once the new director has been hired.

Vice-President Newman stated it sounded like a general consensus has been formed.

Trustee Schapiro asked for clarification regarding collaborative fundraising efforts. Treasurer Allen asked who decides who spends money. Director Dziedzic stated should the Friends choose to fundraise for a specific program they can.

Treasurer Allen stated the Board must approve the donation per Library policy.

Marcia Mahoney stated the Friends would probably start with the Summer Reading Game. One of the things we do well in addition to volunteer organization is sell books donated to the group and get funds to buy new books. She offered the Friends could get prize books for the Summer Reading Game that way.

She continued describing another thing the Friends do well - throw parties around books. The Friends could help with Summer Reading Game kick off events. The Friends could use funds donated to us to buy things to help with some sort of kick off party. The Board and Friends would have a conversation about how we could help in this instance.

Vice-President Newman asked for consensus from the Board to which she received no dissent.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Evanston 150 Update

Trustee Siegel stated the Evanston150 working group titled, "The More You Know" is comprised of two Board members, Friends members, Library staff and other concerned citizens. The goal is to create literacy centers throughout Evanston for many types of literacy and the plan includes making wi-fi free throughout the city.

The working group has asked the Library Board and Staff to give a presentation on the new strategic plan. Trustee Siegel stated she would like to share the survey information from the consultant to help the group move forward.

Vice-President Newman asked what the time table was on the working group. Trustee Siegel stated there was no hard deadline. The group will at some point reach a consensus and their findings will be turned over to those who will try to implement the project.

STAFF REPORTS

Presentation on Youth Outreach

Children's Department Staff members Rick Kinnebrew, Martha Meyer and Laura Antolín gave a presentation on Youth Outreach including the LEAP (Literacy Education at Play) program, Kindergarten Library Tours, and the Book Buddies partnership with Northwestern University.

Rick Kinnebrew spoke about LEAP's beginnings with launch funding and support from the Evanston Community Foundation, how the program has evolved and is a unique, cost-effective and targeted program. Laura Antolín described how the successful Kindergarten LEAP program grew out of the Pre-K LEAP program as a result of meeting with D65 librarians. Now K-LEAP is in 12 schools with the first phase happening in library then it's taken into the classroom.

Laura continued describing the Kindergarten Tours started in 2007 and continuously supported by Foundation 65 and Evanston Community Foundation grants. All new Kindergarten classes are bussed to the library for a tour, storytime and craft. The Kindergarten library card drive generated 400 new cards this year alone, too. Trustee

Schapiro asked if they do library card drives for preschoolers? Laura responded they do and it keeps Jill Skwerski very busy.

Trustee Siegel asked about comparing these outreach programs to IREAD to which Rick Kinnebrew responded IREAD is similar to a Summer Reading Game model.

Trustee Siegel asked if the three had presented these programs at library conferences and the like to which Laura Antolín responded they had presented at Oakton and in Springfield, Illinois but not at the ALA. Trustee Siegel asked if they had considered marketing as it can be a huge revenue builder.

Rick Kinnebrew spoke about how Book Buddies started with Northwestern University Jumpstart volunteers. Every young child is paired with a college student and they spend time reading together it is a very successful program and continues to expand also through partnering with the Evanston Community Foundation and Northwestern.

Administrative Services Update and Financial Statements for ten month period ending December 31, 2011

Paul summarized the financial statement for the 10 month period ending in December, 2011 which was also the fiscal year end. Expenditures were under-budget by \$16,000 (0.4%) and revenues were over-budget by \$13,000 (4.2%).

He continued stating these additional revenues will not be part of the new Library Fund fund balance. The extra money is rolled back into the City's reserve.

Paul stated the two new self-check stations in circulation will be a huge help. The staff is in the final stages of hiring a new Young Adult Librarian. This position will work with the schools, do creative programming and really making a difference in teens' lives. Paul stated it has been rewarding meeting these outstanding and enthusiastic candidates.

The City Council met as a whole on Monday night, February 13th, 2012. The ordinance on library governance was introduced and placed on consent agenda. It passed without discussion and is scheduled for adoption at the February 27th City Council meeting. The City Manager has done a fabulous job stewarding this ordinance and deserves a lot of credit.

NEW BUSINESS

Summer Reading Partnership with Foundation 65

Paul outlined the existing relationship with Foundation 65 including their rental of office space on the 4th floor of the Library building. They have supported low income families in the school district through an intensive summer reading program for children between 1st and 2nd grade who are at risk for falling behind. They send books to the homes and have seen great success in maintaining and improving reading skills.

Foundation 65 wants to expand the program to reach all of the District 65 schools. Meanwhile the Library has received a total of \$30,000 in grants from the Broad Foundation on the recommendation of Northwestern President and former Broad Foundation Trustee Morton Schapiro. The Broad Foundation's mission fits closely with Foundation 65's summer reading program. Paul suggested using these funds to support and work with Foundation 65's summer reading program. He specified Foundation 65

would not be getting a grant, we would be buying the books at a better price, thereby freeing up their money to support teacher's stipends and expand the program.

Vice-President Newman spoke in favor of the partnership.

Trustee Schapiro motioned to approval of the summer reading program partnership with Foundation 65 and the expenditure of \$30,000 over three years to support the program. Trustee Allen seconded the proposal. Passed on a unanimous vote.

Review and Adoption of Revised Services Policy

Paul commented that the services policy in the packet was a straightforward revision of the policy. Jill Skwerski was a great help with the many updates needed. The document is the original policy with edits for the Board's recommendation and approval.

Trustee Allen suggested that the reference policy be changed to read that "Library staff members *will exercise discretion* about the feasibility of answering time consuming questions."

Treasurer Allen said that there is outdated language about branch services in the policy and given we are coming up with new outreach neighborhood services ideas, she didn't know if the policy should mention specific locations. Treasurer Allen read her own revision to the community outreach and access policy.

Trustee de los Reyes makes motion to incorporate the edits in the services policy
Treasurer Allen seconded the motion.

Vice-President Newman requested more time to review the new verbiage presented by Treasurer Allen. Trustee Schapiro agreed it looked odd to include a listing of physical places.

Trustee Lurie moves to table the agenda item for the next meeting. Trustee Smith seconds, and the issue was unanimously tabled.

Appointment of Board Members to Governance Transition Joint Committee

Vice-President Newman suggested Treasurer Allen and Secretary Tannen to the Governance Transition Joint Committee.

Trustee Lurie moved to appoint Trustees Allen and Tannen to the Committee. The motion was seconded.

Treasurer Allen stated she would like to recommend Trustee Schapiro instead of Trustee Tannen. Although she has the utmost respect for Secretary Tannen, he has not been involved with the discussions with the City with the MOU. Trustee Schapiro has a library director's experience which would be helpful for the committee.

Trustee Siegel suggested the Board table the discussion of the committee appointments for the next meeting.

Director Dzedzic reviewed the time table on the committee's upcoming work and stated the work of the committee would not start for a while and can be tabled.

Approved – 4/18/2012

Trustee Siegel moved to postpone the discussion; Trustee Allen seconded and the issue was postponed unanimously.

Close for Executive Session – Personnel

Vice-President Newman read official statement about executive session to address personnel issues. A motion was made to go into executive session.

Vice-President Newman adjourned the regular meeting at 8:22 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Gottschalk
Administrative Services Manager

Next Meeting: March 21, 2012 at 6:30 pm Community Meeting Room

The City of Evanston is committed to ensuring accessibility for all citizens. If an accommodation is needed to participate in this meeting, please contact the Library at 847-448-8650 48 hours in advance of the meeting so that arrangements can be made for the accommodation if possible.