Members Present: Tori Foreman, Michael Tannen, Benjamin Schapiro, and Leora Siegel

Members Absent: Diane Allen, Margaret Lurie, Susan Newman, Vaishali Patel, and Sandra Smith

Staff: Karen Danczak Lyons, Paul Gottschalk, Connie Heneghan, Marcy Jenkins, Renee Neumeier, Jill Schacter, Jill Skwerski, Lesley Williams

Presiding Member: Benjamin Schapiro, President

CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF QUORUM – Insofar as there was no quorum, the Board restricted itself to discussing items on the agenda, but took no formal action on any matters.

President Schapiro called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m.

CITIZEN COMMENT – Michele Hays, representing the Brummel Park Neighbors, requested additional library attention to be directed to the needs of residents in that area of Evanston. The Library Director responded with information about the Library’s commitment to reaching out to that neighborhood (and others) and using the new Harwood Institute approach to foster community conversations. The Library Director also mentioned EPL’s outreach efforts at the Ridgeville Park District and Levy Senior Center. Trustee Tannen suggested that Ms. Hays review the Board minutes over the last several years to see the depth and breadth of the services EPL offers to Evanston.

CONSENT AGENDA – Not discussed nor approved.

INFORMATION/COMMUNICATIONS – no report

LIBRARY DIRECTOR’S REPORT – Director Danczak Lyons drew attention to the following highlights of her February monthly report (copy attached):

Final Library statistics for 2013 showed increases in circulation, visitors, programs, and other key measurements indicating the Library’s vitality.

Redevelopment and renovation discussions for Robert Crown Center continue to include the option of a 5,000 square foot area dedicated to Library service.
The Director and Trustee Leora Siegel attended the Illinois Library Association’s Legislative Breakfast on Monday, Feb 17th, for a program focused on State and Federal issues that the Association and members will be tracking, funding, local control, access to government documents and suggested changes to the Freedom of Information Act.

**STAFF REPORTS –**

A. **Staff Presentation on “Turning Outward”/Harwood Institute** – Lesley Williams, Renee Neumeier, Jill Skwerski, and Connie Heneghan – four librarians who attended the Harwood training in Washington, DC in October reported on the process and led the meeting participants in the “Ask Exercise” which probes people’s aspirations for their community. All four librarians commented that the Harwood training was valuable and that the skills they acquired there will be added to their toolbox.

The goal of the process is to “turn outward” and engage people in conversations about what they would like in the community, as well as what they are willing to do to help realize their aspirations for Evanston. Trustees commented that many of the topics addressed at Harwood echo planks of EPL’s strategic plan.

B. **Administrative Services and Financial Reports** (Paul Gottschalk) – Interviewing for a number of open positions for the Library is continuing, including the full time Development Officer and part time positions for a new Young Adult Assistant, Adult Services Assistant, Cataloger, and Custodian.

C. **2013 Budget Discussion** – Director Karen Danczak Lyons and Administrative Services Manager Paul Gottschalk introduced the discussion about the revenue and expense lines for the final 2013 financials that preliminarily indicated a budget deficit of $325,903 as of February 14.

Latest updates indicate that the Library will officially end 2013 with an operating deficit in an amount that needs to be determined after investigation and discussion with the City, due in part to increases in a number of year-end expenses, as well as shortfalls in receipts from City taxes and fundraising.

The Director will continue to discuss with the City Administration the City’s agreed upon fund balance that the City promised to transfer from the 2012 fund balance to the Library Fund. The Director is confirming this transfer intended to support CAMS took place.

In the case of any year-end deficit, the Library Fund balance is sufficient to account for the shortfall.

A number of changes to the future budgeting and monitoring process were discussed, some of which have already been announced to the staff, including tighter controls on incremental staffing, more detailed budgeting for anticipated employee vacation and sick leave payouts, and – potentially assuming a higher percentage of risk for tax payments than the 2% provided in the 2013 and 2014
budgets.

Leora Siegel suggested a special Executive Committee meeting to look into the finances in more detail the week of February 24, and following the Feb 19, meeting, Thursday, February 27 at 6 p.m. in the Board Room was confirmed for that gathering.

The Board members requested that they have an update and more details documenting the budget variances prior to the Executive Committee meeting, and agreed that they would like the earliest possible notification of any such major financial changes in the future.

BOARD REPORTS –

Development Committee – In the absence of Margaret Lurie, Marcy Jenkins informed the group that the Final Fund for Excellence 2013 donations totaled $141,975, and all key campaign indicators were up, including response rate, average donation value, and total donors.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – none

NEW BUSINESS

A. Library Director Evaluation Process (Benjamin Schapiro) -- deferred

Appeal of Suspension by Todd Kemnitz (Paul Gottschalk) – Mr. Kemnitz was not at the meeting, and the Board did not make any decision regarding changing his suspension.

B. Approvals of a Date Change for EPL’s Staff Development Day from Friday, April 4, to Friday, April 25 and a proposal to close the library early on May 1 for a Donor and Volunteer Recognition Event (Karen Danczak Lyons) – Director Danczak Lyons requested that these items be considered at the Executive Committee meeting to be scheduled for next week.

C. Approval of 2013 Illinois Public Library Annual Report (Paul Gottschalk) -- deferred

ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael M. Tannen, Secretary

Next Meeting: March 19, 2014 at 6:30 PM in EPL Board Room