

WICHITA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Directors
November 17, 2009

The regular meeting of the Library Board of Directors was held at 12:00 Noon on Tuesday, November 17, 2009 with the following present: Ms. Donna Aldrich, Ms. Melissa Alley, Mr. Tom Engelmann, Mrs. Susan Estes, Ms. Lee Gee, Ms. Kellie Hogan, Ms. Cathy Landwehr, Ms. Evelyn Neier, Ms. Marcia Newton, Mr. Steve Roberts, Mr. Jon Roe, Ms. Kerin Smith, and Ms. Marge Zakoura-Vaughan. Absent: Mr. Randy Yeisley.

Staff Present: Jennifer Allen, Administrative Aide II; Cynthia Berner Harris, Director of Libraries; Mary K. Bird-Guilliams, Collection Development Manager; Rex Cornelius, Interim Digital Services Manager; Jennifer Heinicke, Special Projects Librarian; Julie Linneman, Programming/Outreach Manager; Jaime Prothro, Customer Service Manager; Larry Vos, Reference Services Manager.

Susan Estes, President, called the meeting to order at 12:18 p.m., a quorum being present.

As part of the Trustee Certification process, Customer Service Manager Jaime Prothro gave the staff presentation on "Trustee Core Skill Four: Creating Effective Library Policies."

The best protection for both staff and the Board is an excellent policy manual. The manual helps guide decisions that staff make every day in working with the community. It ensures that the same rules are followed with consistency. It also helps the staff know how to proceed in a variety of situations. All library employees have access to the manual to reference when needed. Each Board member also has received a copy of the Library's policy manual. The Library's personnel policies contained within the manual are fewer than those of most other libraries because as a department of the City of Wichita, the Library must comply with the City's Human Resources Policy Manual. The Library manual also contains the Library Board's bylaws as well as sections on collection management, library services, and other topics relating to library operations.

The Wichita Public Library's policies often are based upon best practices from other libraries but also with recognition that our community is unique. In most cases, policies are developed by staff and reviewed by the City's Law Department before they are presented to the Library Board for approval.

Introductions

Kellie Hogan was welcomed and introduced to the board. Ms. Hogan is Mayor Brewer's second appointee to the board.

Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the regular meeting held on October 20, 2009 were presented. It was pointed out that in the first and third paragraphs under the staff presentation, the word “employee” should be changed to “employ.” Steve Roberts moved (Alley) to approve the minutes as corrected. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Finance Committee Report

Marcia Newton gave the Finance report.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Ms. Newton moved to approve the Finance report for October 2009. **Motion carried unanimously.**

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Ms. Newton moved to approve the bills for October 2009 as presented on the agenda: General Fund Operating Bills in the amount of \$892,317.64; Grant Fund Bills of \$28,030.98; prior year Grant Fund Bills of \$11,714.02; and Gift & Memorial Fund Bills of \$1,932.52 for a total of \$933,995.16. **Motion carried unanimously.**

A revision of the Blind and Physically Handicapped Budget FY2009 has been recommended by staff. This revision would move all unspent funds (\$7,252.20) into the personal services budget lines to allow the payroll to be processed, the remaining funds to be spent, and the grant to be closed. On behalf of the Finance Committee, Ms. Newton moved to approve the revision as proposed by staff. **Motion carried unanimously.**

A revision of the State Grants in Aid budget FY09 also has been recommended by staff. The grant funds received are less than what was expected because of state agency budget cuts. The proposed revision transfers overages from the personal services and contractual lines (\$64,459.10) into funding for materials and equipment purchases. It also takes into account the reduced grant award (\$11,442). On behalf of the Finance Committee, Ms. Newton moved to approve the revision as proposed by staff. **Motion carried unanimously.**

On behalf of the Finance Committee, Ms. Newton moved to approve a Brodart book subscription plan in the amount of \$50,000. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Operations Committee Report

Lee Gee gave the Operations Committee Report.

The Library had a busy month during October, but it was uneventful from an operational perspective. The pandemic policy approved by the board in October has been filed with the City. A process to track employee absenteeism has been created and seems to be working effectively.

The Library’s current technology plan expires June 30, 2010. An updated plan will need to be prepared and certified by the State Library in order for the Library to continue to qualify for universal service (e-rate) subsidies. This will be a project planned to begin after the start of the year. The Library’s past process has been to have a staff prepared plan reviewed first by the

Operations Committee and then by the Board as a whole before it is submitted to the State Library. Board members expressed no opposition to continuing this same process for the next planning cycle.

Planning & Facilities Committee Report

Tom Engelmann gave the Planning & Facilities Committee report.

Mr. Engelmann stated that the Planning & Facilities Committee met on November 9th and discussed a recent conversation that the Wichita Downtown Development Corporation (WDDC) President Larry Weber had with Board President Susan Estes.

Mrs. Estes stated that the reason this was on the Planning & Facilities agenda was because she was approached by WDDC President Larry Weber and he expressed some concerns about the proposed new Central Library and asked several questions about the planning process, site selection for the new facility and why more consideration had not been given to remodeling and expanding the current building. She added that she had encouraged Mr. Weber and other representatives from WDDC to attend the next board meeting to share their concerns with all board members but he declined. Mr. Weber wanted to know why the Library was moving out of downtown – he does not consider the west bank part of downtown.

Mrs. Estes reviewed the processes used in choosing the new site for the new Board members. The current building is concrete so there is very little flexibility in expanding and upgrading it plus parking is a big issue in competing with Century II events. At the time that the planning process was started, then City Manager George Kolb told the Library Board that he expected the need to move the Central Library. The feeling was that all of Century II was getting renovated and the Wichita Public Library would no longer fit and would impede those plans. Moving was also looked at as a way to reduce safety concerns and improve efficiency of library operations.

There was much discussion among the Board. There were questions as to why the concerns were expressed now since it has been several years since the process began and was made public. Nothing has been kept secret - there have been several public focus groups and methods by which concerns might have been shared. New and tenured members all agreed that the Board has done due diligence researching all available properties in the downtown area searching for the best fit. Research was done on renovating the current building but that would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, since the building is concrete and there is no extra land to expand on - and it still would not solve problems such as parking. It was the consensus that the Library Board has done its job, the best possible location has been chosen, and the process should continue as planned. It was also suggested that next time Mr. Weber wants to discuss this issue, he should be asked to meet with the entire board of directors and not just one member.

Director Berner Harris reported that the Goody Clancy downtown master planning consultants have invited the Library to a stakeholder meeting on Thursday, December 3 from 3-4 pm at the Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Berner Harris stated that she and Dan Meehan from the library building programming team would participate. She encouraged board members to attend. Most of the board indicated that they would plan to be present.

A preliminary outline of workgroup adjacencies for the proposed new Central Library was presented. Director Berner Harris emphasized that this is not a final plan – it is presented simply to give Board members an idea of where things might be located within a new facility. In reviewing the adjacencies, Director Berner Harris reminded the board of previous discussions about the possibility of having the American Overseas School Historical Society co-located within the new library as a tenant. In working through edits to the building program, the staff Steering Committee notes that the space and access needs of this organization do not appear to be matching easily with the proposed layout of the new building. In its present version, the building program continues to be larger than what was anticipated in the master plan. This means that the likely building cost will also exceed Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding. It is the consensus of the staff committee that it does not make sense for the City to build space for another agency to be located within the new building at the same time as CIP funding may require that the library functions of the building may need to be downsized from what was identified in the Library’s master plan. Berner Harris asked for feedback from the Board on this topic in order to help the staff team complete work on the first edit of the building program.

Mr. Engelmann gave an update on the custodial services problem discussed at the last meeting. The meeting was postponed but Public Works Director Chris Carrier has reported that he and the City Manager are in agreement that the Central Library needs a much higher level of custodial service than what was originally discussed.

Public Affairs Committee Report

Melissa Alley gave the Public Affairs Committee report.

Ms. Alley stated she, Steve Roberts, and Kerin Smith attended the Legislative Luncheon and had several good conversations with the Legislative representatives.

Special Committee Reports

Friends of the Library – Cynthia Berner Harris gave the following information:

- Several Friends Board members attended the Legislative Luncheon.
- The Levand grant the Library receives for the Summer Reading Program will be cut next year from \$35,000 to around \$14,000. The Friends of the Library have agreed to give five months worth of proceeds from the bookstore to help support this program.
- Several Good Samaritan requests have been granted.

Library Foundation – Cynthia Berner Harris gave the following information:

- The Foundation elected their Board of Directors at the last meeting.
- Concentration in the upcoming year will be on fundraising.

Wichita Genealogical Society – Marcia Newton gave the following information:

- Each quarter, the Genealogical Society publishes the *Ark Valley Crossroads* magazine. She also reported on a recent society board of directors planning retreat.
- When the Genealogical Society visited Salt Lake City in October, they took a tour of Ancestry.com, a company that offers a wide variety of genealogy information in

electronic and indexed formats. The Wichita group was the first allowed to visit the facility. The Society is in conversation with Ancestry staff about becoming a partner to digitize and index information.

Director of Libraries Report

Director of Libraries Cynthia Berner Harris reported on the following items:

- When the statistic reports were printed, staff was unable to get data for the Planeview Community Library because of changes to the school district's library computer system. Some information has since been received indicating that during October, 159 items were checked out to public customers of that library.
- There was a meeting last month to discuss the issue of people sleeping on Library grounds that included representatives from several City departments as well as key homeless service providers. Everyone agreed that the legal system was not the solution to this problem. What was done instead was to talk about why these people are disconnected from the services available to them and what the barriers are when an officer comes in the middle of the night to wake someone who is sleeping around the Library. It was agreed that the best course of action is to try to identify these individuals and to encourage them to make use of homeless services. Greater efforts will be made to encourage Comcare homeless services staff to come to the Library to talk with these individuals.
- Dan Meehan from the Central Library programming team will be in Wichita on December 3 and 4. He will be at the Goody Clancy meeting on the 3rd and then at an open staff meeting on December 4 at 8:30 am. The Board is invited to this meeting.
- Mr. Meehan will be back in town again on December 15 and 16 and could be available to make a presentation to the Library Board during this time. Director Berner Harris suggested that the meeting be at a branch and the public be invited to a workshop presentation at the end of the board meeting. In this way, the presentation could fulfill the expectation of a community presentation to validate information from the building program against citizen expectations. Board members expressed an interest in a meeting of this type.
- When the City went through the budget process earlier this year in order to make reductions, Wichita State's Hugo Wall Center was asked to conduct an environmental scan of the City operations to see where there were things that could be done differently in order to generate savings for the City without significantly impacting service. Some things were implemented and others were not. There is now a second tier of projects from this environmental scan that the City Manager has asked departments to evaluate by February 1. Among these items is an evaluation of consolidation of branch libraries. Berner Harris would like the Board's assistance in this project. It was agreed this is appropriate. Board members offered ideas for several pieces of information that would be helpful to them in a review of branch services and the appropriateness of possible consolidations. Staff will begin work gathering this information which will be provided to the board in December.
- The Library's Art Organizational Award from the Arts Council was displayed.

Unfinished Business

Evelyn Neier moved (Alley) that at this time, the Wichita Public Library not move into an

agreement with the American Overseas School Historical Society to house them in the new Central Library. **Motion carried unanimously.**

New Business

None

Announcements

None

The meeting was adjourned at 2:13 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be December 15, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Berner Harris
Director of Libraries