

## **WICHITA PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Directors  
December 16, 2008

The regular meeting of the Library Board of Directors was held at 12:00 Noon on Tuesday, December 16, 2008 with the following present: Ms. Donna Aldrich, Ms. Melissa Alley, Ms. Barbara Baker, Mr. Randy Brown, Mr. Tom Engelmann, Mrs. Susan Estes, Ms. Cathy Landwehr, Ms. Evelyn Neier, Ms. Nancy Ogle, Ms. Helen Parli, and Mr. Steve Roberts. Absent: Mr. Randy Yeisley, Ms. Marge Zakoura-Vaughan, and Ms. Jane Eshelman.

Staff Present: Jennifer Allen, Administrative Aide II; Cynthia Berner Harris, Director of Libraries; John Ellert, Digital Services Manager; Jennifer Heinicke, Special Projects Librarian; Tammy Penland, Support Services Manager; Amy Ramsey, Children's Section Manager; and Larry Vos, Reference Services Manager.

### **Staff Presentation**

Amy Ramsey, Children's Section Manager, gave the staff presentation. She stated that she started at the Rockwell Library part-time when she was sixteen years old. Prior to becoming Manager of the Children's Room, Amy was employed in the Comotara and Rockwell branches and in the library at Friends University. In her new position, Ms. Ramsey leads the Library's Youth Programming Team. At the present time, this group is in the midst of planning for the Summer Reading Club and the Teens Read program. They hope to boost participation in the teen program this year and have managed to get some nice prizes as an incentive.

Ms. Ramsey also announced that the Library has received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities called Picturing America. Through this grant the Library received poster sized prints - some famous and others less familiar to customers. The prints are on rotating display in all library locations. Staff has put together activities related to the prints.

The Youth Programming Team is also working on National Library Week with a "Storytelling Galore" event. This will be two programs with staff members telling stories to the children that attend.

Ms. Ramsey stated that she hopes to work with home-school organizations and home-school parents to let them know about all of the different resources and services the Library has available for them.

Nancy Ogle asked if the Library has found a way to send text messages to get teenagers more involved in reading. Ms. Ramsey answered that the Library is going to use more e-mail this year to contact the summer teen volunteers. This will save on printing and postage costs. Cynthia Berner Harris stated that the Library is not completely satisfied with the telephone notification system in the Polaris system. Polaris has signed an agreement with another company and Library staff is researching this new option. Part of this system is text messaging. As a result, the Library may have the capacity to do this soon.

Nancy Ogle, President, called the meeting to order at 12:09 p.m., a quorum being present.

### **Introductions**

None

### **Public Comment**

Arlis Gladney, previously banned from the Wichita Public Library due to his conduct, has requested reinstatement. Ms. Berner Harris distributed information pertaining to Mr. Gladney's banning. She stated that Mr. Gladney said he did not receive notification of last month's meeting so he was invited again in order to present his case to the Library Board.

Mr. Gladney was escorted in and introduced. He stated that he uses the Wichita Public Library for research and it is one of the best equipped libraries he has been to. He explained that he is a photographer and a musician and this Library has the information he needs. He stated that he has paid all his overdue fines. He went on to say that he is working, has his conduct under control, and would like to be able to come back to the Library.

*Cathy Landwehr arrived.*

A lot of the problems with the Library are the homeless people. He went on to say he has been homeless too but when he comes to the Library, it is to better himself. He stated that he is a disabled veteran and a paranoid schizophrenic but he takes medicine for that. He never thought he would be banned from the Library or would get in trouble with the law.

Susan Estes stated that she shares his love of learning but is struggling with his request. She went on to say that she wants as many people as possible to be able to use the library, including him. She added that she understands that sometimes the homeless are a hindrance to his experience here. Mr. Gladney interrupted saying they aren't a hindrance, he just doesn't think they should be here. A library is a place to go and get things done, not a place you go to keep warm. Mrs. Estes went on to say that a lot of families come to the Library and we get a lot of feedback from them that they don't always feel safe. She asked Mr. Gladney to tell her what he has done between the last incident and now, what anger management or other therapy programs he has completed, that would help him make a different choice the next time. Mr. Gladney once again interrupted and stated that the incident started when he was sitting and studying when a lady came up and stood in the aisle looking at books for thirty minutes. He stated that this annoyed to him so he got up and stood behind her and overreacted. She reported this to security. Mrs. Estes once again asked what Mr. Gladney has done between that incident and now that will help him make a different choice next time. Mr. Gladney stated that he goes to church regularly, volunteers, and believes that Jesus is the best teacher there is. He went on to state that in the bible it says to control your tongue and so he has learned to control his tongue. Mr. Gladney stated that Mayor Brewer said to be a productive citizen so he is being productive. He has started his own business and is working three jobs. This place is an asset to him.

*Randy Brown arrived.*

Barbara Baker asked Mr. Gladney if he was on his medication when these incidents occurred. Mr. Gladney responded that he was living in a hotel at that time and was periodically on and off his medication. Now his health is good, he takes a martial arts class, has joined the Y and will hopefully get some transportation. He went on to say that he has a fourteen-year-old daughter who gets straight A's. How would it look to her that her father can't even go to the library? He wants to be able to teach her and be a role model to her. He stated that there are laws that you have to abide by but he wasn't totally in the wrong. The lady was in the aisle for thirty minutes just standing and doing nothing and he overreacted. He repeated that it was not all his fault.

Mrs. Estes asked what he would do differently if he had it to do again. Mr. Gladney responded that he would have paid his fines so he could check the books out and take them home instead of studying at the Library. Mrs. Estes asked if he thought it would have been better to ask a librarian to help him out with his situation. He agreed.

Tom Engelmann stated that he was not speaking for the Board, and started to inquire if Mr. Gladney would be willing to check in with the security officer at the start of each library visit, should his request be approved. Mr. Gladney became agitated, collected his belongings and left without responding to Mr. Engelmann.

President Ogle asked if the Board should vote on Mr. Gladney's request. Director of Libraries Cynthia Berner Harris explained that the last action of the Board was to affirm the banning. Unless a member of the Board makes a motion to reconsider that decision, the banning will remain in effect.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the regular meeting held on November 18, 2008 were presented. Susan Estes moved (Roberts) to approve the minutes as written. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Finance Committee Report**

Tom Engelmann gave the Finance report.

Mr. Engelmann made a committee motion to approve the minutes of the November Finance Committee meeting. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Engelmann made a committee motion to approve the Finance report and bills for November 2008 as presented on the agenda: General Fund Operating Bills in the amount of \$572,836.93; prior year Grant Fund Bills of \$382.15; 2008 Grant Fund Bills of \$35,327.74; and Gift & Memorial Fund Bills of \$577.87 for a total of \$609,124.69. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Engelmann stated that a copy of the preliminary projections for the department's General Fund receipts and expenditures was received, reviewed, and filed by the Finance Committee.

The Interlibrary Loan and Development Grant Budget was previously approved by the Board. Some of the usage requirements have changed over time and have been reviewed and reprioritized. Mr. Engelmann summarized the updated purchase plans that will result from the changes to the program requirements.

The 2009 Budget Outlook was also reviewed with the Committee agreeing that the year ahead will be fiscally challenging.

### **Operations Committee Report**

Cathy Landwehr gave the Operations Committee Report.

This has been a quiet month for Operations issues. The Library is continuing to refine processes related to the Polaris system. Tammy Penland & Cynthia Berner Harris have met with the City's new Internal Auditor to talk about how to take advantage of the increased power of Polaris to make cash reporting and related processes more efficient. At this point the Director does not think there will be any policy changes coming from the auditor's recommendations.

The Library completed the printing and distribution of the Contingency of Operations (COOP) Smart Books and will be scheduling information on those processes into 2009 in-house staff training. The book is actually being used for the first time today as the Linwood branch has had a planned power outage by Westar Energy. The information in the book made it easy to explain exactly how this situation should be handled.

### **Planning & Facilities Committee Report**

Donna Aldrich gave the Planning & Facilities Committee Report.

- Seven firms replied to the request for proposals for the Central Library building project. The screening committee will meet on December 22 to short-list proposals.
- The Library has completed an updated submission into proposed revisions of the Capital Improvement Program for the Central Library, West, and Southeast branch projects.
- Rockwell repairs and remodeling resulting from the car incident are complete. Staff has identified some additional rearranging that will be completed soon which should assist with operational efficiencies.
- Work has begun on the installation of the new shelves in the Wulfmeyer Special Collections center.
- The Library has made arrangements with a local landscaping company to do snow removal in the parking lots of the branch libraries whenever there is 2" or more of snow.

President Ogle added that she is serving as a library representative on the RFP screening committee along with Director Berner Harris and Planning & Facilities Chair Donna Aldrich. They will be joined by one representative from the Library Foundation and four from other City departments.

## **Public Affairs Committee Report**

Randy Brown gave the Public Affairs Committee Report.

There have been no significant activities in the past month. The KLA is waiting for budget issues to be resolved and there are no new updates on Legislative Day.

2009 funds for marketing will be less than the previous year, but planning has been completed to ensure that the most cost-effective initiatives can continue. The money comes from several places. There are distributions from an endowment held by the Wichita Community Foundation that was part of a Friends of the Library Challenge Grant. Most of the funding from the City of Wichita Cultural Arts Grant goes for marketing related activities such as printing of the monthly activity calendars and BookLetters and BookPage subscriptions. There is also a limited amount of printing money in the General Fund and the South Central Kansas Library System Grant Fund.

## **Special Committee Reports**

*Friends of the Library* – Helen Parli gave the following information:

- Last week Kristian Strom, the person responsible for selling rare books on Ebay for the Friends, was at the meeting to follow-up on training for bookstore sorters.
- Current membership is 859 members, including 26 platinum, 785 gold and 48 Individual card members.
- Sherryl Torres is the new interim book store manager.
- Ann Starch is now a Board member.
- 1 Good Samaritan report was received.
- The next meeting will be January 9<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm.

*Library Foundation* – Nancy Ogle reported that the Library Foundation met on December 9<sup>th</sup> with the main topic being the stock market.

*Wichita Genealogical Society* – Barbara Baker gave the following information:

- There will not be a December class.
- The new bookshelves for Genealogy are in and the damaged end caps will be in this week. People seem to appreciate the new location of the microfilm readers.

## **Director of Libraries Report**

- Cynthia Berner Harris invited the Board to attend the Holiday Social tomorrow in the Auditorium from 11:30 am – 1:30 pm.
- Today is Genealogy Librarian Marsha Stenholm's last day. Digital Services Manager John Ellert will retire on January 6. Both retirements will also be celebrated at the Holiday Social.
- Last week several members of the Youth Services staff went to Trees for Life to see a training video that they helped prepare for use in the Books for Life program. The

video teaches parents and people in libraries how to select and read books to children. It is a great teaching video and will be used in training new staff and could also be used by organizations like ChildStart. The Library is going to try to organize a community event in January where the Mayor and Superintendent of Schools will talk about it. Not only does the Library want to celebrate its involvement in it but also the fact that this is something that is happening from Wichita that has gone worldwide.

- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has set up a grant opportunity through ICMA encouraging units of government to remember their library as a resource. The Library is investigating whether there is a fit with the Mayor's initiative for downtown or some of the master planning that is happening. One idea talked about was the parcel of land that will hopefully be the location of the new Library, and how it might be incorporated into the neighborhood.
- During the City Council meeting today an agenda item for consulting studies for an assessment and facilitation service related to the Southeast Wichita Community Resources Center was approved. A public library is identified as a potential part of that building.
- The 2008 Library Performance report was included in the Board packets along with a 2009 Work Plan. Ms. Berner Harris asked for feedback and an endorsement, if found appropriate, of the 2009 Work Plan.

Nancy Ogle mentioned that Polaris training was listed in the work plan and stated that she thought this was finished. Ms. Berner Harris answered that it will be ongoing as enhancements to the system are implemented.

Evelyn Neier asked for a definition of mid-list adult fiction and graphic novels. Ms. Berner Harris answered that mid-list adult fiction are not the best sellers but are consistently popular. Graphic novels have artwork similar to comic books and are a great resource for the reluctant reader.

Tom Engelmann asked Ms. Berner Harris to share with the Board what she had discussed with the Finance Committee concerning Playaways. Ms. Berner Harris answered that one of the things the Library hopes to do with part of the Interlibrary Loan Development Grant is to test a format that is new to the Library called a Playaway. This is a single title that is combined with the playing unit so that both are circulated and used as one small unit. Similar in size to a small MP3 player, Playaways appear to be an affordable option to create portable listening opportunities for library users who do not have their own CD, cassette or MP3 players.

Barbara Baker asked about Blu-Ray technology. Ms. Benner Harris replied that the Library is still monitoring this developing technology but has not yet made a decision to start incorporating it into our collections.

### **Unfinished Business**

Barbara Baker asked for clarification on Sherryl Torres' duties at the Library now that she is the Friends Book Store Manager. Ms. Berner Harris stated that she will still remain in her position with the Library as a part-time Volunteer Coordinator but will also work for the Friends as an interim part-time contractor overseeing the book store. Her schedule has been

shifted so that she works half a day for the Library and half a day for the Friends.

**New Business**

Nancy Ogle asked for feedback or a possible endorsement on the 2009 Library Work Plan. Susan Estes moved (Engelmann) to endorse the 2009 Library Work Plan. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Ms. Ogle stated that she had asked for an Executive Session to be on the agenda to allow for discussion on the Director's 2008 performance. Susan Estes moved (Landwehr) to go into a ten minute Executive Session for purposes of discussing issues of non-elected personnel. **Motion carried unanimously.** Ms. Ogle dismissed everyone except the Board and stated they would be in Executive Session until 1:02 pm.

Ms. Ogle called the meeting back to order at 1:02 pm and stated that no action was taken during the Executive Session.

**Announcements**

None

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be January 20, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Berner Harris  
Director of Libraries