

October 20, 2011

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Skokie Public Library held in the Skokie Public Library Board Room, Thursday, October 20, 2011.

Mrs. Hunter congratulated Gary Gustin and Holly Jin on winning the Alexander J. Skrzypek Award sponsored by the Illinois Library Association.

CALL TO ORDER

Diana Hunter, President/President Emerita, called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

Members present: Diana Hunter, President/President Emerita; John Graham, Vice President; Zelda Rich, Secretary; Richard Basofin; and Carolyn A. Anthony, Director.

Members absent: Susan Greer; Karen Parrilli; and Dr. John M. Wozniak.

Staff Present: Susan Carlton, Assistant Head of Youth Services; Barbara A. Kozlowski, Associate Director for Public Services.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR AND CLOSED MEETINGS OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2011

Mr. Graham made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rich to approve the minutes of the regular and closed meetings of September 14, 2011, subject to additions and/or corrections.

There being no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved and placed on file.

CONSENT AGENDA (Financial Statements; Circulation Report; Library Use Statistics; Report(s) from Department Head(s); Gift)

Mrs. Rich made a motion, seconded by Mr. Basofin:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, SUBJECT TO AUDIT, AND THAT THE FOLLOWING CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS BE PLACED ON FILE:

1. CIRCULATION REPORT
2. LIBRARY USE STATISTICS
3. REPORT(S) FROM DEPARTMENT HEAD(S)
4. GIFT: \$25. FROM JACQUELINE BRISKEY IN HONOR OF JOHN WOZNIAK'S BIRTHDAY FOR THE PURCHASE OF A HISTORY BOOK(S).

The motion passed unanimously.

BILLS

A motion was made by Mr. Graham, seconded by Mr. Basofin:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE BILLS, SUBJECT TO AUDIT.

The roll call vote for approval was unanimous.

Mrs. Anthony apprised the Board that the Carrier chiller broke down before the end of the season and may need to be re-built.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

USAGE----Circulation in September was down 4.6% from circulation the same month last year. The biggest drop is in Adult print, down 8.7%. Video was also down nearly 5% and Audio more than 8%. The big gains were in electronic formats. The Bookmobile also showed a healthy increase of 15% in circulation. Reciprocal Borrowing was down 22% to just over 12% of circulation. The Gate Count showed a decline of nearly 5.5% for the month.

ROAD DIET----The Village Board will consider the proposed Road Diet in their regularly scheduled meeting October 17. The meeting will be held in the Petty Auditorium at 8 p.m. to allow for a larger number of attendees. The Skokie Chamber Board voted to approve the plan for the Road Diet after a presentation by Peter Peyer and representatives from Gewalt-Hamilton at the September Chamber Board meeting. Mrs. Anthony explained why the Road Diet was problematic for the Library and others were sympathetic, indicating that the Library's concerns should be addressed. Mr. Peyer indicated that the Village was considering some options such as starting the Road Diet east of the Library. Mrs. Anthony's was the sole dissenting vote at the Chamber meeting.

On October 17, the Skokie Village Board voted against the Road Diet.

GIFT FROM ROSS----Ross Dress for Less gave the Skokie Public Library a check for \$1,000. at their Grand Opening Saturday, October 8, in Fashion Square. Ross is the second largest off-price retailer in the country and they are opening twelve stores in Chicagoland this month. The gift to the Library is to be used for Youth Services for the reading program.

KINDLE FOR LIBRARIES----Amazon launched Kindle for libraries September 21 so we will see what impact this has on the circulation of titles in electronic format. Amazon

is growing and becoming involved in more aspects of the book business. They quietly introduced their own book imprint in 2009 and recently began actively signing agreements with authors for publication of titles. The appeal of the electronic publishing agreement is a much larger share of the book proceeds than offered by traditional print publishers.

DIGITAL INFORMATION DISPLAYS----The Library is replacing digital display screens in the west lobby and at Readers Services and adding a new screen in the east lobby for promotion of Library programs and services. A new software package will enable the Library to program the screens to display the day's events or the week's events or other activities according to parameters set by staff. Staff will still be able to incorporate book images and other content as desired.

ILA CONFERENCE----The Illinois Library Association Annual Conference will be held October 18-20 at the Convention Center in Rosemont. Several staff from Skokie Public Library will present programs. Mrs. Anthony will make a presentation about Coming Together in Skokie, along with librarians from District 219 and Oakton Community College.

PUBLICATION----Mrs. Anthony's is one of several commentaries on a newly published title Main Street Public Library by Wayne Wiegand that will appear in the September/October issue of Public Libraries. The book is a history of four public libraries in Minnesota, Michigan, Iowa and Wisconsin, following their development from their founding in the nineteenth century through the mid-1950s. The author has enlivened the text with stories and details about local personalities and circumstances, making clear the way in which public libraries are shaped by their communities.

GIFT FROM FILIPINO-AMERICAN COMMUNITY----The Malaya Chapter of the Order of Knights of Rizal presented the Skokie Public Library with two copies of Remembering Rizal, an anthology on Dr. Jose Rizal, the Philippine national hero, on the occasion of his sesquicentennial birthday in October. The presentation was part of the third year of celebration of the Filipino American History Month in Skokie.

LIBRARY CARD CAMPAIGN PROJECT

The Library Card Campaign grew out of discussions during the 2010 strategic planning process and is managed by Susan Carlton, Assistant Head of Youth Services, and Toby Greenwalt, Virtual Services Coordinator. It is premised on the belief that if every student in the Skokie public schools had a Skokie Public Library card, the schools would be able to access Library databases (each student using his or her own library card number)

without a budgetary impact for the schools. It would greatly expand the resources available to students and teachers, not only in the classroom but also with individual students in school computer labs and at home.

The Library is partnering with interested school districts to implement library card campaigns and to develop methods to allow students and teachers to quickly and easily access Library databases. Teachers receive training from library staff to familiarize them with the project and with the online resources available. Each participating school also has two representatives on the newly formed Database Advisory Committee. The purpose of the committee is to review and recommend databases for potential purchase by the Library.

District 73.5 was the pilot school district for this project and it is fully implemented in all three district schools. Library staff are currently working with Districts 68, 72, and 73 and they are in various stages of implementation.

Susan Carlton discussed the Library Card Campaign project. Mrs. Anthony stated this is an exemplary project and that Mrs. Carlton and Mr. Greenwalt are trailblazers with these partnerships.

The Board thanked Mrs. Carlton for her presentation and Mrs. Carlton left the meeting at 6 p.m.

REACHING ACROSS ILLINOIS LIBRARY SYSTEM (RAILS)

The following is Mrs. Parrilli's Report on the Committee of the Whole Meeting of September 16, 2011.

On July 15, RAILS received a six-page letter from Anne Craig, Director of Illinois State Library, requesting the Board of Trustees to answer 38 questions regarding their Plan of Service and policies, and defend line items included in their FY12 budget.

The Board of Directors met as the Committee of the Whole, for the purpose of reviewing and discussing each item. Mr. Michael Piper, Interim Executive Director, responded in a 15-page letter to the issues raised. Some items were referred to the Finance and Personnel Committees for review.

In his memo to the Board, Mr. Piper explained that when considering certain issues "*that require in-depth consideration,*" the Board of Directors meets as a committee. Once the Committee as a Whole adjourns, the Board of Directors then meets to vote on the recommendations.

At this time, Mrs. Parrilli asks the Library Board how far they would like her to track the various issues as the new library system develops. As time goes on, more and more meetings are scheduled, i.e., committee (legislative, finance, personnel) meetings, Member Advisory Group meetings, RAILS Update Videoconferences. Last month we discussed and voted on the Reciprocal Borrowing Program. Mrs. Parrilli suggests that she continue to follow the RAILS website and report on any information regarding RBP and any other issues that directly affect the Skokie Public Library. Also, if any Board member has specific questions or concerns about the issues RAILS faces, please let her know and she will follow up with a report.

The following are the Highlights of the RAILS Board of Directors Meeting of September 28, 2011 as submitted by Mary Witt of RAILS.

There was a meeting of the RAILS Board of Directors on Wednesday, September 28, at 1 p.m. The meeting was held at Burr Ridge and via prearranged videoconference sites.

Documents distributed at the meeting can be found on the RAILS website. Official minutes for the meeting will be published on the RAILS website when available.

Meeting highlights include:

- IFF presented a report on their analysis of RAILS facilities. The Merger Transition Board designated FY 2012 as a planning year. The IFF analysis is one piece of information that will help the RAILS Board begin the process of determining the optimal facilities configuration for RAILS as the year progresses.
- The Board approved a proposed reply to the July 15 letter from the Illinois State Library regarding RAILS' FY 2012 System Area and Per Capita Grant application.
- Audit reports from the five predecessor systems for FY 2011 were presented. No significant findings were noted for any of the five audits.*
- RAILS LLSAP Service Managers presented an overview of the four LLSAPs affiliated with RAILS: MAGIC, PrairieCat, RSA and SWAN. The overview is part of an ongoing series designed to update the RAILS Board on RAILS' priority services.
- The RAILS Board approved an application for membership from Sanford-Brown College in Skokie. The application will be sent to the Illinois State Library for approval.**

- A proposed amendment to add language regarding the RAILS Member Advisory Group to the RAILS bylaws was presented. The Board will vote on the amendment at their October 21 meeting.
- Anne Craig, Director of the Illinois State Library, discussed the budget process for the State Library and Secretary of State's office. The budget process for FY 2013 has already begun. Illinois has adopted outcomes based budgeting for FY 2013.

*For your information, the written report on the conclusion of audits of the five former library systems indicated that no significant deficiencies were noted. Net assets transferred to RAILS totaled \$16.3 million. The breakdown among the library systems is as follows:

ALS \$2.4 million

DLS \$3.3 million

MLS \$3.5 million

NSLS \$3.1 million

PLS \$4.0 million

**Sanford-Brown College on Oakton Street, Skokie, was the first school library to apply for full membership in RAILS.

Discussion of Public Reaction to Limitation on Reciprocal Borrowing

Mrs. Anthony reported that there has been lively discussion online, comments to staff in the Library and an article in The Bugle regarding the recently-enacted policy of a limit of three items per cardholder for Reciprocal Borrowing. Mrs. Anthony printed out and distributed some of the comments so that the Board can get a feel for the nature of the remarks. The Bugle reporter asked for commentary from the Board. Christie Robinson, Manager of Marketing and Programs, contacted Board Vice President John Graham who stepped up to be interviewed since President Diana Hunter was out of town.

Mrs. Anthony also distributed a fact sheet on the number of Evanston and Morton Grove residents who are registered as Reciprocal Borrowers at Skokie Public Library (1288 for Evanston and 1424 for Morton Grove) and the number of items checked out by Evanston (141,143) and Morton Grove (97,421) residents from the Skokie Public Library as compared with the number of items checked out by Skokie residents from the Evanston Public Library (11,261) and Morton Grove Public Library (10,501) for the past two years.

Tobi Oberman, Head of Circulation, reports that four suburban patrons have purchased Skokie Public Library cards to avoid the RBP limitation.

Public reaction to the policy change may abate with time, but it could be useful to clarify the Board's rationale since a number of staff are being called on to explain the policy change to patrons.

Lengthy discussion ensued. Mr. Graham stated that when it comes to RAILS the bigger issue is exemplified in Paragraph 2 of Mrs. Parrilli's report:

"In his memo to the Board, Mr. Piper explained that when considering certain issues *that require in-depth consideration*, the Board of Directors meets as a committee. Once the Committee as a Whole adjourns, the Board of Directors then meets to vote on the recommendations."

This is hardly transparent and whether RAILS will survive is a question.

Mr. Graham stated another issue is the imbalance with certain communities using the Skokie Public Library.

Lastly, Mr. Graham stated the fiduciary responsibility is to Skokie taxpayers. The rationale is clear.

Other libraries' reciprocal limits, taxation, and the cost of a non-resident card for purchase were also discussed.

Mrs. Hunter read a statement she prepared:

With the reorganization of library systems in Illinois policies were re-examined. It was noted there are large imbalances in reciprocal borrowing. The Skokie Public Library is funded 95% by local taxes. This presents a burden to Skokie taxpayers. Therefore, in accordance with the rate of reciprocal borrowing as stated in the Resource Sharing Policy of RAILS, 3 items will be the maximum to non-Skokie residents.

Mr. Graham asked for clarification regarding RAILS 16.3 million dollars in net assets. Is that cash or does it represent real estate, physical resources, etc.?

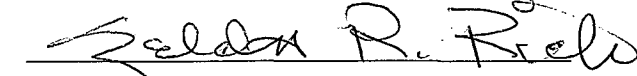
RAILS recently announced that any member of the library community can rent the former NSLS space for meetings.

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES

A letter was recently received from the William Leonard Public Library stating they are in the same financially cash-strapped position as last year. Individuals may contribute if they so desire.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:35 p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Graham, seconded by Mrs. Rich to adjourn the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Zelda R. Rich", written over a horizontal line.

Zelda Rich, Secretary