

September 20, 1987

Minutes of the special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Skokie Public Library held Sunday, September 20, 1987.

The meeting was called for the purpose of discussing role setting for the Library.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m. by Diana Hunter, President.

Members present: Diana Hunter, President; Dr. John M. Wozniak, Vice President; Shirley Merritt, Secretary; Dr. Herman S. Bloch; Walter B. Flintrup; Eva D. Weiner; Norma L. Zatz; and Carolyn A. Anthony, Director.

Observer present: Barbara A. Kozlowski, Associate Director for Public Services.

EXPECTATIONS FOR MEETING

Mrs. Anthony discussed her expectations for the meeting and the importance of role setting. She was involved in developing the roles as set forth in PLANNING AND ROLE SETTING FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Her idea was that the Board would discuss considerations in selecting roles, share their perceptions of the value of various roles, and make a preliminary prioritized listing of the roles.

Initially the Board reviewed the chapter "Developing Roles and Mission" of PLANNING AND ROLE SETTING FOR LIBRARIES.

The Board discussed some of the eight basic library roles and their components.

WHY DO ROLE SETTING?

Discussion ensued regarding the importance of setting roles; the potential benefits to individuals and to the community; resources available affecting the Library's ability to fulfill each role; and the range of service aspects of each role.

BACKGROUND OF ROLES CONCEPT AND RELATION TO PLANNING PROCESS

Mrs. Anthony explained the background of the development of library standards over the years--the last set of national standards being developed in 1966.

It became evident, however, in the 1970s, that public libraries need to differ, according to the resources available to them, and the needs of the community. They could not use a universal standard. It was necessary for each library to develop goals and objectives for their library within the community context.

Mrs. Anthony spent four years on the Steering Committee of the New Standards Task Force developing the standards set forth in the 1987 American Library Association publication "PLANNING AND ROLE SETTING FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES. (Prepared for the Public Library Development Project by Charles R. McClure, Amy Owen, Douglas L. Zweizig, Mary Jo Lynch and Nancy A. Van House.)

CONSIDERATIONS IN SELECTING ROLES

The Board discussed considerations in selecting roles for the Skokie Public Library.

Considerations include community needs; economic and social climate; other libraries, agencies and community resources. Also to be

considered during the planning process are demographics--age groups, ethnic and cultural differences, education and economic level.

A community survey will be developed to determine community needs and perception of the Library and to learn of community interests and activities.

Further considerations in developing roles would include the Library's resources, financial, staff, facilities, collections and the Library's history--use as indicated by statistics, output measures, past strengths and weaknesses. Benefits need to be considered and finally, given all the above, where can the Library make a difference.

COMPLETION OF LIBRARY ROLES WORKSHEET

Each trustee completed a worksheet pertaining to his/her perception of the Library as: a community activities center; community information center; formal education support center; independent learning center; popular materials library; preschoolers' door to learning; reference library; and research center. The trustees were asked to assign points to roles as reflected in current library activities and again to reflect a desired level of commitment.

DISCUSSION OF ROLES SELECTED AND SERVICE IMPLICATIONS

Trustees discussed determining current library involvement in the eight library roles listed on the worksheet in order to clarify their understanding of the Library's activities.

Needs and commitment to the community were discussed.

The trustees will continue to consider the Library's role in the community, talk about each role and assign priorities again at a later date.

Concerns in selecting areas of commitment were discussed including percent of staff time involved; number of people impacted by it; how effectively are we doing it; is it provided elsewhere; and is it cost effective for the Library to provide it, i.e., is it costing \$5.00 a patron to show the Thursday film.

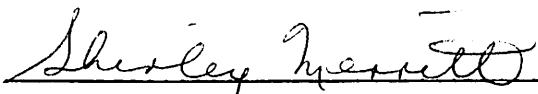
Financial implications are a part of role setting--the Board wants to continue to address community needs within prudent fiscal considerations. The Skokie Public Library maintains a positive public image and current high standards and this will remain a priority in developing and setting Library roles.

WHAT NEXT?

Roles selected as priorities must take into consideration what is best for the entire community. Community needs will be determined in part through a community survey. We should strive to attract residents who are not library users and to fulfill the needs of the diversified ethnic and cultural populace of Skokie. Additional information about the changing demographics of Skokie, as well as statistics for Library services, will be helpful in reexamining the roles. Input from the Board of Trustees will be important throughout the planning process as trustees have the perspective of community residents who are also very knowledgeable about services the Library can provide.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.


Shirley Merritt, Secretary