

September 14, 1964

Minutes of the special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Skokie Public Library with the Board of Trustees of the Village of Skokie, held September 14, 1964 at 7:30 p.m. in the Lecture Room of the Library.

Library Board members present: Conroy V. Erickson, Mrs. W. C. Griffin, L. O. Green, Mrs. Daniel Petty, Rabbi Karl Weiner, Louis Weingart and Miss Mary Radmacher, Librarian.

Village Board members present: Mayor Myron Greisdorf, Trustees Berger and Wozniak, Bernard Marsh, Village Manager, Richard Kaegi, Assistant Village Manager, and Marvin Glink, Village Attorney.

Also present: James W. Hammond, architect and Mrs. M. Sarver, secretary.

Meeting was called to order by L. O. Green, President of the Library Board, who explained the reason for the combined meeting was to seek the advice and counsel of the Village Board on the proposed expansion of the present library building and contemplated erection of a branch in the north end of Skokie. It was explained that at the time the present building was erected, the projected population figure for 1980 was 75,000 people which was considered a maximum figure. Now, the library is overcrowded from usage of the present population which is approximately 68,000. The projected population figure for 1970 is 91,800 by Northeast Metropolitan Planning Commission. Mr. Green asked the Librarian to explain the need for space.

Miss Radmacher stated one of the main concerns was lack of parking space for patrons. The need for more space for books is urgent as partially explained by the knowledge explosion - 2 books per capita is no longer enough. This Library is actively drawn upon by the students and, while some of the schools have fairly good libraries, some have lesser accommodations, but none are adequate to supply the students' need. Along with the constantly increasing use of this Library by the

students, it is necessary to adequately serve the adults. The Business Service is increasing in usage by the people in industry in the area. This building has no room for a collection of prints, audio visual facilities and lacks space for adult readers.

At this time Mr. James W. Hammond, Architect, was introduced to present figures and renderings for preliminary plans prepared in consultation with Miss Radmacher and the Board on actual footage of space necessary for functioning and serving the community based on the need within twenty years, for an expansion and branch at a total figure of \$1,597.00, not including land.

At this point there was a discussion of the circulation figures - approximate number of books circulated per month or year and use of the reference collection.

Mr. Berger questioned the advisability of building a branch library because of increased cost of personnel, etc., since expansion of this building is essential. The Librarian and the Board assured him that the branch would be staffed with non-professional help. These persons would have library experience but not library degrees. All of the processing of books, reference work and other areas of service requiring graduate librarians would still be conducted at the main library.

Since the branch library is being built adjacent to the Old Orchard Junior High School and, in effect, with School District No. 68 on the purchase of the land, would it not be prudent and economical to include the branch in the school building? This question was asked by Mr. Berger. Mr. Green pointed out that in cases where this has been done the library has, in effect, become a school library and the adults cease to use it, possibly for many reasons, one being that they do not like going in and out of the school and also because there is practically no room left for the adults. It has never been satisfactorily done.

Mr. Berger also asked the reason for using the north end of the Village rather than the east or south. This was explained by the lack of available property

for purchase in many areas and also the tremendous increase in the population in the north end. Also, the fact that delegations from that area have visited the library with the request for the branch and this would seem that they are aware of the urgent need for it and their interest in working for it.

Mayor Greisdorf stated he thought the only thing to do was to go ahead with it and present it to the people and if they reject it there is nothing to do but abide by their decision. After all both Boards are working for the good of the people and it is necessary to plan for them and permit them to accept the proposals if they wish.

Mr. Green stated that the over-all plans would increase the tax rate, as spread over twenty years about \$85,000 per year plus interest or \$100,000 per year, which would add about \$7.00 - \$8.00 to the Village family tax bill. Mayor Greisdorf questioned whether it would be quite this high - possibly nearer to \$5.00.

Mayor Greisdorf stated (off the record) if he were around the Library much he would be planning branches in the north, east and south. He continued to state that there will have to be a very active campaign conducted. This would have to be planned.

President Green stated that the feeling of the Library Board was the same as the Mayor's, this should be presented to the people and let them take it or reject it.

The question arose of who would pay the legal fees in connection with the bond issue. Mr. Green stated the Library will pay all the legal fees. Mayor Greisdorf stated that if the Library Board is prepared to carry the ball and do all the work, the Village Board would take care of the perfunctory work.

Mr. Berger asked what real advantages or reason for building a branch at the location of Gross Point Road and Kenton Avenue. Rabbi Weiner replied that speaking as a property owner alone and not talking of need, it would be an advantage to the development of the community as a whole and turn that bit of land into a civic area rather than a wasteland which would give the Village, as a whole,

more esteem. Mr. Berger stated that, in his opinion, the only real justification for a library branch is definite need for a library per se.

Mr. Green stated that along with the bond issue referendum for building it would be necessary to ask for an increase in the tax levy for operation up to the .02 per cent maximum as set by the State Library Code. It was a question in the mind of the Library Board whether to include this with the building program or not. Mr. Berger stated he wondered if the Library Board was aware of the opposition and would be alerted to see that there was no organized opposition --- and if it would be wise to put it into two phases.

Mayor Greisdorf suggested he would go ahead "whole hog" and then find out what the practical objections were. He said the Village will help with everything they can.

Mayor Greisdorf asked Mr. Green to let the Village Trustees know when the Library Board planned to attend the Village meeting and suggested that, at that time, all the papers should be prepared and the resolution ready to be passed. The Mayor recommended the engagement of legal counsel. Mr. Green recalled for the information of the Village Board the exorbitant fees paid when the referendum for the present building was conducted and asked for a recommendation by the Village Trustees. Mr. Spear has done reasonably priced work for the Village and it was stated that he would take care of the whole thing and how the bonds should be sold. Engagement of his services would be a real economy. However, the Mayor cautioned the Library Board to remember that 1/8 of a per cent must be included in the budget for engaging a counsel to take care of the sale of the bonds.

Mayor Greisdorf said he would send a copy of the prospectus for the water bonds to the Library.

The Village Trustees recommended that a close look should be taken at what the assessed valuation will be, and also the ratio of industrial and residential property taxes.


Mr. Green stated that in line with the favorable opinion of the Village Trustees a resolution will be prepared by W. Scott McDowell for presentation at their meeting.

In answer to Mr. Green's question about a time limit within which it must be approved Mr. Glink said he was not sure but thought sixty days.

In discussion about having the bond issue referendum on December 5 with School District 68, Mr. Berger said he did not think it would do any good to go in with District 68 and felt there should be a bond issue referendum of the Library alone. Mayor Greisdorf thinks it would be in conjunction with the school. Mr. Green stated that in view of this he is thinking that it should be a week ahead of School District 68, especially in view of the report Miss Radmacher had brought from the meeting with the School District 68 before noon this date. Miss Radmacher stated that Mr. Gibbs had definitely said that they were anticipating passing their bond issue because of the alliance with the Library and its plans. Mr. Berger offered this suggestion: "If this is the way they feel, try to bring it out. After this evening have a complete discussion with them whether it is more important to have a library than to have a library and a school. They may recommend to you that you not put all your eggs in one basket."

After further discussion of the approval of the Village Trustees present with the complete plans and assurance of their cooperation, the Village Board members retired from the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

The President adjourned the meeting of the Library Board at 9:30 p.m.

  
Selma Petty Secretary