

August 11, 1999

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Skokie Public Library held in the Skokie Public Library Board Room, Wednesday, August 11, 1999.

CALL TO ORDER

John J. Graham, President, called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

Members present: John J. Graham, President; Diana Hunter, Vice President/President Emerita; Eva D. Weiner, Secretary; Zelda Rich; Richard J. Witry; Dr. John M. Wozniak; and Carolyn A. Anthony, Director.

Susan Greer arrived at 7:55 p.m.

Also present: Barbara A. Kozlowski, Associate Director for Public Services and Skokie resident, Carole Riding.

Mr. Graham said that "Comments from Visitors" will be an Agenda item each month, following Comments from Trustees. Visitors and staff will have the opportunity to speak.

The Board concurred.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 14, 1999

Mrs. Hunter made a motion, seconded by Mr. Witry, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of July 14, 1999, subject to additions and/or corrections.

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

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

LIST OF BILLS

Mrs. Rich made a motion, seconded by Dr. Wozniak:

MOTION: THAT THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE MONTH OF JULY, 1999 AND THE LIBRARY NOTE FUND BE

ACCEPTED, AND THAT THE LIST OF BILLS BE APPROVED FOR PAYMENT, SUBJECT TO AUDIT.

The roll call vote for approval was unanimous.

CIRCULATION REPORT
LIBRARY USE STATISTICS
REPORT(S) FROM DEPARTMENT HEAD(S) (1)
PROGRAM STATISTICS 1ST QUARTER F.Y. 1999-2000
PERSONNEL

Mrs. Hunter made a motion, seconded by Dr. Wozniak:

- MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES PLACE ON FILE THE FOLLOWING CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:
1. CIRCULATION REPORT
 2. LIBRARY USE STATISTICS
 3. REPORT(S) FROM DEPARTMENT HEAD(S)
 4. PROGRAM STATISTICS 1ST QUARTER F.Y. 1999-2000
 5. PERSONNEL

Resignations: Licarion E. Mendoza, Jr., part-time Roving Technology Guide, Adult Services Department, effective July 19, 1999; Sana Ansari, hourly Clerk, Circulation Department, effective July 21, 1999; Hena Shamim, part-time Roving Technology Guide, Adult Services Department, effective August 10, 1999; Jobby Mampilly, hourly Information Services Desk Clerk, Adult Services Department, effective August 25, 1999

Re-appointment: George Anastasiadis, hourly Clerk, Circulation Department, effective August 2, 1999

Appointment: Cynthia M. Robinson, part-time Librarian, Youth Services Department, effective August 23, 1999

The motion to place the Consent Agenda items on file was unanimously approved.

BALANCE SHEET FOR THE THREE MONTHS ENDING JULY 31, 1999 and YEAR-TO-DATE BUDGETARY STATUS (Not on Consent Agenda)

During discussion Mrs. Hunter said she is concerned that tax bills will be going out late again this year. She said this could create a hardship for the Library and asked Mrs. Anthony if she anticipates any problems.

Mrs. Anthony said, as in the past, when there was a shortfall because mailing of the property tax bills was delayed, some adjustments will need to be made, namely delaying payment on certain bills. We have occasionally had to borrow from the Reserve Fund and then repay it when we received sufficient funds.

John Graham commented that the situation with late tax bills and spending outpacing revenues for the first five months of the year will clearly show the Village why the Library needs to have at least four months reserve in the working cash fund at the end of the fiscal year.

The Board reviewed the Year-to-Date Budgetary Status.

Mrs. Hunter made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rich to accept the Balance Sheet for the Three Months ending July 31, 1999 and the Year-to-Date Budgetary Status as presented.

The motion was unanimously approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Usage--Circulation in July increased only slightly from circulation last summer with big increases on the Bookmobile and in adult audio and video and decreases in print circulation, especially in Youth Services. Reciprocal borrowing was up by 8%. The gate count was comparable to last July. The Library home page logged 8,431 requests from 3,449 district host computers.

Building Improvements--We have had numerous building-related projects underway this past month including completion of the new panels for the service desks, cleaning of carpeting throughout the Library, some exterior painting of the new building, installation of additional interior signage and installation of additional shelving for current periodicals.

Millennium Project--Mrs. Anthony is involved in Village Millennium projects, serving on the Village Millennium Committee, working with Mayor Van Dusen on a children's history of Skokie to be published next year, and working with the Skokie Historical Society on a series of displays for the Millennium.

Health Advisory Committee--The Skokie Health Department has convened a committee of representatives of numerous agencies to advise them in development of their new priorities for community health for the next five years. The group has a limited life of four meetings. It is interesting to review the data they have gathered and to note that they are also making use of the general demographic data and updates to the 1990 census compiled by the Library's Information Gathering Committee. Mrs. Anthony had sent the report to Village Manager Al Rigoni who distributed it to his department heads.

ILA Meetings--It has been a busy month for Illinois Library Association meetings. We had a day long leadership retreat and orientation for Board members and committee chairs in Springfield, followed by the first ILA Board meeting. The Conference Committee met at Navy Pier to review meeting spaces and logistics for the Conference October 16-19. Mrs. Anthony encourages Board members to attend the Conference for one or more days. Early registration is due August 20.

Filtering Issues--Mrs. Anthony continues to follow developments in Internet filtering and policy. She attended a meeting at the Chicago Public Library at which Karen Schneider spoke. Ms. Schneider organized the Internet Filtering Assessment Project which was completed about two years ago. It revealed many flaws with commercial filtering products which she feels have not improved significantly. Arlington Heights has joined a growing number of libraries offering filtered stations in the Youth Services Department. For several years now, they have offered a restricted use card for video checkout which has been selected by parents of about 150 children.

The Board voiced their continued concern over the issue of Internet filtering.

Mrs. Greer entered the Board Room at 7:55 p.m.

During discussion Mr. Witry said filtering and related issues should be of great concern to the Board. He will attend the September 25 workshop "Ethics, Policy & the Library" at Loyola University. Mr. Graham urged other trustees to attend.

Mrs. Anthony said trustees unable to attend the Loyola program can attend the Illinois Library Association Conference program for trustees at Navy Pier Saturday, October 16 or the preconference on filtering Saturday afternoon.

Mrs. Hunter suggested contacting NSLS Director Sarah Long and ask if the program September 25 will be taped as it would be beneficial to all trustees.

Marketing Meeting at ALA--Mrs. Anthony attended an ad hoc meeting at ALA to help inform some marketing professionals from BSMG Worldwide who are developing a plan to market libraries in contemporary society for ALA.

Carpet Cleaning--Carpeting in the Petty Auditorium and the first floor will be cleaned over the weekend.

COLLECTION SERVICE FOR LONG OVERDUE MATERIALS

Over the past year we have been investigating the feasibility of implementation of a collection agency service in order to help us retrieve unreturned library materials. Each year 900-950 items are never returned, representing a loss to the Library of about \$20,000. In FY '99, there were 926 unreturned items, worth \$18,787.79. Additional costs to the Library include reordering, cataloging and processing replacement titles.

There are several collection agencies used by libraries for this purpose. We have talked with a number of representatives and have checked with other libraries regarding their experience. We prefer Unique Management Services because libraries are their only clients and they are sensitive to the desire to maintain patron good will. They also have software which interfaces with our library automation system, eliminating the need for time-consuming paper submittals. Their costs are comparable to other agencies.

Unique Management Services has a 90 day no-risk trial. Given the sensitive nature of the collection process, the Board's approval of a trial is requested.

The Board reviewed the collection process information, terms of the trial, sample letters and telephone script.

The agency would not take over until all internal procedures have been exhausted. We would still send an overdue notice at 15 days late and a bill after 30 days. The collection agency could take over pursuit of an account at least 45 days overdue, but not more than 60 days overdue and would only follow up on accounts worth \$30.00 or more.

The Board discussed the potential negative PR. Mr. Graham suggested staff carefully record any adverse PR during the 90 day trial period, so that when the issue resurfaces in a few months as an Agenda item, we will have a good monitor.

Mrs. Rich made a motion, seconded by Dr. Wozniak:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE SERVICES OF THE COLLECTION AGENCY, UNIQUE MANAGEMENT SERVICES, FOR A 90 DAY TRIAL PERIOD AS PRESENTED.

The motion was unanimously approved.

COMPUTER PURCHASE

As part of our planned replacement cycle, we would like to purchase 25 new computers at \$1,235 each for a total of \$31,750, including shipping. The purchase will enable us to retire 17 older, networked computers, several other older computers at standalone locations and place two additional computers in the Circulation Department. The expense would be covered by the Technology line in the budget.

After brief discussion Mrs. Rich made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Hunter:

MOTION: THAT THE SKOKIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF 25 DELL OPTIPLEX GX1L+PIII450 COMPUTERS AS REQUESTED FOR A TOTAL OF \$31,750.00.

The roll call vote for approval was unanimous.

POSSIBLE MINOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Construction Proposals

A proposal to enclose the former Board Room with a glass wall to convert it to a quiet study area was prepared by Architect Paul Steinbrecher at Director Anthony's request. Also, there is a need for additional space for collection and a proposal to enable expansion of the collection without compromising seating space is to glass in a portion of the lobby across from the checkout stations. It is proposed that new materials in various formats would be shelved in this area. A new glass curtain wall would be constructed, extending 17 feet 7 inches into the present lobby backed by the Mary Radmacher Meeting Room and coming up to the doorway of Readers Services. A free standing section of plaster wall would be erected in front of the glass so that it could be used for display and look exactly as it does now. The area could meet collection growth needs for the next 2.5 to 3 years.

Mr. Graham suggested each project be discussed separately and voted on separately. The first proposal under consideration is the lobby reconfiguration.

Lobby Reconfiguration

Mrs. Greer made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Rich to proceed with the lobby reconfiguration as proposed.

During lengthy discussion it was the consensus of the Board this construction project not be pursued at this time. Mrs. Weiner reiterated that the Long Range Plan Committee discussed space needs at length previously. It is impossible to look far enough "down the road" to accurately judge future needs. We have no way of knowing how often this problem or one similar will come up again in the next few years.

Mr. Witry said there is much to consider here and the lobby reconfiguration in essence is a Band-Aid approach to fix the problems mentioned. There are serious concerns for the Board to look at and to decide where we want the Library to be in five to ten years.

Mrs. Rich agreed the Board would need to make some type of long range commitment.

Mrs. Hunter said she is very, very averse to infringing on the lobby; that the Library's trustees are the guardians of this architectural award-winning building and no matter what, the building's integrity must be retained.

Mrs. Greer said it is an impressive and grand entrance and should remain so.

There are questions the Board needs to ask and discuss; an assessment of space needs, including a west entryway. The Board needs to know what the alternatives are. The present building addition is built to sustain a third floor and every possibility needs to be considered. Perhaps a third floor is the answer.

The roll was called. The motion failed.

A motion to table the subject was made by Mr. Witry, seconded by Dr. Wozniak, and was unanimously approved.

The Board asked that a list be prepared of architects who have worked specifically on library construction and renovations to libraries. We need to look to 2010 and beyond and what we want the Library to be.

Quiet Room

Mrs. Rich made a motion, seconded by Dr. Wozniak to discuss the second proposal - to convert the open study area (former Board Room) into a "quiet room" by enclosing it with a glass wall.

Mr. Witry made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Hunter to table the subject.

The roll was called. All yes, but Dr. Wozniak, who voted "no".

The motion to table passed.

Additional Millwork

Paul Steinbrecher has prepared drawings and we have received a quotation from Continental Woodworking for some additional millwork for the Library. The three projects proposed include a 24 ft. patron counter for computers; a new hanging bookshelf unit behind the Information Services Desk and two additional laminate replacement pieces behind the Readers Services Desk.

The cost of these projects would be \$6,580.

Mrs. Hunter made a motion, seconded by Dr. Wozniak to approve the additional millwork as proposed in the amount of \$6,580.

The motion was unanimously approved.

LIBRARY CABLE NETWORK CHANNEL 24

The Board reviewed the August 1999 Cable Guide.

NORTH SUBURBAN LIBRARY SYSTEM

There was no meeting of the NSLS Board of Directors in August.

COMMENTS FROM TRUSTEES

Mr. Witry said he would like the Library's Technology Specialists to come to a Board meeting and update the Board of progress with our web sites and other technology plans.

The Board said once they have the list of architects requested, interviews can be conducted in November. Criteria will be established and space issues and concerns can be extrapolated from the Long Range Plan.

Mr. Graham said the compensation study committee is still meeting with the consultant. There are staffing issues to be considered such as some type of human resources person to help with the workload in Administration.

Mrs. Rich left the Board Room at 8:55 p.m.

COMMENTS FROM VISITORS

Visitors were asked if they would like to speak.

With regard to the approved collection agency 90-day trial Ms. Riding commented that there is not uniformity among Circulation staff in how they deal with people with overdue. Some are more willing to forgive fines while others hold firm. Ms. Riding also suggested a sign be put up in the lobby indicating where to return books because the sign that we have up is not visible upon entry. She also asked that the approved Board meeting minutes be placed at the Reference Desk for the public.

Ms. Kozlowski said her staff will be very interested in discussing space issues and what our needs are now.

Mr. Graham thanked Ms. Riding and Ms. Kozlowski for their comments.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.



Eva D. Weiner, Secretary