

MINUTES of the Washington County Library Board
Regular Meeting at Stafford Library
Woodbury, MN
June 28, 2010

Present

Board: Japs, Nickerson, Sievert, Sindelir, Skinner, Vidlock, Weik
Staff: Conley, Schneider

1. Call to Order

Nickerson called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

2. Recognition of Public

No members of the public present.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Motion made by Japs and seconded by Vidlock to adopt the Agenda. Vote: All in favor. Motion passed.

Consent Calendar Approval

Motion made by Japs and seconded by Vidlock to adopt the minutes. Vote: All in favor. Motion passed. Motion made by Sindelir and seconded by Sievert to accept the donations. Vote: All in favor. Motion passed.

4. Unfinished and New Business

A. Strategic Plan – Conley opened discussion on the strategic plan and the list provided to the Board of the various descriptions of roles public libraries address in their communities. She indicated only two board members had returned their top five choices from the list prior to the meeting and apologized if she had promised to send the list and a reminder. In order to expedite collecting the board members’ top choices, Conley passed a copy of the list around and asked members to check their top five during the meeting. Conley counted the choices made and reported: five votes: Create Young Readers and Connect to the Online World; four votes: Be an Informed Citizen, Make Informed Decisions and Understand How to Find, Evaluate and Use Information; three votes: Satisfy Curiosity; two votes: Get the Facts Fast, Succeed in School and Visit a Comfortable Place; and one vote: Celebrate Diversity, Know your Community, Learn to Read and Write, Make Career Choices, and Stimulate Imagination. Some members noted roles overlap such as “being informed” and “making informed decisions”. Others suggested “connecting to the online world” was a “method” to access intellectual material or a “gateway” to reading materials. Japs said computers can also inhibit information seekers because they can be used by companies and others to track who is asking for what. In contrast a public library works to protect privacy and confidentiality. Skinner added she made the assumption in her choices that “providing reading materials in whatever format” is the number one role of the library when she made her selections. Several board members indicated agreement with her and added that there is also an “organizing information” and “guiding function” to add. Based upon the discussion and growing

consensus, Conley suggested the number one role of the public library “is to provide and organize reading material and information in whatever format”. Further comments from board members included being careful of “mission creep” and making sure the identified priorities is a “proper mix” to address the community, for example reviewing the population’s diversity when making materials and service changes. Members agreed the public library also continues to be a place for those who cannot afford their own access to online and reading materials. Conley suggested she take the top selections by board members, the number one role “to provide and organize reading material and information in whatever format” and draft some possible action statements in relation to them keeping in mind the current budget reductions and the possibility of more in the next year. Some actions proposed might focus on protecting the collection budget and instituting technology improvements to cope with limited resources and staff. She suggested that there would be the possibility of some type of online survey and/or a focus group with selected participants if necessary regarding a draft plan but that could be decided later. She expects the library board would review a draft with proposed actions and strategic goals at the September meeting. Board members agreed that this would be a practical way to proceed on the draft plan.

5. Administrative Reports

- A. Director’s Report - Conley distributed a written report to the board and summarized the report: the kiosk installation at Hugo will be on July 8th; the County Board has approved a final amended budget which translates into an approximate 4% cut for the Library; Cottage Grove has decided to move ahead on a public safety and city hall building near the County’s South Service Center; a book in the Library collection has been challenged; and the Lake Elmo city council is calling a special meeting this Tuesday to consider a resolution to create a separate library and levy for the same. Conley then explained she had written a letter to Brenda Mathson on the book she has asked be removed, When the New Baby Comes, I’m Moving Out. She explained her rationale for keeping the book in the collection and said however Ms. Matson can appeal her decision to the Library Board. Board members had during the meeting read the books in question and the library director’s response and generally agreed that they supported Conley’s response. Nickerson suggested that Conley communicate with Ms Matson so that she would be aware of the Board’s sentiment. She is still able to further appeal to the library board. Conley agreed she would do so. On the matter of Lake Elmo, Conley noted Lake Elmo now is looking for 40 hours per week although originally the discussion had begun with switching service days from a week day to Saturday. The City also does not seem to be supportive of the County’s long term capital plan for future library locations and service models. Meanwhile the County has made no decisions regarding the county library branch in Lake Elmo. Board members commented statistics show that most Lake Elmo residents use other libraries such as Oakdale and Stillwater. Conley indicated she would keep board members informed regarding any decisions.

6. Board Reports

- A. President’s report - Nickerson said he had a communication that some library staff may not be on board with the Library Board or the library administration to date regarding reductions in hours and services. He suggested that some communications may be helpful with staff as well as assist them with questions.
- B. Board members’ reports –Sindelir noted that the Marine branch report indicated no children attended the book binding program. Sievert indicated he had heard a group may be forming to work on keeping the Lakeland branch open.

7. Adjournment

Nickerson entertained a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Sievert and seconded by Japs to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 26, 2010. Conley anticipates the meeting will be held in Hugo to show board members the kiosk and locker installation. The start time for the meeting may need to be earlier. Board members will be notified.