

THE URBANA FREE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 2003

Present: Kermit Harden, James Quisenberry, Beth Scheid, Chris Scherer, Charlie Smyth, and Jane Williams

Absent: Mary Ellen Farrell, Marion Gushee, and Odell Warren

Staff present: Debra Booth, Becky Brown, Jean Koch, Barbara Lintner, and Fred Schlipf

Also present: Peggy Henderson

The Urbana Free Library Board of Trustees met at a regular meeting held in the Archives of The Urbana Free Library on April 8, 2003. The meeting was called to order by the president, Kermit Harden, at 7:30 p.m.

It was moved by Charlie Smyth, seconded by Beth Scheid, and passed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on March 11, 2003, be approved as mailed.

It was moved by Charlie Smyth, seconded by Chris Scherer, and passed unanimously that the following bills be approved retrospectively for payment:

March 12, 2003 – General Fund, \$15,990.38; Trust Fund, \$1,143.35; Documents Fund, \$200.00; Publications Fund, \$198.71.

March 26, 2003 – General Fund, \$16,729.02; Trust Fund, \$422.36; Publications Fund, \$161.79.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Automation

No report.

Building and Grounds

The electrical supply for the Library was transferred from the old transformer to the new transformer on March 14. The Library was closed for the entire day, since it was uncertain when the power would be restored.

The walls of the new north ramp are done, and the contractor hopes to pour the slab in the coming week. An entrance door will be installed in the next few weeks, but a temporary opening will be created to allow book sale volunteers to move books to Lincoln Square for the upcoming Friends of the Library book sale.

The north side footings have been poured, and work on foundations and footings should continue for at least another six weeks.

Workers are removing the curtain walls for the 1975 addition—both glass and limestone. They should be done by early May.

One of the front steps is loose, and the contractors will stabilize it. The construction contract calls for totally rebuilding the steps during Phase II of the project.

The Archives is serving as a temporary fire exit, in order to provide two emergency exits from the ground floor.

Education and Training

No report.

Finance

The Finance Committee presented a proposed 2003/2004 budget.

Following the City's request that increases in expenditures be kept as low as possible, the Library's budget shows a 2.63 percent increase. Increases over 2002/2003 line items included a 2.5 percent cost-of-living increase for staff (the same increase as that provided to City staff), an increase in the cost of health insurance, a 2 percent increase for materials, and unavoidable increases in such contractual expenses as insurance, energy, maintenance contracts, etc. All other budget lines were frozen at their 2002/2003 level.

The Library staff have been tracking those construction expenses that have been paid out of the Library budget rather than charged to the construction budget.

The City will close the Documents Center as a separate entity at the end of the 2002/2003 fiscal year. Documents Center funds will go directly to the Library rather than to the Documents Center. Since the Library has not replaced Dian Strutz, who worked as the Center's microfilmer, the remaining staff are Jean Koch, who works 5 hours a week for the Center, and Howard Grueneberg, who works 20 hours a week for the Center. Since both Jean Koch and Howard Grueneberg work part time for the Center and part time for the Archives, their salaries will be assigned to the Archives. This transfer of funds between agencies is the reason for a substantial budget increase in Archives operating costs; there is no actual increase in staffing.

The City wishes to keep Howard Grueneberg available as an indexing expert, but would like him to reduce his City time from 20 hours a week to 10 hours a week. Until the Library can increase Howard Grueneberg's Library hours from the current 20 to the proposed 30 through staff attrition, the City will continue to pay for the full 20 hours.

The proposed 2003/2004 budget includes a half-time circulation position and a half-time custodial position that will not be immediately filled. The positions are not needed at this time due to the slowdown in use and lack of needed exterior maintenance during construction, but they will be needed later.

It was moved by Chris Scherer, seconded by Jane Williams, and passed unanimously that the proposed 2003/2004 budget for The Urbana Free Library be adopted and transmitted to the City.

Friends of The Urbana Free Library

The book sale will be April 25-28, with the Friends pre-sale on Thursday evening, April 24. An extra day has been added to the sale this time due to the large number of books and the excellent Lincoln Square location. The books will sell for full price Thursday through Saturday and for half price on Sunday. Leftover books will be given away Monday.

Lincoln Trail Libraries System

A copy of the letter from Jan Ison of the Lincoln Trail Libraries System in response to the Board's letter is attached to these minutes. The Board still feels strongly that the RFP should go out to for competitive proposals, especially since LTLS is looking at a 5-year contract. There was discussion about what recourse the Board has in this matter. The question was raised if there are any other libraries in the system that feel the same on this matter. It was moved by Charlie Smyth, seconded by Chris Scherer, and passed unanimously that a letter from the Urbana Free Library Board be sent to the LTLS Board, explaining the Urbana Board's concern that in a year of tight funding, it is in the best interests of Lincoln Trail to confirm expectations of lower costs by having an open proposal process comparing the cost of an upgrade with that of a new system.

Lincoln Trail Libraries System is currently soliciting people to be on their Board of Trustees. James Quisenberry and Charlie Smyth are both willing to be presented as possible nominees. It was moved by Beth Scheid, seconded by Chris Scherer and passed unanimously that The Urbana Free Library Board nominate James Quisenberry and Charlie Smyth as candidates for the Lincoln Trail Libraries System Board. Kermit Harden will write a letter to Lincoln Trail recommending them as nominees.

Long-Range Planning

Charlie Smyth noted that the Library is approaching the end of its five-year financial plan, portions of which had to be postponed due to the City's financial situation.

He suggested the Board should begin work on a new five-year financial plan, including a review of the organizational structure of the Library, to make sure that the staff structure and the workflow match. For a number of years, the Library has been patching the personnel structure with whomever is available to get a job done, and the staff pressures brought by construction have made the situation more apparent.

It was the consensus of the board that work on this plan should begin with a meeting of Beth Scheid, Charlie Smith, Debra Booth, and Fred Schlipf.

Policy

When Urbana Junior High became Urbana Middle School, sixth graders were transferred from grade schools to the middle school. This has caused problems in the Children's Department, because by Library policy, children receive Adult Department cards after completing the sixth grade. Sixth graders get their cards in the Children's Department and are expected to use the Internet connections in the that department, while seventh graders are moved to the Adult Department. As a result, when a group of middle school friends from both grades come in together, the Library staff must try to send part of the group to one department and part to the other. It was moved by Chris Scherer, seconded by Charlie Smyth, and passed unanimously that children entering the sixth grade will now get their library cards in the Adult Department.

TRUSTEE REPORTS

Marion Gushee has resigned from The Urbana Free Library Board. She feels that this is best, given her record of absences plus the fact that she knows of several future meetings she will miss.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Executive Director

Kate McDowell has turned in her resignation to The Urbana Free Library, creating a half-time professional opening in the Children's Department.

One Urbana Free Library staff member is among the group of GSLIS graduates chosen for special faculty awards this year. A year ago, two staff members were in this group.

There will be a fire drill for all staff on Friday, April 11.

Construction continues to have an impact on Library use. During March, circulation was down 13 percent, and door count down 12 percent. Adult Reference use remains constant, perhaps because patrons are making many reference requests by phone.

Adult Department

No report.

Children's Department

Elaine Bearden has been tracking the number of hits on the Library's web site. There were 65,972 in February 2003 as compared to 49,404 in February 2002.

Once summer comes, the Children's Department will no longer be able to use the Phillips Recreation Center for programs, and staff have been searching for another place to hold Funfairs and Babies' Laptime programs. Discussions with the First United Methodist Church of Urbana are just about completed. Since the church is right across the street, staff hope that parents and children will take advantage of the short distance and summer weather to come to the Library after the programs. Programming for the older children will involve a variety of field trips to interesting places around Urbana-Champaign, such as WILL, WCIA, Krannert Center, the Urbana Fire Department, and The Urbana Free Library construction site.

Special Collections

After 50 years of business, the Gliessman Studio has closed its doors, leaving behind an extensive and important collection of negatives, prints, slides, and films. The new owner of the building has offered the material to local historical libraries. It will be divided among the University of Illinois Archives, The Urbana Free Library Archives, and the Illinois Historical Survey at the University of Illinois.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

At 8:45 p.m., Kermit Harden asked that the Board go into executive session to discuss a personnel matter. It was moved by Charlie Smyth and seconded by Chris Scherer that the Board go into executive session. During the executive session, which extended from 8:45 until 9:05 p.m., no other issues were discussed and no votes were taken.

The Board returned to open session at 9:05 p.m.

It was moved by Charlie Smyth, seconded by Chris Scherer, and passed unanimously that, due to the pressures brought by Library construction on the Library's administrative staff, the staff be directed to develop an acting administrative position beginning as soon as possible and continuing no longer than the end of construction, at a net cost not to exceed \$13,000 annually.

It was moved by Charlie Smyth, seconded by Jane Williams, and passed unanimously that the minutes of the preceding executive session be made open immediately.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Becky Brown, Recording Secretary