

**Ames Public Library Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2010**

The Ames Public Library (APL) Board of Trustees met in regular session on Thursday, March 18, 2010, in the Dale H. Ross Board Room with Bradley, Budd, Campbell, Lockett, Meier, Seagrave, and Stow in attendance. Schill and Warnick were excused. Library Director Weeks and Assistant Director Carey were also present.

Call to Order: Board President Seagrave called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda: Moved by Schill, second by Bradley, to approve the amended agenda; motion approved by consent.

Approval of Minutes: Moved by Stow, seconded by Meier, to approve the minutes of the meeting of February 18, 2010, as presented.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion approved unanimously.

Public Forum:

Catherine Scott, 1510 Roosevelt Avenue, asked if the Library Board meetings could be televised. She pointed out that other city board and commission meetings are made available to the public via video streaming and cable TV; they can also be seen on line or when rebroadcast. Ms. Scott said that the Library generally does a wonderful job of keeping up with technology, but this is one area in which it seems not to be keeping up. She added that televising meetings might have been a better way to improve communication about recent issues. She said she recently discovered that the Library Board's agenda and minutes are on website, but had not known that before and she feels many people don't take time to look for them. She expressed the hope that if a new library is built, it will have a board room with appropriate technology.

Weeks stated that he had looked into using the Council Chamber earlier in the year, but the third Thursday evening time slot is already taken by another city commission, and there was no other time after 4:00 p.m. when a regular monthly meeting time could be scheduled. He said a new board room could possibly be wired properly for videography, but a technician would be required to manage the cameras. Seagrave mentioned that meetings could possibly be recorded and viewed later, but a videographer would still be needed.

Ms. Scott suggested that more information about the substance of upcoming meetings could also appear in *Page One*.

Consent Agenda: Meier moved and Lockett seconded adoption of a resolution approving the consent agenda.

- 1) Claims 2/1/2010 – 2/23/2010
- 2) Financial Reports
 - a) Monthly Expense Report Summary 2/1/10 – 2/28/10
 - b) Year-to-date Expense Summary through 2/28/10
 - c) Year-to-date Donations Report through 2/28/10
 - d) Library Bequest Interest Earnings Report through 2/28/10

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion approved unanimously.

Communications: E-mail messages from J. Deppe and R. J. Gardner, copies of City Council

Resolutions 10-070 and 10-071, and a copy of the Director's letter regarding the Contract for Library Service with Story County were received as information. Seagrave noted that if Trustees received any communications at home, they should forward them to the business office to make sure the entire board received them.

Trustee Campbell stated that he had watched the last City Council meeting. He feels the City Council members are in favor of what the library is trying to do, but sensed that they really want the Trustees to be present to help articulate why the building project is important. He felt it would be helpful if Library Board members would show up to support the Director. There was agreement on that idea, and it was suggested that they might consider taking turns attending meetings when library issues were on the agenda.

Administrative Staff Report: Library Director Weeks said that the blog comments to the "Ask the Tribune" columns in the paper were instructive, but not very supportive. He said he feels the board needs to communicate a better vision of what the new library could be.

Weeks noted that the APL was lauded for being instrumental in moving the "Geek the Library" campaign forward in Iowa and an award will be presented at next PLA meeting. Mary Logsdon will accept it on behalf of the library.

On another positive note, Weeks reported that Story County approved library funding for next year at the same level as last year, in spite of the severe stress on budgets.

Carey distributed Geek Week buttons and invited the Trustees to participate in the VEISHEA parade on Saturday, April 17. Anyone who is interested in walking along with the bookmobile and helping Smyles pass out Geek materials, temporary tattoos, and free books was asked to let her know in advance. Family members, including children, are also welcome.

Friends of the Ames Public Library Report: Trustee Bradley said the Friends met on March 1; the budget committee is at work now and will provide preliminary figures in April. The Friends have begun advertising the book sale that will take place April 9 – 11 and they are still welcoming donations. Officers nominated for the upcoming year are: Joan Van Norman, President; Marsha Miller, Vice-President; Kristi Minion, Secretary; and Fred Brown, Treasurer. Greg Bruna advised the board that he will be leaving, so a search for new board members will begin again. Bradley said a task force of three was appointed to continue talking about a possible merger of the Friends and Foundation.

Ames Public Library Foundation Report: Trustee Meier reported that the Foundation Board met on March 11. They discussed a letter from the Story County Community Foundation (SCCF), in which that organization requested funding to meet overhead expenses. Meier explained that the administration fee being charged by the Greater Des Moines Community Foundation is scheduled to drop from 1% to .7%, now that the SCCF's fund total has reached \$1 million. However, because the SCCF has grown to the point where it represents 33 Story County foundations, but does not have an operating budget, it has asked each of its member groups to assign its .3% savings to the SCCF, rather than taking the discount. Meier said the Foundation directors discussed the matter at length, and finally voted to approve the SCCF's request.

Weeks said that Suzie Shierholz, President of the SCCF Executive Committee, will attend the next Foundation meeting to provide information and entertain questions. The APL Foundation's portion will only cost about \$175 per year. Weeks added that Story County is the first community foundation to surpass the \$1 million investment mark.

The Foundation also talked about the merger with the Friends and discussed the annual campaign. Solicitation materials will go out the second week of April, in conjunction with National Library Week.

Seagrave asked if there was a timeline for the merger. Weeks said they would like for it to happen before the building campaign starts, perhaps by the end of the year. Some legal advice will be needed to help with the process.

Policy Review:

Conduct in the Library: Moved by Campbell, seconded by Lockett, to adopt a resolution approving revisions to the Conduct in the Library Policy as presented/amended.

Carey said a staff committee and APL supervisors looked at ALA documents and other libraries' policies. She outlined the proposed revisions, noting that she had already received a suggestion about clarifying that headphones should be required only when persons are using personal electronic audio devices, not when they are using laptops or calculators.

Meier and Budd both questioned why leaving personal items in the building should be considered misconduct. Carey explained that sometimes people bring in a lot of possessions and want to leave them for the day, or they park a stroller in the lobby and leave it while they go elsewhere. Stow said he felt this could be classified as misconduct -- airport security would not allow a suitcase to be left unattended. Lockett proposed that the phrase "intentionally leaving" could be substituted for clarification; Campbell agreed.

Campbell mentioned that when the Trustees recently discussed the Unattended Children Policy, they had determined that the library could not guarantee anyone's security. He wondered if using the word "secure" would give the library any liability. Seagrave noted that item 8a in the *ALA Guidelines for the Development of Policies & Procedures Regarding User Behavior & Library Usage* spoke to "safety" instead. Campbell said he would prefer that word.

Lockett asked whether library visitors were habitually called "customers." He said it carried a distinct commercial connotation. Carey said that question was the subject of a huge discussion about 10 years ago; the change was made because of a previous director's preference. Customer service was a concept that was being actively discussed and the word "customer" was employed, in part, to convey the idea that people using the library were making use of what their tax dollars were "purchasing." Seagrave said he felt the words "patrons" and "customers" seemed to be interchangeable these days.

With respect to the section on consequences, Budd asked if staff had to prove that a person's action was extreme. Carey said that the policy relies on the staff's comfort level, their training, and their experience. She said supervisors spend a lot of time talking about situations and how they are handled, so the members of staff will be as comfortable as possible when they have to intervene, as there are constant judgment calls.

Budd said he realized that if someone felt his punishment was unfair, he could appeal to the director. Weeks said that the librarian in charge is authorized to send persons out of the library; however, they also have to consider the larger situation – the weather, the interactions between the victim and perpetrator, whether an individual is deliberately being belligerent or if there is a medical problem, for example. Carey added that regular debriefings help staff gain a repertoire on how to respond; they are helpful and compassionate when possible, but still need to manage the environment.

Budd said that the ALA Guideline stated that all applicable ordinances and laws should be referenced and wondered if more citations should be provided. Carey stated that where the policy specifically names something that is illegal, a reference has been made.

Vote on Motion as amended with the following changes: substitution of the word "safe" for the word "secure" and reference to "the *safety* of those in the building" in the third bullet under the definition of misconduct on the first page; the addition of the word "intentionally" at the beginning of the third bullet on the second page, so that "*intentionally* leaving personal items on the premises" would be considered misconduct; and insertion of the word "audio" into the fourth bullet on the second page, requiring the use of earphones with "personal electronic *audio* devices:" 6-0. Motion approved unanimously.

ALA Guidance Document: Moved by Stow, seconded by Lockett, to adopt a resolution reaffirming the *ALA Guidelines for the Development of Policies & Procedures Regarding User Behavior & Library Usage*.

Vote on Motion: 6-0. Motion approved unanimously.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

Update on Director's Annual Evaluation: Seagrave stated that a closed session will be held during the April meeting for the annual evaluation of the library director. Prior to that date, the Executive Committee will meet to review feedback from supervisors, look at the director's goals and accomplishments for 2009, and discuss goals for 2010. A questionnaire will also be sent to the other board members.

Appointment of the Nominating Committee: Seagrave announced with some regret that he and his wife are planning to move to Arizona sometime before the first of July, depending on when they sell their house in Ames. He said that he hoped to attend the next few Library Board meetings, but he may have to miss some of them. Seagrave stated that he and Melody Warnick will serve as the Nominating Committee, and they will report in April.

Payment for Fundraising Feasibility Study Contract with The Hodge Group: Moved by Stow, seconded by Budd, to adopt a resolution directing that the balance of authorized payments to The Hodge Group for the Fundraising Feasibility Study, in an amount not to exceed \$40,000, be made from the library's bequest fund.

Weeks reminded the Trustees that the City Council only approved the expenditure of \$28,000 from unspent capital improvement project funds, and directed that the library pay the remaining \$40,000 its bequest account. The library director is not authorized to expend more than \$25,000 without approval of the Board. Campbell remarked that the Board had briefly talked about this in October. Lockett commented that, under the present economic circumstances, he felt the Council was rather generous.

There was some discussion about the next steps in the expansion process. Weeks explained that the plan is to wait to see what Hodge reports about the financial reality so that the architect will have reasonable parameters under which to design the building. Depending on the situation, the board could also discuss whether or not they want to continue on with the project.

Campbell asked when the Board should begin to marshal its resources to try to shape public opinion. He felt that different entities had been allowed to frame the past conversations and, while the library has responded somewhat, it needs to have greater influence and continue to promote the expansion.

Weeks said that The Hodge Group had asked for a case statement to use when discussing the project with the public. He and Carey are working on it now and it will go to a working group for review. Stow said that a case statement normally outlines the vision for the project and gets everyone on the same page. Campbell said he felt everyone who visited the library should get a copy of the statement when they come to the library. Weeks said a committee of solid supporters was also needed now.

Carey agreed that the library needed to frame the conversation, but cautioned that it has to be careful to only provide information and not to campaign.

Weeks recognized that there are some valid concerns from the community and that people have to feel a need for spending on such a costly item as this, especially when drawings and plans are not yet available. Campbell said that part of the problem is that staff does such a good job and people feel the library is a nice place.

Luckett asked if there was anything further going on with Ames Historical Society. Weeks said he felt the Historical Society's Board was waiting to see if the library project was going to be successful. So far, the Board has had no negative feedback from its donors who contributed to the purchase of their existing building; in fact, they seem to be quite supportive.

Weeks said The Hodge Group would be meeting with community members, some staff, and a few members of the library support boards at the end of the month.

Vote on Motion as presented: 6-0. Motion approved unanimously.

Trustee Comments:

Budd asked about the increase in library usage for Gilbert, as shown on page 36 in the board packet. Carey said there is no way to determine a reason for the increase. Campbell suggested that the bookmobile stop at the new Fareway Store could be contributing to it, since the statistics for Ames are based on the city's incorporated boundaries.

Bradley expressed sadness in learning that Seagrave would be leaving Ames and the Library Board. She also thanked Weeks for his good answers to the questions posed in the "Ask the Tribune" series.

There were no other comments.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

The next regular meeting will be on Thursday, April 15, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.