

Ames Public Library Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes May 21, 2009

The Ames Public Library (APL) Board of Trustees met in regular session on Thursday, May 21, 2009, in the Library's Board Room with Bradley, Budd, Campbell, Lockett, Schill, Seagrave, Stow and Warnick in attendance. Meier was absent. Staff in attendance included Carey, Thompson, and Weeks. Library Architect Jeffrey Scherer was also present.

Call to Order: President Seagrave called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda: Seagrave asked for any changes to the agenda; hearing none, the agenda was approved by general consent.

Approval of Minutes: Seagrave asked for any changes or corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting. With a change at the bottom of page three to indicate approval of the Circulation Policy, rather than the Records Retention Policy, the minutes of the meeting of April 16, 2009, were approved by consent.

Public Forum: None.

Meyer Scherer & Rockcastle, LTD: Jeffrey Meyer, library architect with Meyer Scherer and Rockcastle, LTD, presented an executive summary of the meetings that he had conducted earlier in the week. There were four public meetings which drew 110 participants. He said the process seemed to be moving along well; the public was candid and everyone asked good questions. The group that met at Northcrest was universal about wanting a new building.

Four "internal" meetings were also conducted during the week – with library staff, library supervisors, the building expansion committee, and with the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), attended by the City Manager. The HPC inquired about the situation with First United Methodist Church (FUMC). Scherer explained that the library had opted not to impose on the church's expansion proposal, which includes a major façade on its south property line. The HPC, however, indicated it would like the library expansion to take place on the present site and urged that every effort be made to do so. Scherer stated that he and Weeks would be meeting the following morning with the chair of the FUMC Building Committee. The HPC also requested further discussion with the Library Board.

Scherer reported that the City Manager would like all future expansion scenarios to include equal amounts of parking so that "apples-to-apples" comparisons may be made. Scherer offered some ideas about how an aesthetically appealing, reasonably-priced deck might be constructed above the City Lot Q (north of the library). Scherer also stated that the question about what would happen to the current library was often raised during the week. Warnick said there was a sense that a decision on that matter needed to be made before there would be support for moving to a new site.

Seagrave asked Scherer how heavily a two-year hiatus in service should be weighed, if the library were forced to relocate during a renovation. Scherer said it was not discussed very much. He did not think the patrons understood it or placed too much emphasis on it; to them it's just a fact of life.

Scherer explained that his next presentations will include analysis of: location, parking, quality (including environmentally responsible behavior and operating costs), parking, and money. The designs will attempt to keep each of those five issues as equal as possible; then, the crux of the argument in the community will be centered on any point or points that are deemed to outweigh the others. Scherer stated that Option C, over a 50- to 100-year period, would be superior to A or B, and also less expensive. Options A and B would each cost an extra \$5 million, if a ramp were included.

The original timeline for this project indicated that Ames was supposed to choose an option in May, Scherer now believes the pace needs to be slowed down and that additional meetings are warranted. The upshot is that more discussion about the contract will also be required. Warnick pointed out that the correspondence included in the meeting packet would demonstrate support for slowing the process down. She said that if now is the first time some of these groups have heard about the expansion, they have been not paying attention; nevertheless, they are feeling neglected. Scherer remarked that it is probably not wise to rush a project as important as this. After he brings analysis and spreadsheets back in June, people may need to think through the information over the summer. Weeks pointed out that the bond issue probably can't come up until fall of 2010, anyway, and time may be needed to hold discussions with the Public Works, Planning, and Fire Departments.

Luckett asked about conversations with the Elks Club. Weeks said he was trying to schedule a meeting. Budd remarked that he was uncomfortable with the idea of changing private parking into public parking and wondered if there was any possibility of the library and the Elks exchanging one piece of property for another. Weeks indicated that it would be helpful to him to have someone who had skills in that area; he is not sure what purchasing, leasing, or other options might be open to the library.

Given the many unresolved questions, the Trustees agreed that it was appropriate to slow down the process in order to be more prudent and deliberative, as long as progress is still being made.

Moved by Luckett, seconded by Campbell, to direct MS&R, LTD to proceed by combining Options A and B into a design that could be compared to a version of Option C.
Vote on Motion: 7-0. Motion approved unanimously.

Moved by Stow, seconded by Budd, that the board members have presented to them two final options upon which to make a decision by the September board meeting.

Weeks was asked to work with MS&R on contractual matters related to the revised the timeline; schematic design will begin after September.

Vote on motion: 7-0. Motion approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda: Campbell moved and Stow seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda.

- 1) Motion approving claims reports: April 1, 2009 – April 31, 2009
- 2) Motion approving gifts:
 - a) From Alan Maximuk \$25.00
 - b) From Anonymous in thanks for tax preparation assistance \$20.00
 - c) From Bertha Bartlett Library Foundation for Toddlerfest books \$200.00
 - d) From Durbin Zheng & Son, Inc., in honor of Seth Shaoyi P. Durbin
on the occasion of his 6th birthday..... \$250.00
 - e) From Ames Woman's Club... six books for the library collection given in memory of De Loris Anderson, Edythe Frette, Dorothea Gienger, Jeanne Ostrem, Dorothy Scott, and Irene Van Zee
 - f) From The Friendship Force of Central Iowa ... the books entitled *Graphic Glenelg Shire*
and *Sydney and Surrounds*

- g) In memory of Miya from friends and family the DVD entitled *Miya of the Quiet Strength*
- 3) Motion approving new hires:
 - a) Hiring of Lori Jenks as the summer Bookmobile Story Time Program Presenter at \$12.00/hour, effective May 5, 2009, and ending by August 10, 2009.
 - b) Hiring of William Underwood as a circulation assistant at \$7.47/hour, effective May 5, 2009.
 - c) Hiring of Sara Sickelka as a circulation assistant at \$7.47/hour, effective May 11, 2009.
 - d) Hiring of Ruth Mills as a circulation assistant at \$7.47/hour, effective May 11, 2009.
 - e) Hiring of Katherine Martin as a circulation assistant at \$7.47/hour, effective May 13, 2009

Vote on Motion: 7-0. Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports: Weeks reviewed the April financial reports and said that expenditures were on track for this point in the fiscal year. Campbell pointed out that the expense report summary (pages 15 and 16) should have indicated that we are now 10 months into the fiscal year, rather than eight.

The financial reports were received as submitted and modified.

Communications:

The letters regarding the building project were discussed briefly. Weeks also explained the merger of the Friends of Libraries USA (FOLUSA) into the trustee organization, which he felt was done to increase participation and to enhance the support side. FOLUSA's executive director is staying on.

Campbell asked if Weeks and Carey had seen letter to editor about the Friends book sale. Weeks replied in the affirmative.

Administrative Staff Report: Weeks stated that the semi-annual book sale is a fundraiser conducted by Friends, and fundraising is their mission. He said he and the City Attorney visited about the ownership of donated books. While it is understood that they belong to the Friends, there is nothing in writing at present. A memo of understanding is needed to address donations and what happens to books the library withdraws (which were paid for with tax dollars), as well as an agreement about the library providing storage facilities and space for the sale in exchange for remuneration from the Friends, which would be the donations they give back to the library.

Weeks brought up the Historic Preservation Commission's request to arrange a joint meeting. Seagrave asked Weeks to set up a meeting, with the Library Board's first preference being 6:00 p.m. on the June 18, prior to the regularly scheduled meeting, or to ask the HPC to suggest an alternate time between June 16 and 18, when Scherer would be in Ames. Warnick requested that the HPC create the agenda, with the Library Board reserving the right to make additions.

Weeks mentioned a library campaign being funded by The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to help public libraries heighten awareness and increase support for their needs. Iowa is one of two test areas that will be used to determine if the program should be run nationally. The campaign will focus on "influencing the influence-makers," such as Foundations and other library funding bodies. Weeks said a marketing scheme will run from June through December and someone will be hired locally to help libraries, so it's possible that person could make a presentation to staff.

Luckett asked if local communities would present a united front to the Gates Foundation. Weeks said that the Story County Library Association has discussed the program, but nothing specific has come up about uniting the libraries behind the campaign. The State Library plans to do some coordinating and Kathy Swift will visit each library.

Stow asked if any research had been done into Gates Foundation library grants. Carey stated that it had, and that the APL does have some Gates computers here. The new campaign is not aimed at

the use of technology in the future of libraries; rather, it is to support an increase in operating funds. The new program will also involve a study on library funders dubbed "From Funding to Awareness." It seems that people love libraries, but they are not that willing to donate – and funders tend to donate even less than the general public.

Warnick left the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Library Building Expansion Committee Report: Weeks said the committee met in May but no next meeting was scheduled. Seagrave asked if there was merit to the idea of adding someone from the Historic Preservation Commission. Weeks indicated that he would contact Mayor Campbell to ask her opinion on whether or not a member of HPC or any other city boards or commissions should be invited to join it.

Friends of the Ames Public Library Report: Budd and Bradley met with APL Friends board on May 4. Officers were elected to three-year terms and the budget for the new fiscal year was approved. Budd pointed out that the Friends operate on a fiscal year running May 1 through April 30. He distributed copies of the budget and said they anticipate income of \$50,950 and expect to spend \$37,750 on library programs.

Bradley stated that \$11,679 was realized from the spring book sale; the next sale will take place in October. The Friends do not meet during the summer; the next meeting will be August 31.

Ames Public Library Foundation Report: Carey said that the annual campaign mailing did not go out as planned because the printer did not receive the envelopes on time. So as not to conflict with the Friends' membership drive, the Foundation's solicitation is now scheduled to be sent on June 5.

Stow said they talked about establishing a building fund so the Foundation could accept gifts for the building expansion. They also talked about forming a committee to hire a consultant – someone who understands libraries, city government, and Ames – to conduct a fundraising feasibility study. The proposal will come up under New Business, later on the agenda.

Policy Review:

Display Spaces Policy – Action Item: Budd moved and Campbell seconded approval of the Display Spaces Policy as presented/amended.

Carey explained that staff was working on a bulletin board policy when they decided it would be better to address all display spaces that the public uses. The new policy, therefore, incorporates the exhibit space policy and the procedures that were being used for bulletin boards.

Luckett had concerns about the wording in the Content section and said he would like a disclaimer that would allow requests to be reviewed by the City Attorney so that we would not risk any First Amendment violations. Luckett accepted Seagrave's suggestion to change the last line of the first paragraph under Content to read "The library reserves the right to accept, reject, or request modifications to any display materials, *subject to advice from the City Attorney.*"

Campbell requested the addition of the statement, "*All materials shall include contact information of the organization or individual requesting a display,*" under General Guidelines.

Vote on motion to approve the policy as amended and remove the Exhibits Policy: 6-0. Motion passed unanimously.

Policy Review Schedule.

Weeks briefly identified the various policies coming up for review. He said the Investments Policy

was very short and could possibly be reviewed by the Board's Budget and Finance Committee. He also suggested that the Executive Committee could consider the Public Participation Policy. The Strategic Plan is coming up again in December. It will involve policy on the scheduling and scope of the next plan; he does not anticipate that it will be as extensive as the one done in 2006.

The proposed policy review schedule was received without objection.

Unfinished Business:

Library Fees and Charges (Addendum to the Circulation Policy) – Presentation:

Weeks presented the new addendum, noting that there were no changes in the amounts, only in the format. Everything that had a twenty-five cent fee was consolidated and two sections were added to make clear when the suspension of borrowing privileges applies and when debt collection begins. Budd stated that he was very pleased with the revisions.

Committee Appointments: Seagrave announced the following committee appointments: Meier and Stow, representatives (voting members) the Ames Public Library Foundation Board of Directors; Bradley and Budd, liaisons to the Friends of the Ames Public Library Board; Campbell and Schill to the Budget and Finance Committee; and Lockett, Warnick and himself, to the Bylaws Review Committee. Seagrave said he was amazed and pleased to announce that everyone got their first preferences.

New Business:

FY08-09 Budget Amendments – Action Item: Lockett moved and Stow seconded approval of the FY08-09 Budget Amendments as presented/amended.

Weeks stated that objective in final amendments is to work with the adjusted budget and noted that library staff is not charged with making allocations for line items that apply to salaries, benefits, or internal services, as the Finance Department handles them.

Vote on motion: 6-0. Motion passed unanimously.

APL Foundation Proposal to Establish a Joint Committee for the Hiring of a Feasibility Consultant for the Library Expansion Project – Discussion: Weeks stated that, at some point, it will be necessary to hire a consultant to do a feasibility study for fundraising for the library expansion. Even though the architect's timeline has now been altered, he said that identifying potential consultants will require some research that could be started soon. The committee participants and funding sources are questions that need to be answered so that work can begin on a Request for Proposal (RFP).

Seagrave asked if the City Council would comment on the selection process. Weeks stated that the RFP wouldn't have to go through the City if the Foundation funded it. However, if bequest money were used, or if the cost exceeded \$50,000, it would have to be approved by the Council. The Purchasing Division will also help with the RFP if the Board of Trustees is involved.

Stow said Foundation is looking for the Board of Trustees to indicate that some members would be willing to participate in a joint committee. Weeks said the charge to the new committee would be to hire a consultant – once fundraising begins, a new committee will take charge. He said that Assistant City Manager Sheila Lundt has found that feasibility studies, when done by a professional, are usually quite accurate. Qualified individuals will consider philanthropy as well as political feasibility. They can identify how much can be expected to win approval in a bond vote by doing research and polling voters.

There was consensus among the trustees to agree to participate in a joint committee with the Foundation. Stow indicated that he was willing to become a member. Seagrave said that two more trustees were probably needed, and asked them to let him know if they were interested.

Trustee Comments:

Schill – none.

Bradley – none.

Luckett stated that he was visiting with a friend who has not been to any of the library expansion meetings, but said that after hearing that the library might have to move to another location temporarily, he is in favor of a brand new building. Luckett said that the issue of moving to a temporary place and further discussion of costs need to be made clear and should be announced in the newspaper.

Stow said that he appreciated having Scherer attend the board meeting, as he had not been able to attend the public meetings. He expressed a preference for Option C and agreed with Luckett that the community doesn't know the magnitude of the problem of relocation.

Campbell – none.

Budd said he participated in the building tours in April. He found them to be well planned and well executed. People were amazed at the working conditions.

Seagrave asked if there were plans to repeat the tours. Carey replied that staff has talked about offering them again in the fall.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.