

**Ames Public Library Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
August 20, 2009**

The Ames Public Library (APL) Board of Trustees met in regular session on Thursday, August 20, 2009, in the City Hall Council Chambers with Bradley, Budd, Campbell, Lockett, Meier, Schill, Seagrave, Stow, and Warnick in attendance. Library Director Weeks and Assistant Director Carey were also present.

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

Adoption of Agenda: The agenda, as presented, was approved by general consent.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of July 16, 2009, were approved by consent with identification of the second Trustee's Comment as belonging to Bradley rather than Meier, and correcting Budd's statement under Communications to read "not just a building for today, *but also for tomorrow.*"

StatCom Presentation on Surveys of Library Users: Anna Peterson and David Rockoff of StatCom at Iowa State, a volunteer organization of graduate students in statistics who work with community organizations, presented the results of surveys that were taken in March and July of 2009. The topics studied in the survey included: library usage, library programs, visitors' modes of transportation and perceptions about parking, shopping habits and use of other downtown amenities, and opinions about library hours and operations. Library volunteers administered the survey and garnered responses from over 1000 patrons during two one-week periods in two different seasons.

Rockoff reported that approximately 90% of respondents had a successful visit to the library on the day they participated and 9% said they did not find exactly what they needed, but found an acceptable alternative. About 98% of patrons were either self-sufficient or obtained the help they needed from library staff. They also found a wide variety of resources were being used by visitors. Rockoff noted that the survey might under-represent teenagers because the volunteers were instructed to ask only those who appeared to be 13 or older to participate.

Peterson stated that 78% of responding individuals drove to the library during the survey weeks. She further noted that while 23% of all respondents said they believe parking at the library is a problem; 28% of those who actually drove to the library feel it is a problem. Analysis of their responses indicated that their dissatisfaction was because parking is not free and they dislike meters.

Rockoff noted that 78 percent reported that going to the library was either their sole or primary purpose for going downtown. Of those, 53% did go elsewhere in the downtown area (to grocery stores, banks, or retail establishments). Rockoff said the inference is that the library draws approximately 2300 people per week to the downtown area who then patronize other establishments. He added that the statistics about patrons' shopping habits in the South Duff, North Grand, Lincoln Center and West Ames indicate good potential locations for book drops.

In response to questions from the Trustees, Peterson stated that the statistical results on parking and other issues incorporated answers received in both March and July, and there were approximately 500 participants each month.

Public Forum:

Holly Fuchs, 806 Brookridge, stated that aesthetic, logistical, financial, and environmental reasons, along with questions about an unclear decision-making process, resulted in her preference for library expansion on the present site. She cited concerns about some potential constraints Option B would place on City Hall and nearby businesses as negatives, while finding the possibility of having a “cultural campus,” the option for delaying construction of a parking structure, and a preference for remodeling over tearing down an existing structure as positive aspects of Option A.

Dale Ross, 909 Hunziker Drive, stated that he and Bob Anderson had formed an *ad hoc* group of citizens to consider viable and attractive alternative uses for the existing library building, if the Trustees were to select the site opposite City Hall for expansion. He said they concluded that a combination of arts agencies and human services agencies would be the most effective. There was some thought that it might be possible to use a mixture of public and private funds for initial renovation of the building, while allowing the arts and human services agencies an opportunity to indicate an interest in moving in.

Richard Deyo, Ames, stated that he favors keeping the library in its current location.

Tom Niehoff, 3624 Ontario Street, said that he was strongly in favor of a renovation at first, but after thinking about issues such as movement of resources and people within the building, about new methods of heating, air conditioning and ventilating, and about bringing more natural light into reading areas, he now thinks it is time to start over. He supports a freshly-designed building east of City Hall.

Jo Rod, 4235 Eisenhower Court, stated that, regardless of the location selected, Ames needs to offer free parking for library users; meters are not acceptable.

Susie Petra, 2011 Duff Avenue, said that she would like the library to remain at its present site, citing her belief that there may soon be an opportunity for expansion of the library into the block across Douglas Avenue and the creation of a synergistic cultural center.

Sue Ravenscroft, 455 Westwood, urged support for Option A, based on its historical significance, its ability to work with City Hall as a “bookend” to downtown, and evidence of the City’s commitment to sustainability through renovation. She also doubted there was adequate funding to allow social services or arts agencies to acquire the existing building.

Catherine Scott, 1510 Roosevelt Avenue, wants the library to remain at its current location so that its entrance may continue to reflect the park-like nature of Ames and the City does not make a long-term commitment to the individual car culture. She said the community has been expecting expansion at the Douglas location and, given that the list of pros and cons is roughly equivalent, emotional attachments should be taken into consideration.

Marla Miller, 825 Clark Avenue, expressed support for the original location on behalf of the Historic Old Town Neighborhood Association, as Option B does not seem compatible in size and scale with the surrounding buildings or the historic district.

B. J. Kerns, a resident of Kelly but with Ames roots and memories, said she would like the library to stay on Douglas, as it fits well with the other older buildings.

Harold Ault, 57154 245th Street, said he prefers keeping the library in its original location, with preservation of the 1904 section and the Community Room. The space on Clark Avenue is

necessary for City Hall parking now and may be needed for future expansion. He also said that future stories should either be built right away or never planned, as overbuilding to allow for additional stories that may never be constructed is wasteful.

Consent Agenda: Stow moved and Campbell seconded adoption of a resolution approving the consent agenda.

- 1) Claims reports:
 - a) June 1, 2009 – June 30, 2009 (FY09 accruals) and
 - b) July 1, 2009 – July 31, 2009
- 2) Gifts:
 - a) From M. Burton Drexler \$330.00
 - b) In memory of June Barnes from:
 - i) Anonymous donors \$305.00
 - ii) Don and Marie Anderson \$25.00
 - iii) Mirriam Andes \$10.00
 - iv) Edwin Augustine..... \$25.00
 - v) Denise Baustian \$15.00
 - vi) Marcia Braley \$20.00
 - vii) Dale and Irene Brentnall..... \$20.00
 - viii) Margaret Broer \$25.00
 - ix) Shirlie Brownlow \$25.00
 - x) Mary L Casey \$25.00
 - xi) Donna and John Dowden \$25.00
 - xii) Lorna and Laurel Ericson \$25.00
 - xiii) Linda Sue Erlandson \$25.00
 - xiv) Steve and Lavonne Farner \$25.00
 - xv) Arlene Ford..... \$20.00
 - xvi) Jerry and Sheila Goben..... \$50.00
 - xvii) Greta Goodman..... \$50.00
 - xviii) Henry and Janet Gray \$20.00
 - xix) Sharon Guber..... \$20.00
 - xx) Suzanne Gutknecht \$25.00
 - xxi) Gayle and Lee Huey..... \$25.00
 - xxii) Edward and Susan Jones \$25.00
 - xxiii) Kim Jordan \$20.00
 - xxiv) Jean Lem..... \$20.00
 - xxv) LGI Inc..... \$150.00
 - xxvi) Dale and Marlene Larsen \$20.00
 - xxvii) Cherrie Macal \$20.00
 - xxviii) M. M. Mickelson \$20.00
 - xxix) Lynn and Thomas Nehls \$25.00
 - xxx) Jill and Kevin Nelson \$20.00
 - xxxi) James and Laura Olberding \$50.00
 - xxxii) John Pesek..... \$50.00
 - xxxiii) Margaret Savelkoul \$25.00
 - xxxiv) Scott and Jeanne Sherwood \$100.00
 - xxxv) J. M. and Sandra Slaughter..... \$20.00
 - xxxvi) Frank and Joanne Tedesco..... \$25.00
 - xxxvii) Delores Wade..... \$50.00
 - c) In memory of Margaret Toms from:
 - i) Dean and Sharon Axland \$20.00
 - ii) Clifford and Judy Farthing \$20.00

- iii) Edwin and Mary Fawkes \$25.00
 - iv) Ruth and Thomas Grabau \$20.00
 - v) Dean and Mary Harms \$30.00
 - vi) Mark and Linda Lunde..... \$50.00
 - vii) Ava McFarlin \$25.00
 - viii) Lois and Burnett Mens \$25.00
 - ix) Robert Reichardt \$30.00
 - x) Ronald and Kathy Ridnour \$25.00
 - xi) Vaughn and Mary Speer \$10.00
 - xii) W. B. and Joyce Stoner..... \$30.00
 - xiii) Frank and Joanne Tedesco..... \$25.00
 - d) In memory of Dorcas Speer from:
 - i) Gracie and William Larsen \$40.00
 - ii) Don and Wilma Lesan \$25.00
 - iii) James and Jermaine Prescott..... \$25.00
- 3) Staff changes
- a) Hiring of Elizabeth Laage as circulation desk assistant at \$7.69/hour, effective August 10, 2009.
 - b) Hiring of Nicole Harding as ½ time library assistant (grade 57) at \$18,984.50/year, effective August 11, 2009.
 - c) Hiring of Danielle Ziegler as ¾ time library assistant (grade 57) at \$28,476 /year, effective August 24, 2009.

Vote on Motion: 8-0. Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports: The financial reports were received as submitted.

Weeks reviewed fiscal year 2009 final reports, noting that the library spent 99% of its budget; unspent costs were mainly in personnel and internal city services. He pointed out that page 18 in the board packet detailed the expenditures of gifts and donations. Moving on to the July expenses, Weeks pointed out that some contractual agreements may appear to be high, but that is because some expenses, such as those for periodical subscriptions, are paid in full at the beginning of the year.

Meier stated that she had noticed charges for Workers Compensation had seemed high at the end of last year and appeared to be high again. Weeks said he would look into the matter.

Warnick asked if the expenses shown for Project Smyles were really almost \$79,000. Carey said they were – staff had initially anticipated spending \$60-65,000, but were able to do more last year because of some grants that were received. She said this year all funding will be private, so staff is both actively seeking grants and scaling back as much as possible.

Communications: The letter written in response to Holly Fuchs, letters received from Barbara Matthies and the Historic Old Town Neighborhood Association, and a memo containing comments called in about the library site selection were received as information.

Administrative Staff Report: Weeks reported that the subcommittee working on Fundraising Feasibility had prepared a Request for Proposal (RFP) which was sent out to nine consulting firms that are capable and interested in determining if it is likely the community would support a \$35-\$37 million dollar expansion project. He said the consultant will be asked to give a realistic outlook about the amounts that could be raised through a bond referendum and private donations. He said the proposals will be opened on September 23, and he anticipates that a

recommendation will be made to the Board in October. It would be possible for the study to start in December or January. January is also when the schematic design phase will be done and promotional materials will be available. Weeks said the subcommittee hopes to get a mid-term report in March which will indicate a viable amount for a bond referendum. The City Council would then need to be petitioned to hold a special election.

Weeks also highlighted:

- Settlement of a class-action lawsuit with Microsoft that will allow the library to get more computers;
- A new downloadable audio service from NetLibrary that will be in addition to the services already available at the library via WILBOR;
- Continued promotion of the “Geek the Library” campaign with distribution of fliers and buttons to over 700 teachers at the “Salute to Educators” event;
- A new bookmobile stop, beginning August 26 from 5 –7 p.m., at the Fareway Store on Bloomington Road;
- Excellent work done by Michael Qiu and Daniel Ramey, who coordinated the work of over 100 teenage volunteers who straightened stacks, cleaned the library, helped out as needed, and wound up the summer with all-night library sleep-over.

Warnick asked about the cost of the fundraising feasibility study and wondered if the Trustees should consider applying the anticipated \$35,000 and \$50,000 expense toward the salary of a development person. Weeks said that the purpose of the study is to determine how much could be raised from private and public sources, and that would not really be part of the job description of a development director. Stow (who serves on the subcommittee) added that a key component of the study is determining how much the public will support and that will drive the size of library we can have. Warnick wondered what would be done if the consultant determined it was only possible to raise \$20 million, and also whether that figure should have been determined earlier. Weeks said the consultant’s report may stimulate further discussion, but there had to be a product to market before it could be known what the community would support. Campbell questioned how the consultant’s information would be used. Weeks replied that the study would try to determine how much citizens would be likely to support by taxation, as well as how much they might also voluntarily contribute. Seagrave pointed out that the Trustees don’t have the expertise to carry out that kind of study.

Library Building Expansion Committee Report: Weeks reported that the committee met to discuss the pros and cons of the two options, but did not make any recommendation. It was agreed, however, that if the Board determines to go to a new place, the disposition of existing library building needs to be known. The Expansion Committee will meet once more before the September meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Policy Review:

Public Participation Policy: Bradley moved and Budd seconded approval of a resolution to adopt the Public Participation Policy as presented/amended.

Weeks said the Executive Committee reviewed the policy and recommended no changes.

Vote on motion: 8-0. Motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business:

Story County Library Service Contract: Meier moved and Luckett seconded approval of a resolution to adopt the Story County Library Service Contract as presented or amended.

Weeks explained that the contract has been in existence since before 1995, but the Story County and Ames City Attorneys agreed that it needed to be annualized. The new language, therefore, states that the contract will continue from year to year, but shall be reviewed prior to February 1 on an annual basis. Weeks said the only point of discussion among the libraries had to do with the level of county funding relative to city funding. This arose because of the situation in Collins, where the library serves a very large number of rural residents and the gap in levels of support has narrowed. The contract states that the Story County contribution should not exceed amount that a city provides. The Board of Supervisors believes this should continue to be the case. Weeks said he agreed with that: if a community is diminishing to the point it can't support its library, it should consider signing a library service contract with a neighboring city.

Weeks said the contract requires the signatures of all 11 libraries in the county. If one city doesn't sign, it can opt out of the funding or the contract can be re-negotiated. He said the funding was determined by formula and Ames receives approximately 60% of the distribution -- about \$119,000 per year. The formula is based on library usage by residents of unincorporated areas of the county versus usage by residents within the city limits, which is tracked by all libraries.

Vote on motion: 8-0. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

Change of date of next regular meeting: Campbell moved and Stow seconded a change in the date of the next regular meeting from September 17 to September 24, 2009.

Seagrave thanked the others for considering this change, since he would be out of town on September 17. Stow said he would also be out of town, but was working on setting up a means for teleconferencing.

Vote on motion: 8-0. Motion passed unanimously.

Trustee Comments:

Warnick thanked community for listening and sharing their input. She invited them to make further comments to any of the Board members.

Schill stated that he was impressed with staff's management of the annual budget and agreed that it was good to hear the public comments.

Stow – "I geek public input."

Bradley invited citizens to share additional thoughts in writing, via e-mail, or by calling.

Luckett – No comments.

Meier thanked people for attending the meeting and expressing their opinions.

Budd said he found the public input very helpful.

Campbell assured the audience that the Trustees will exercise due diligence in selecting a site for expansion and said he hoped they would support the Board's decision.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.