

**Ames Public Library Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2009**

The Ames Public Library (APL) Board of Trustees met in regular session on Thursday, December 10, 2009, in the Dale H. Ross Board Room with Bradley, Campbell, Lockett, Meier, Schill, Seagrave, Stow, and Warnick in attendance. Budd was excused. Library Director Weeks and Assistant Director Carey were also present.

Call to Order: Board President Seagrave called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was approved by consent.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of November 19, 2009, were approved by consent, with a correction of the spelling of Mr. Schill's name on page nine.

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

Public Forum: None.

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

- 1) Claims report: November 1, 2009 – November 30, 2009
- 2) Gifts:
 - a) From Susan North for an audio book..... \$99.00
 - b) From Susan Sulzbacher in memory of Eric Rudman..... \$50.00
- 3) Hires:
 - a) Hiring of Emily Knapp as circulation desk assistant at \$7.69/hour, effective 12/7/09.
- 4) Financial Reports:
 - a) Monthly Expense Report Summary through 11/30/09
 - b) Year-to-date Expense Summary through 11/30/09
 - c) Year-to-date Donations Report through 11/30/09
 - d) Library Bequest Interest Earnings Report through 11/30/09

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

Communications: Communications about the magazine *Sex, Etc.* that had come in since the November meeting were received as information. President Seagrave also reported having received two telephone calls on that topic.

Administrative Staff Report: Library Director Weeks reviewed his written report, noting that in November, the City Council had voted to postpone action on the fundraising feasibility study contract until its joint meeting with the Library Board. He also stated that the Council's December 8 agenda had included a request from the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) for direction to proceed with listing the Ames Public Library on the National Register of Historic Places. Because of inclement weather, the Council held a very short meeting and postponed many items, including that one.

Weeks said he had some concerns about the HPC's request because Chapter 15 of the Municipal Code designates the Library Board as the custodian of the library building. Weeks stated that he felt the Trustees should be apprised of the ramifications the potential listing would have, especially since they are interested in finding a new tenant for the building and because National Register Listing could possibly have a financial impact on the building project. He felt it

would be beneficial for the Board to meet with the HPC to learn more about the designation; however, the Chair of the HPC has requested that the City Council approve the nomination request at its December 22 meeting.

Trustee Lockett stated that he would feel more comfortable if the Library Board were able to obtain an opinion about what the National Register Listing would mean from an architect or an attorney, and he felt the Trustees should definitely communicate to the Council that they had not had time to familiarize themselves with the implications of the HPC's request. President Seagrave said that he had originally planned to attend last Tuesday's Council meeting and was going to ask that action be delayed until after their joint work session on February 16. He asked library architect Jeff Scherer, who was present, if he could share any information on the topic.

Mr. Scherer stated that anyone is allowed to submit a nomination for listing on the National Register, but the historic designation would not be made if the owner of the building objected. He felt one question here was whether the City Council or the Library Board of Trustees was considered the owner. Beyond that, Scherer said the designation would not mandate that the building remain unchanged. Under a Section 106 Review, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the owner, and whoever nominates the building work jointly to prepare a memorandum of understanding about any proposed changes; they have to submit proposals that minimize the negative impact of any changes.

Scherer said he has not had any problem with buildings put on the National Register -- the process is usually open. SHPO offices are cooperative and they do not stand in the way of energy efficiency; however, the projects do end up costing more if any federal funding or tax credits are involved. Scherer added that the City Council's vote would not be the nomination -- it would offer approval of the proposed action. Yet, if the *Municipal Code* does in fact give the Trustees custodianship, the nomination could be objected to.

Trustee Warnick said she had a sense that there is tension between the Library Board and the HPC and worried that if the Trustees were to make an objection, the public might view it as an attempt to undermine historic preservation. Weeks agreed that he didn't want it to appear as if the Library were being uncooperative, he simply felt that more information was needed.

Trustee Lockett said he felt step one should be to ask City Attorney Marek who the custodian of the building is. Weeks said that Marek has stated that the Library Board should be consulted. Seagrave read Section 15.7(2) of the *Municipal Code*, which gives library trustees the power and duty "to have charge, control and supervision of the public library, its appurtenances and fixtures, and rooms containing the same, directing and controlling all the affairs of such library."

The Board considered how to best address the situation. Scherer said that, in other cities, he has seen the Historic Preservation Commission hold a study session with the Library Board to explain the issues. He suggested that a memorandum could be written to indicate that the Board is aware that the library is an historic building, and since the *Municipal Code* entrusts the Trustees with legal responsibility for the building, they want to be part of the process of deciding whether or not it is listed on the National Register -- they feel it is their bound duty to understand the implications of the nomination. He added that a summary of what the designation means is available from the Department of the Interior, and was willing to prepare an information packet.

Moved by Stow, seconded by Campbell, that the library staff write a memo to the City Council on behalf of the Board of Trustees asking the Council to delay directing the Historic Preservation Commission to proceed with listing the Ames Public Library on the National

Register of Historic Places until after February 16, or whenever the work session between the Council and the Library Board takes place.

Luckett said he would like the memo to incorporate the wording suggested by Mr. Scherer.

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

APL Friends Liaisons' Report: Trustee Bradley stated that the Friends had met on December 2. They received an update by Information Services Supervisor Mary Logsdon on the Friends-sponsored book clubs (Let's Talk About It and Great Books), formed a new committee to examine on-line sales of books, and discussed merging the Friends Board with the APL Foundation as a means of eliminating confusion about fundraising and reducing the cost of certain services. Bradley said that the two boards will hold their joint meeting on February 1 and a merge will be addressed.

The Teen Advisory Group made \$200 by participating in Community Day at Younkers, it held a fun and successful Second Annual Monopoly Tournament, and is planning a live "Clue" Murder Mystery event in December.

APL Foundation Liaisons' Report: Trustee Stow stated that letters went out last week asking for end-of-year gift giving, but the December meeting was cancelled, so there was no report.

Policy Review: The proposed policy review schedule for January through June 2010 was discussed and agreed upon. Weeks noted that, by the end of May, all APL policies will have been reviewed in the last three years, but staff is proposing that the guidance documents also be looked at when policies are reviewed. The guidelines are statements by ALA, so the Board may not change them, but it does have the option to use them as they see fit or reject them.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

Conversation with Library Architect Jeff Scherer Seagrave stated that Mr. Scherer had been invited to help the Trustees prepare for the upcoming meeting with the City Council. Scherer said he had been thinking about how he could help move the expansion project forward being true to the Board's desire to have a new building for the 21st Century, but also taking into consideration the concerns that have been raised about the Clark Avenue site and the disposition of the existing library building. He said that one solution to the problem would be to take the Trustees' idea for a new, state-of-the-art building on Site B, but plant it on Site A – disassociated from the historic building. He said that if a firewall were put between the two buildings, the new library to the south could be totally new and flexible. It might even be possible to free-span the entire building, leaving the whole floor area open, with no built walls, so that departments could be changed as needed. Scherer stated that he is convinced that, in the future, libraries that aren't nimble and cannot change quickly are going to die or petrify because they will run out of money to make changes. He believes it would be wise to put money now into the "intelligence of the building." The historic section could then be renovated for another purpose; it would be small and should not take that long to find a tenant.

Scherer also said that he believes a healing process is needed in Ames, as a result of the negative energy that has emerged. Some of the letters that were written recently show how passionate people are, and his intuition is that people might vote against their own self-interest, just because they did not get their way on the location. He said it takes a lot of work and unity to get a project like this done, and he offered to come back to Ames for the work shop with the City Council.

Seagrave asked how the bottom line cost might be affected by the concept that Scherer described. Scherer replied that the original budget could be scaled back in many ways. Rather than installing all new computers, for example, the decision could be made to cycle them in on their original replacement schedules. The building could also be designed to accept a materials conveying system, but it could be bid as an alternate. In general, he said, efficiency can go way up if no columns are used, and he could reduce the size by 4,000 to 5,000 square feet just by decoupling the two buildings.

There was discussion about renovations to the older building, the scale of the new building, which portions of the 1983 building could be retained, the use of Douglas Avenue as a plaza, and the emerging national debate about print versus non-print media and e-readers.

Luckett stated that he personally wants a library that will advertise Ames as a particular kind of community – a university community with light industry that attracts intelligent people – so he wants it to be state-of-the-art and energy efficient. He is less wedded to the particular location. Scherer said there were a lot of design possibilities that could be incorporated; he is aware of net-zero buildings now in the works in many cities.

Campbell said he had leaned toward a new building on Site B because of the synergy of the municipal buildings being together, but said he could envision a state-of-the-art building on Douglas, too. He did have some concern about how the Board could back away gracefully from its position on Site B and how it could get the public re-involved.

Scherer said he felt the Board could gain strength by admitting that there are some new obstacles that have come up, along with some new options, and showing that they are being deliberate. He mused that perhaps he should have presented this as one of the options earlier, but a process that engages the public is on-going and he believes that the public will embrace the idea, once it understands what the board is trying to accomplish and the legacy it would like to leave.

Luckett suggested that it might be worthwhile to see how the HPC reacted to this concept. Scherer commented that having an enthusiastic partner would be a game-changer. Weeks stated that he had a meeting scheduled in the coming week with a party that might be interested in taking over the historical section of the building; he hopes to report on that in January.

Seagrave said that it is clear to him that the city administrators are not enthusiastic about the library using Site B or about the thought of leaving the existing library building empty; however, he felt they might have more interest in taking over the smaller, older piece of the library building – it is quieter and more within the means of a prospective client. He suggested that the task group organized earlier by Dale Ross and Bob Anderson could perhaps work on finding someone who might be interested in the smaller piece.

There was further discussion about parking, alternatives that could be included in a bid, and a new time line for the project. Scherer said that he would work up a schedule, using both November 2010 and March 2011 as potential dates for a bond referendum, as well as some cost analysis of the new concept and some ideas about the older building. With respect to immediate next steps, it was agreed that one of the Trustees should act as a liaison to the Historic Preservation Commission to give the commissioners an update and work on bridge-building. Seagrave requested that anyone interested in taking on that role contact him in the next 24 hours.

Summer Hours – Motion by Lockett, second by Stow, to adopt a resolution to establish consistent weekend hours at the library throughout the year as presented/amended.

Assistant Library Director Carey stated that there was an error in the Briefing Paper – the library is presently open on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. during the school year. She said the idea of having consistent hours year-round has come up many times over the years, and a greater emphasis is now being placed on direct service to customers. The StatCom surveys that were done earlier in the year provided clear evidence that the public's top two choices for additional library hours were on Saturdays and Sundays during the summer.

When asked what hours were being proposed for summer, Carey said they would be the same as they are during the school year: Saturday 9-6, and Sunday 1-5. Trustee Warnick inquired whether the change would be cost neutral. Carey said there would be the cost of a few hours additional lighting, but back-of-house efficiencies are being examined and no additional staffing is being requested.

Vote on Motion as presented: 7-0. Motion carried unanimously.

Library Services Contract with the City of Gilbert Motion by Campbell, second by Schill, to adopt a resolution approving the FY2010/2011 Gilbert Library Services Contract as presented/amended.

Director Weeks stated that the amount of compensation for the APL was being increased by three percent this year. The contract is to be effective July 1, but will be sent to Gilbert for review now, while that city's budget is being constructed.

Campbell asked if it were possible to determine whether or not Gilbert citizens were using the bookmobile at the Fareway Store on Bloomington Road. Carey believed it was, and said she would check on getting the information.

Vote on Motion as presented: 7-0. Motion carried unanimously.

Appointment of Director Evaluation Committee: President Seagrave stated that the Executive Committee, comprised of himself, Dudley Lockett, and Sherry Meier, would conduct the Director's evaluation this year.

The by-laws committee (Lockett, Seagrave, and Warnick) will also look at changes that need to be made in April, as a result of the changes approved in the recent election and forthcoming amendments to the *Municipal Code*.

Trustee Comments:

Schill – none.

Lockett – none.

Stow – none.

Warnick – none.

Campbell said that he appreciated having Jeff Scherer here to walk through some new ideas.

Meier remarked that “I Love My Library” pins were passed out at ILA and she has had many positive comments about hers. She is encouraged by the support people show for the library.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

The next regular meeting will be Thursday, January 21, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.