

Ames Public Library Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes March 19, 2009

The Ames Public Library Board of Trustees met in regular session on Thursday, March 19, 2009, in the Library's Board Room with Anderson, Budd, Campbell, LeGates, Meier, Ross, Seagrave and Warnick in attendance. Luckett was absent. Staff in attendance: Carey, Thompson, and Weeks.

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

Adoption of Agenda: Ross asked for any changes to the agenda; hearing none, Seagrave moved and Legates seconded approval of the agenda. Vote on motion: 8-0. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Anderson moved and Meier seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of February 19, 2009. Vote on motion: 8-0. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Forum: No one spoke.

Meyer Scherer & Rockcastle, LTD: Jeffrey Scherer, principal architect with Meyer Scherer and Rockcastle, LTD, discussed the public meetings that he had conducted earlier in the week. He also reported on the results of a parking study done by the First United Methodist Church in January 2008. It indicated that there are only about half as many spaces available in this vicinity as the consultants feel there would need to be.

The results of the five straw polls (four taken with the public and one with library staff) showed a preference for options G, A, B, F, E, C, and D, in that order. Scherer noted that the public voted to stay on the existing site, while the supervisory staff preference was for a new building near City Hall. Scherer outlined some of the pros and cons of the various scenarios. He also explained two new ideas that had come up earlier in the day. One was proposed during the staff discussion, and the other occurred to him as he was reviewing the issues.

In addition to constraints related to the existing library and uncertainties about the availability of properties adjacent to this site or the one near City Hall, he said an important consideration will be whether or not the library would be forced to temporarily relocate during construction. Once given direction by the trustees on which options to pursue, Scherer said the architects will think very seriously about all the issues, including economics, the logistics of moving, etc.

Seagrave stated that City Council member Mahayni recently pointed out that the end result for taxpayers might be better with a new building – they would have the new library, the value of building that is left here, and the savings garnered by not having to move. In Seagrave's opinion, the benefit of not having to relocate was worth more than the pure dollar amount; there would be a huge cost to bear in terms of inconvenience. Scherer mentioned several problems and risks associated with operating out of a new location for a short time.

The Board discussed the public process and agreed that the week had been a good exercise. There was careful deliberation about the strategies they wanted MS&R to continue to work on, resulting in three:

Option 1 -- Build a new 94,000 gross-square-foot library placed on the public land located to the east of City Hall between 5th and 6th Streets along Clark Avenue. The building will be between three and four stories. Parking will be located to the north, and with a single level parking structure running east-west along 6th Street. This option will involve cooperation with First National Bank to ensure that it does not lose parking or the banking drive-through. This option will also explore the maximum parking that can be provided without using the bank property. No underground parking will be included in this study. This option is a variation on option E presented to the public.

Option 2 – Remodel the 1904, 1940, and 1984 library and expand the building over Douglas Avenue, which will be closed to through vehicular traffic. The historic 1904 and 1940 building facades will be preserved in this option. A limited addition would be extended to the west on property owned by the City of Ames (on the northeast corner of the intersection of 5th Street and Kellogg Avenue) to provide space for loading, bookmobile, and deliveries. This limited addition will be done with full consideration of the needs of the United Methodist Church and its plans for an expansion. This option will include the study of the benefit of purchasing of the Elks Property and the house located between the Elks Club and the funeral home for use as parking and building expansion. This option is a variation on option F presented to the public.

Option 3 -- Extensively remodel the eastern portion of the 1984 library, and demolish the 1940 addition and all but the exterior facade of the 1904 portion of the library for new library space. Demolish and expand the existing entrance and auditorium up to the westerly property line of the existing library site. Construct a limited addition to the west on property owned by the City of Ames (at the northeast corner of the intersection of 5th Street and Kellogg Avenue) to provide space for loading, bookmobile, and deliveries. This limited addition will be done with full consideration of the needs of the United Methodist Church and its plans for an expansion. This is option H, as developed in the Board meeting. Included in this option will be a limited exploration of Option A as an alternative. This limited exploration of option A will not include concept plans, but will include functional and cost comparisons with Option 3.

All three options will include exploration of parking, consideration of interior spaces, functional efficiency, and costs and operation of the library during construction, should it involve the existing site.

Scherer left the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Consent Agenda: Anderson moved and LeGates seconded the motion to approve the consent agenda. Vote on motion: 8-0. Motion passed unanimously.

- 1) Motion approving claims reports: February 1, 2009 – February 28, 2009
- 2) Motion approving gifts:
 - a) From Hazel Henryson\$10.00
- 3) Motion approving staff changes:
 - a) New Hires
 - i) Amarilis Gonzalez Vazquez as a circulation assistant at \$7.47/hour, effective March 9, 2009.

Financial Reports: Weeks stated that 66.7% of the fiscal year had elapsed at the end of February and the library had spent 66.1% of its budget. He explained that the overage in the outside professional services category represented the cost of the consultant and the 360 evaluation survey instrument, plus increased charges for the OCLC bibliographic database. Budget corrections will appear when the amendments are entered.

Meier inquired why no expenses appeared in some of the Internal Services lines for July and November. Staff will investigate.

Budd inquired about the payment to Accurate Mechanical; Weeks explained that a leak that was found in the course of doing repairs to the chiller last July, so the \$12,000 was an emergency expenditure. Adjustments will be made to the capital improvements budget this spring.

Campbell questioned the payments to LawnPro, and Weeks said that firm provided snow removal from the library's sidewalks.

The financial reports were accepted as submitted.

Communications: None

Administrative Staff Report:

Weeks informed the Trustees about a controversy between McCallsburg and Zearing over the amount McCallsburg is willing to pay for library service. Weeks said that he hoped the situation would be resolved soon, but if it is not, he will recommend that the APL Board of Trustees vote to refuse library service to McCallsburg residents as a matter of principle. Weeks explained that Open Access in Iowa only works when all communities cooperate, and the system as a whole would be harmed if Ames (or any other local library) were to let McCallsburg opt out of having to make a contribution for library service without any sanction. According to Ross, the APL would then have the option of charging McCallsburg residents a fee if they wished to use Ames's library service.

Weeks welcomed Sherry Bradley, who was present as an observer, and announced that she, Sam Schill, and Kevin Stow would begin terms of service on the Board of Trustees in April.

Other updates included:

- Intercept surveys on library usage will be done by STATCOM, a group of Iowa State graduate students in Statistics, later this month. Volunteers are still needed and Weeks invited anyone interested in helping out to sign up. The survey is anonymous and voluntary; customers will be asked what brought them to the library and what else, if anything, they did while downtown.
- The bookmobile has started a new stop at Green Hills Retirement Community. Regular visits will take place on the third Thursday of the month.
- The mother of Sheila Lundt, one of the Assistant City Managers, passed away earlier in the week. A garden sculpture was sent by library staff in memorium.

Library Building Expansion Committee Report: Weeks said the Library Building Committee would meet on Monday, March 30. There will be a briefing about this week's activities and discussion about moving forward. The idea of taking this group to tour the library in St. Cloud has been dropped, as the committee was not yet ready. However, supervisory staff at the library is planning a "scouting mission" to see the St. Cloud facility and to look at materials handling in the Hennepin County Library. Travel will take place on May 11 and 12, with an overnight in Minneapolis. Weeks invited the Trustees to go along, if they were interested. There are no meetings scheduled with MS&R in April, but Weeks said that tours of the library will be offered so that the public can see some of the deficiencies in the existing building. Also, in response to a suggestion from the committee, white papers are now being posted on the APL blog.

Warnick left the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Friends of the Ames Public Library Report: Budd reported that the Friends met March 2 and considered three main items. They agreed on a book bag and will order 250 bags to be used as incentives for membership. The bags are lime green and black, with a zipper. They also reviewed assignments for the annual book sale, scheduled for April 17-19 (also VEISHEA weekend). He was not sure if the Friends had been able to contract with anyone for security. A new slate of board members was presented: Joan Van Norman, President; Norma Sisson, Vice President; and Frances Wilke, Treasurer. Budd also stated that Jean Meek and Kirsti Minion are new members.

Foundation Report: Ross reported that the APL Foundation met on March 12. Frances Wilke will replace Joan Van Norman as the Friends liaison. He said the Foundation discussed possibility of exploring grants again. They came to no resolution, but hope that one person who has worked as adjunct library staff member and who has written grants in the past will start looking at some of the grants Stevin Dahl identified. Ross said the Foundation also talked about finding a director whose salary would be paid, in part, with library funds. He said they proposed the idea that this individual might be a half-time library, half-time Foundation employee, but are not sure how that arrangement fits with City policies.

Carey said the Foundation approved a concept for the annual campaign mailer, which will go out in April. She added that two new representatives from the Board of Trustees will be needed to serve as liaisons to the APL Foundation. The Trustees' representatives serve as voting members of the Foundation Board.

Policy Review:

Records Retention Policy – Action Item: Anderson moved and LeGates seconded the motion to approve the Records Retention Policy as presented.

Budd inquired about the policy statement that DVR recordings shall be retained not less than 21 days. Weeks said that the device automatically erases video on the 21st day; by that time the library will know whether or not it needed to be retained for a police matter.

Meier asked about the retention of major bequest files. Carey stated that the bequest files will be kept as long as they were active, but will be destroyed five years after the funds are completely expended. However, the record of expenditures is preserved permanently as a part of the records of the Board of Trustees, so the terms of the bequest and the record of expenditures will not be lost.

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

Expressions of Concern Policy – Action Item: Budd moved and LeGates seconded the motion to approve of the Expressions of Concern Policy as presented.

The Trustees were reminded that this policy was extracted from several other policies, at their request, so that any future changes to this matter would not require updates in numerous sections of the policy manual. Weeks noted that no effort will be made to change existing policies now, but when they are next reviewed, the pertinent paragraphs will be removed and replaced with references to this policy.

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

Unfinished Business:

Director's Evaluation – Executive Session:

Art Weeks requested that the meeting be closed during his evaluation under the provisions of the Code of Iowa Open Meetings Law. Chapter 21.5, Section I, permits closure of a public meeting to discuss employment conditions, including performance. Ross said the law allows a closed session to discuss the professional competency of an individual, but made clear that "a governmental body shall not discuss any business during the closed session which does not directly relate to the specific reason announced as justification for the closed session."

Seagrave moved and LeGates seconded the motion to close the meeting. Roll Call Vote: 7-0. Voting aye: Anderson, Budd, Campbell, LeGates, Meier, Ross, and Seagrave. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting closed at 9:00 p.m.; whereupon, all staff and visitors left the meeting.

Seagrave moved and Campbell seconded the motion to re-open the meeting. Roll call vote: 7-0. Voting aye: Anderson, Budd, Campbell, LeGates, Meier, Ross, and Seagrave. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting re-opened at 9:22 p.m.

Ross told Weeks that the Board of Trustees carefully considered the evaluation that they had previously shared with him. The Trustees are extremely pleased with performance to date, his leadership, his involvement in the community and the important role he is playing in the development of the current library expansion project.

Director's Salary for FY2009/10 – Action Item: The Executive Committee moved that Library Director Art Weeks receive a salary increase of 4.5% for the upcoming year. Vote on Motion: 7-0. Motion carried unanimously.

Weeks thanked the members of the Board, saying that their comments were humbling, and that he enjoys the challenge of living up to their high expectations.

New Business:

Report of the Nominating Committee – Ross and Budd:

Ross stated that the committee's recommendations proposed the following officers: Richard Seagrave, President; Dudley Luckett, Vice President; and Sherry Meier, Secretary. He then opened the floor for additional nominations. Hearing none, Anderson moved and Campbell seconded the motion to close nominations. Vote on motion: 7-0. Motion carried unanimously.

Election of Officers – Action Item:

Anderson moved to accept the slate of officers as presented. LeGates seconded the motion. Vote on motion: 7-0. Motion passed unanimously.

It was noted that a public vote is scheduled in November to revise the terms of office of the Board of Trustees. If approved, library trustees would serve three-year terms beginning in July of the year of appointment, and each member would be eligible for two full consecutive terms. The City Attorney will have to advise the Board on how that change would affect trustees currently in office. Weeks noted that the proposed rules would also allow individuals to serve again after a short hiatus.

Recognition of Outgoing Board Members:

Ross presented certificates of appreciation to LeGates and Anderson which expressed deepest thanks and gratitude for their years of service. Weeks presented a similar certificate to Ross and added that Ames has been honored to have a person of Ross's stature in the library community as president of its Board. Not only is Ross a member of the national library community, he's also a state-wide leader, a former member of the Iowa Library Commission, and the incoming president of the Iowa Library Association.

Ross expressed his pleasure at having been able to serve on this Board for six years. He said he feels the Ames Public Library is in significantly better shape as an organization today than it was when he was appointed. The staff has come together as a unit under Weeks, who has brought in his experience as well as an appreciation for the staff and the community.

Weeks thanked Ross for his kind comments, but stated that credit must also go to Lynne Carey and other members of the library staff who work so well together as a team.

Trustee Comments:

Seagrave stated that he supported Weeks's comments. In the many years of their association, Seagrave has found that everything Ross has undertaken has been done to the highest standards.

LeGates said that she had enjoyed her years of service and the opportunity to get acquainted with

all the members of the board.

Anderson said that his four years of service went by in a flash; he wished he had been able to serve for six. He also distributed bookmarks that he had purchased at the library in Alexandria, Egypt.

Campbell commended the three outgoing trustees on a job well done; in spite of their departure, he said he feels the confident about the new appointees and believes the Board will carry on in good hands.

Meier said she does not believe she has met anyone with more knowledge of libraries than Ross.

Budd thanked outgoing members for their service and their assistance to him.

Ross, speaking on behalf of himself, Anderson and LeGates, said they will continue to take an interest in the activities and expansion plans at the library.

Adjournment:

Seagrave moved and Meier seconded the motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:36 p.m.