

Regular Meeting  
April 3, 2008

Board Members Present: Kathy Eubank, Anna Reiz, Evva Schuster, Helen Sergott, Suzanne Wilson and Julie Yelick-Miller

Board Members Absent: None

Others Present: Mary Elizabeth Harper (RDL Director), Maureen Swanwick, William Blevins, Bethanie Connors, Chuck Schacht, Janine Saputo.

President Yelick-Miller called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS:**

The Board members introduced themselves to the staff and public in attendance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Sergott requested that e) Debt Service Transfer and f) 2007 W2s be added under VI Financial Report.

Wilson requested that IV) Director's Moving Loan be added under VIII Old Business b) Personnel Committee.

Schuster requested that d) Status of Community Block Grant - Kezar be added under VIII Old Business.

Eubank made a motion supported by Schuster to accept the agenda as amended. Ayes: All. Nays: none. Motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Sergott made a motion supported by Reiz to table the approval of the minutes. Ayes: All. Nays: none. Motion passed.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Janine Saputo introduced herself as the Romeo DDA (Downtown Development Authority) Coordinator. She stated that she is relatively new to the community and began her position last August. She briefly explained what she and the DDA do. Her visit was two-fold: to congratulate the Board on the final payment on the building and also to thank the library, especially the staff at Kezar, for all their support and help with downtown Romeo promotional efforts. She announced the two winners of the Romeo Trivia contest were Corinne Wong and Geralyn Jarmoluk. These two people answered all 25 questions in the trivia contest correctly. The DDA, together with the Romeo Historical Society, will present each lady with a grand prize at 4:00 p.m. on Friday (April 4) in the Kezar Branch Library. Five people answered 24 questions correctly and they will be receiving gift certificates for the downtown Romeo area. Saputo enthusiastically

stated that the partnership with the Romeo Library has been very successful and supportive.

At this point Harper introduced Bethanie Connors as one of the people involved in creating the window display at Kezar for the Romeo Romantic Days window display contest in February.

Bethanie Connors mentioned the issue with the problematic W2s for Chuck and herself. Sergott pointed out that the issue is now on the agenda, and Connors said she would wait until that portion of the meeting.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

February 29, 2008 Balance	\$1,890,087.92
March 31, 2008 Revenues	\$ 767,359.05
March 31, 2008 Expenditures	\$ 206,097.96
March 31, 2008 Balance	\$2,451,349.01
Debt Service Fund Balance	\$ 482,925.97

### **LIBRARY BILLS:**

**Bills Payable:** Sergott pointed out that everything seemed correct. Bills were done by AccounTemp; Sergott and Eubank reviewed the bills with Harper to make sure they were correct and signed the checks. The long distance telephone bill (Lightyear) appears to be creeping up and the Board will need to keep an eye on it.

Eubank made the motion supported by Wilson to pay the bills in the amount of \$58,635.45. Ayes: All. Nays: none. Motion passed.

**Update of Ford Payment:** Sergott pointed out that last year the Board had made a motion to repay the Ford tax money with one single payment. The Macomb County Treasurer is now handling this account and has split it into two payments. Sergott made a motion supported by Schuster to accept the County's payment schedule for the Ford tax refund per the Michigan Tax Tribunal. Ayes: All. Nays: none. Motion passed.

The library is still waiting for the request for the second payment, which was expected at the end of March, and the Board stands ready to make the payment as soon as it is received. Harper will contact the County to see when the request should be received.

**Debt Service Final Payment:** Sergott stated that the final payment was made on Monday March 31, 2008. The building is now paid for. Harper commended the current Board for all their work in this matter, and Sergott added that all those who worked on the bond issue also deserved to be commended on accomplishing a difficult task. Yelick-Miller also thanked the Friend's members and the community.

**Debt Service Transfer:** Sergott made a motion to temporarily transfer \$30,000 to the debt service account. This amount is to cover the repayment of the Ford Motor Company tax tribunal issue. Part of the Ford tax issue included debt service, and the library paid the first portion out of debt service and the general fund. Sergott pointed out that, according to the auditor, the library can temporarily transfer money from the general fund to the debt service account. Sergott will double-check with the auditor. Reiz seconded the motion. Ayes: All. Nays: none. Motion passed.

**2007 W2s:** Sergott stated that, as Treasurer of the Romeo District Library Board of Trustees, she wished to inform the Board that the status of the controversy regarding the 2007 W2 forms had been turned over to the library's auditors and to the library attorney. She is waiting for a response from both of these firms and she requested that this item be placed on a future agenda when the response has been received. Sergott made a motion supported by Schuster to table this motion until the Board has all the paperwork and the item. Ayes: All. Nays: none. Motion passed.

#### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Harper added to the written report:

The fire extinguishers and fire alarms were tested on this date and found to be in working order. The Fire Marshall did a spot visit and the library was found to be in good shape at the time of the Fire Marshall's visit. Generally, inspections follow a Fire Marshall's visit.

Schuster reported that, with regard to the aquarium issue, she had discovered that the cichlids that had been suggested for the aquarium, in place of the salt-water fish, are very aggressive and might not be the best option for the library aquarium at a savings of only \$20.00 per month. Harper pointed out that the maintenance of the aquarium was on the wish list, and mentioned the "wish tree" out in the lobby that had been created by Connors for the celebration. Connors mentioned that she had talked to one of the workers from Aquarium Shine, the current maintenance company, and he suggested it would be possible to come once a month instead of twice a month, which would be a possible savings. The staff in the Children's Department would have to do a little more monitoring. Harper asked if the library is locked into using Aquarium Shine. Harper will look into other companies and also discuss the option of once a month visits from the maintenance company with the staff in the Children's Department. Aquarium Shine has provided good service, so this is not a question of service just economics.

Yelick-Miller thanked the staff on the celebration committee - Barb Gunter, Joyce Diegel and Kathy Fannon - for all their hard work. Harper mentioned that, as a thank you to the staff for dressing up for the celebration, Friday and Saturday were designated to be casual days - with a twist. Staff members were challenged to wear something in the red color group on Friday and something in the yellow color group on Saturday.

Eubank questioned why programs are taking place at Kezar after hours. Harper explained that the reason to have the programs after hours is that there is no space for

them during regular hours and it is more convenient for the patrons.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

Yelick-Miller announced that there was no update at this point, and that the Finance Committee would be meeting soon.

Sergott mentioned that she had missed something under the Financial Report regarding some investments to approve. Sergott made a motion for the following investments: \$99,000.00 was invested in a 90-day CD with the Byron Center Bank of Byron Center Michigan at a rate of 3% payable on 6/27/08. On Thursday April 3 \$99,000.00 was invested in a CD with M Bank in Manistee Michigan at a rate of 3.2% payable on 10/14/08. Sergott asked the Board members to note that each investment is for only \$99,000.00 and in separate banks so that they are guaranteed safe by the FIDC. Sergott discovered that the 5% rate being offered by National City is a teaser rate and is non-institutional. Since the library is considered an institution it cannot invest in that. It was also for three years, whereas the library investments are for one year or less. The library is not currently buying commercial paper because the rate is currently only 2.1% to 2.3%. Consequently, the library is looking at CDs and only those with rates over 3%. The rate on the money market account is also dropping. It was 2.6% at the end of March and as of this date it is 2.05%.

Eubank made a motion, supported by Reiz, to accept the two investments, one for \$99,000.00 at Byron Center Bank and one for \$99,000.00 at M Bank in Manistee in the form of CDs. Ayes: All. Nays: none. Motion passed.

Yelick-Miller pointed out that there are amounts in the expenditures where the year-to-date amount is higher than the budget. Sergott said they would be looking at that at the next Finance Committee meeting, and that it would be taken care of next month. Wilson asked, in anticipation of the upcoming budget planning cycle, if the Finance Committee had given any consideration to having any type of special meeting where the Board could review the finances. Sergott replied that she would suggest that the whole Board should sit down to discuss the budget in depth. April 19 was offered as a tentative date for this special meeting. Since Eubank will be out of town that day, Sergott asked her if she could write down any suggestions she has ready for the meeting, and Harper offered to send questions, notes, etc. as planning tools to all the Board members. Sergott will discuss these with Eubank before she leaves on vacation. The date and time for the meeting was set at 9:00 a.m. April 19, 2008.

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:**

Wilson reported that the Personnel Committee met on March 12 and discussed the Employee Manual that they are working on, some of the issues with ADP, and the new employment application form.

**Employee Manual Final Draft (emailed and in packet):** Wilson said that the manual has not been sent for legal review yet since there may still be some changes to be recommended by Board members. Discussion ensued regarding proposed changes and

additions to the manual. Yelick-Miller recommended some additional wording and changes regarding the pages wearing jeans or shorts. The recommendation was made that they should wear clean, tidy jeans and no shorts. Sergott suggested that there should be a specific section referring to benefits available to the staff. She also pointed out that it mentions a “terms of employment” policy, which could not be found in the proposed handbook. Sergott also questioned the phrase “compensatory leave” as used in the section referring to emergency closings. The Board needs to discuss the issue of compensatory leave before it can appear in the handbook. Sergott pointed out that under “Vacations” it refers to a “Leaves of Absence” section, but she was unable to find such a section in the proposed handbook. Sergott suggested that sick leave, FMLA and leaves of absence should be paragraphed together in the handbook. Wilson suggested the whole Board discuss the handbook during the second half of the whole Board budget meeting. It can then go to the open Board meeting for approval and then finally to the attorney for a legal opinion.

**Independence Day Holiday:** Wilson introduced a concern that had been brought forward by an employee concerning the fact that July 4<sup>th</sup> falls on a Friday this year. This involves some complications with scheduling that would entail half the staff working four days, having Friday off and getting paid for the five days, while the other half of the staff, who are scheduled to work Saturday, would either work their five days, not get paid for the Friday and then have a holiday leave day to use at some point, or have another day off either that week or the following week in lieu of the Friday, and still get paid for the Friday. She mentioned that staff members are only supposed to be paid for five days per week, and the holiday falling on a Friday poses a problem. Wilson asked if the Board would consider closing the library on both the Friday and the Saturday, thus giving the staff a 3-day weekend, and avoiding the above-mentioned problem with pay and holiday leave, and mentioned that benchmarking had shown that most of the libraries in the Coop would be closed that Saturday. She said the Personnel Committee had discussed this and admittedly do not like extra closures. A discussion then ensued regarding what constitutes the workweek and the beginning of the workweek. Yelick-Miller would like to revisit the policy of closing at 5:00 p.m. the night before a holiday. Harper suggested that the Board consider that we close for the Saturday but not close early on Thursday. Yelick-Miller made a motion, supported by Eubank, to close the library on Saturday July 5<sup>th</sup> but keep it open normal business hours on Thursday July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ayes: All. Nays: none. Motion passed.

**RDL Employment Application Form (FYI) (emailed and in packet):** Wilson then introduced discussion regarding the proposed new form for employment. She indicated that it is a vast improvement over what the library has had in the past, it will facilitate the process for getting signatures, reference checks, and that it is very thorough and professionally well done. Yelick-Miller asked if the library attorney had looked at it yet. Harper replied that the library attorney had not seen it yet, but that the form had been created by a labor attorney with Dokema Gossett named Al Muskovitz, who shared it at a workshop that Harper had attended.

**Director's Moving Loan:** Wilson then introduced the topic of the Director's moving loan. Wilson pointed out that one of the components of the employment contract was that Harper would be eligible for an increase in pay after the first six months. However, the Board opted not to move forward with that at that juncture due to financial constraints. Another caveat of her contract was that the Board advanced a loan of \$6,900.00 for moving costs, which was to be repaid at the end of her first year. Since the Board has been unable to establish any type of raise for her, and since her performance has been exemplary, Wilson made a motion, supported by Reiz, to forgive that moving debt. Wilson pointed out that the advantage is that the money has already been spent, so it will not be necessary to tap into the budget for it now. Sergott stated that this was not just a loan, but also a separate promissory note drawn by our attorney, and was due before the end of the fiscal year June 30, 2008. Sergott questioned if the forgiveness of this promissory note would be precedent setting, and that the attorney should be contacted for his opinion. Eubank questioned the percentage of the \$6900.00 in relation to Harper's salary. The amount was stated as approximately 8%. Wilson stated that she wanted to call the question. A roll call vote was called. Ayes: Wilson, Eubank, Yelick-Miller, and Reiz. Nays: Schuster. Abstain: Sergott. Motion to call the question passed.

#### **CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH PARKING LOT**

Sergott has not received any further contact to date from the Church regarding this issue.

#### **STATUS OF COMMUNITY BLOCK GRANT**

Schuster questioned why the library was not on the list of recipients. Yelick-Miller explained that the deadline had been moved up. Harper had contacted Mike Rozny, the Macomb County Program Manager for Community Development Services, who informed her that the date had been changed and that a notice had appeared in the Romeo Observer in November. He did tell Harper that she is now on his list for being contacted next time. Rozny also told Harper that, in addition to changing the date, the three municipalities are now consolidated so that only one application goes to cover the three communities. Sergott mentioned that it is important to have the project package ready and to make sure the library is on each of their lists as well as the County list. She also pointed out that the deadline date is a moving target which can be different each year. Harper proposed that we have the roof inspected to try to address the problem with the roof, and gather together all the information for the handicapped ramp, and get all the numbers and information together, and then do whatever is necessary to get on the various lists. She also pointed out that there are a number of foundations that will fund brick-and-mortar projects for non-profit organizations, and that that is another reason for getting these numbers together. Sergott also pointed out that there is the possibility of another brick-and-mortar project being turned down and consequently coming back into the system, and that we should be ready to submit our proposal.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**July meeting date:** the meeting will still be on Thursday July 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Proposed Internet Policy Revision (draft in packet and emailed):** Harper stated that she is aiming for consistency between the two buildings and to have computer use mimic any other library “checkout”. Patrons are not allowed to check out materials if they owe \$5.00 or more; likewise they would not be allowed to use the computers either. Harper proposed putting the rules on a bookmark so the rules can be available to hand out and at each computer station, and Sergott suggested posting the rules at the computer terminals. Sergott made a motion, supported by Schuster, to accept the Internet Policy revision as presented by the library director. Ayes: All. Nays: none. Motion passed. Harper announced that she would make this revision effective immediately.

**2008 Summer Lawn Maintenance Bids (to be opened at the meeting):** Harper brought eleven sealed lawn mowing bids to the meeting. Yelick-Miller suggested, in future, that the bids be opened at the pre-meeting, which involves the Director, the President and the Treasurer. The information could then be put on a chart, which would make it easier to process. Eubank volunteered to help. Yelick-Miller made a motion, supported by Schuster, that Sergott review the lawn mowing bids with the director and then send to the Board President for an email vote. Ayes: All. Nays: none. Motion passed. Eubank and Sergott will get together to arrange the bids, tally them and create a chart or spreadsheet.

**Correspondence:** Schuster read aloud a thank you letter from Dominic McLaughlin, one of the staff members who attended the annual Friends dinner. Harper read aloud a letter from an 11-year old patron expressing his delight in the library.

Schuster made a motion to adjourn, supported by Eubank. Ayes: All. Nays: none. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Evva Schuster  
RDL Board Secretary

Maureen Swanwick  
Recording Secretary