

RAMAPO CATSKILL LIBRARY SYSTEM
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
AUGUST 18, 2008

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Marion M. Dumond
Norman R. Gallagher
Robert P. Knight
Chuck LaRocca
Mary Ellen Leimer
Herbert Lerner
Ira Simon
Samuel L. Simon
Joanne Sininsky
Patricia Soto
Melvin Wesenberg
Stephen L. Oppenheim, President

*Excused absence

STAFF

Brenda Adams, RCLS Fiscal Officer
Ruth K. Daubenspeck, RCLS Administrative Assistant
Robert Hubsher, RCLS Executive Director

Stephen L. Oppenheim, President, called the Board to order in Regular Session at 7:32 p.m., Monday, August 18, 2008 at RCLS, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. A quorum was present.

MINUTES

Robert P. Knight moved and Mary Ellen Leimer seconded the motion that the minutes of the June 16, 2008 meeting be approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously. (motion 08-055)

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Stephen L. Oppenheim thanked Ira Simon for hosting the Board Retreat on Monday, July 21. He reminded the Board that RCLS is not a library system in the sense of such libraries as Phoenix, San Diego, or New York in that we are not a central library with branches. Our Director is not running branches, but a cooperative library system.

BOARD DISCUSSIONS

At the Board Retreat the issue was raised that the Board has too many committees and some that do not function. Stephen L. Oppenheim reviewed with the Board the various committees. Marion M. Dumond moved and Robert P. Knight seconded the motion to abolish the Continuing Ed and Marketing / Public Relations Committee chaired by Robert P. Knight. The motion passed unanimously. (motion 08-056)

The Board looked at the Electronic Resources and Central Library Committee chaired by Mary Ellen Leimer. The Board discussed the role of the Central Library Committee. The Committee reviews and approves the Central Library's proposed budget and reviews the plan of service. The Central Library is intended to further the mission of RCLS. Mary Ellen Leimer moved to abolish the Electronic Resources Committee. She then moved to amend the motion to include the Central Library. Marion M. Dumond seconded the motion. The motion carried with 10 in favor, 1 opposed (Samuel L. Simon). (motion 08-057)

The Board discussed the value of having a Board Development Committee. Marion M. Dumond moved and Samuel L. Simon seconded the motion to establish a Board Development and Nominating Committee. The motion carried with 9 in favor and 2 abstentions (Chuck LaRocca and Ira Simon).

Stephen L. Oppenheim will be writing member library board presidents inviting them to attend RCLS Board Meetings.

The Board suggested an annual orientation meeting for new member library trustees in place of the bi-monthly RCLS Orientation. Robert Hubsher stated that Orientation is intended to provide staff and trustees a tour of RCLS headquarters, an overview of programs and services we provide and an opportunity to meet RCLS staff. He noted that a minimum of three or four people attend each Orientation. An orientation for trustees only would probably be held in the evening with a briefer explanation of what RCLS does and more emphasis on the duties and responsibilities of trustees. Stephen L. Oppenheim suggested that Robert P. Knight develop this idea and report back to the Board.

The Board discussed the need for a more formalized type of outreach to member libraries' trustees. Patricia Soto volunteered to head the ad-hoc Trustee Outreach Committee. She may recruit help if needed.

Marion M. Dumond felt the Board Retreat was wonderful, needed and brought the Board together.

After reading the latest communication from Bob Devino, Director of Finkelstein Memorial Library in Spring Valley, Samuel L. Simon questioned having trustee representation at the ANSER Committee meetings along with RCLS staff. Although the trustees receive a report, he felt they would like to get the information first hand. After much discussion, Samuel L. Simon no longer felt the need for trustees to attend the meetings. Stephen L. Oppenheim noted that the Directors' Representative needs to take a more active responsibility in reporting to the Board about the issues raised, discussions and recommendations made at the ANSER Committee meetings.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Patricia Soto moved and Ira Simon seconded the motion to accept the Bylaws as presented as the first reading. Motion passed unanimously. (motion 08-058)
- B. Robert Hubsher presented a draft of a letter to Cassandra Artale, Library Development Specialist, for the Board President's signature. The letter addresses the legality of public library systems charging service fees. Included with the letter are documents from Suffolk Cooperative Library System which deal with this issue. The letters from the Suffolk Cooperative Library System (SCLS) Director, the State Librarian, and the President of SCLS member library span a time frame from April 4, 1995 to December 21, 1995. Essentially these letters address "a program for member libraries to participate in the financing of 'non-mandated' system services." Robert P. Knight moved and Herbert Lerner seconded the motion to approve the letter for signature as presented. Motion passed unanimously. (motion 08-059)
- C. The Board discussed the cap on Board travel imposed for 2008. This line item included attendance of workshops and conferences. Some directors felt the RCLS budget amount for trustee travel was too high. Samuel L. Simon felt directors should encourage trustees to attend these events. Trying to limit trustees is a disservice to the System. Patricia Soto stated that we are talking about member libraries' trustees coming for orientation at RCLS and yet limiting system trustees to attend workshops and conferences. Robert Hubsher pointed out that it was the RCLS Board that placed the limit on Board travel to deal with constraints within the operating budget. Brenda Adams noted that in preparing the preliminary budget for 2009 we have included all of the Board members requests for travel. Based on these requests the line item for trustee travel will be over the cap limit. Robert Hubsher reminded the Board that we have a policy in place which requires management to bring the Board a balanced budget. The Board is responsible for the final decision regarding the allocation of funds. Management will provide the Board with recommendations. He also noted that we are anticipating cuts in State Aid next year, although we have no idea how much the amount of those cuts will be. The Preliminary Budget will be based on the funding formulas in Education Law.

- D. Chuck LaRocca reported that he, Melvin Wesenberg and Robert Hubsher met Thursday, July 17 to review and discuss the parking lot expansion project.

The Committee also discussed the Minimum Standards variances granted to eight member libraries last year. They also wondered if other libraries are not in compliance and simply ignore the issue. They do not know how to address that matter. Robert Hubsher pointed out that we do not have a way of knowing if libraries are in compliance or not. Most of the standards are not really measurable, with the possible exception of handicap accessibility.

Chuck LaRocca and Melvin Wesenberg are going to draft a letter asking the library directors of libraries which have requested variances, to outline what they have tried to do to correct the situation. Robert Hubsher stated that if the Board decides to take any action, it will need to give the libraries adequate notice. He reminded the Board that the variance requests they will be dealing with later this year are related to the year 2007. The variance requests they will receive in the second half of 2009 will be for the year 2008 and we are in the 8th month of the year.

- E. Robert Hubsher reported that the RCLS Charter amendments have been sent to the state and are waiting for a reply.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. RCLS received a new quote for the proposed Parking Lot Expansion Project and was able to lower its construction grant request from \$96,421 to \$86,752, leaving more money for the member libraries. The net impact of the project will be an increase of 17 parking spaces. The project is also important because a large amount of asbestos was discovered in the deteriorating building. At some point in time we may be ordered by the Town of Wallkill to repair or demolish the building. At that time RCLS may not have the funds readily available to do the work. Ira Simon moved and Samuel L. Simon seconded the motion to approve as presented in the Executive Director's Supplemental Report the RCLS construction project. The motion passed unanimously. (motion 08-060)

Robert Hubsher reported six member libraries have submitted construction project applications under the \$800,000 grant and 11 under the \$14 million grant. Ira Simon move and Samuel L. Simon seconded the motion to approve all the Construction Grant applications and the allocation of Grant funds as presented. The motion passed unanimously. (motion 08-061)

Herbert Lerner thanked Brenda Adams for her work on the grants.

- B. Melvin Wesenberg moved and Patricia Soto seconded the motion to approve the Plan of Service amendments submitted by Robert Hubsher with the inclusion of the fundraising item on page 3, third paragraph beginning 13.1 in the Fundraising Committee minutes of August 4, 2008. The motion passed unanimously. (motion 08-062)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Personnel and Finance – Mary Ellen Leimer, Chair reported the Committee had met tonight to evaluate the Executive Director’s performance. The Committee has asked for additional material from Robert Hubsher to continue the discussion. They will meet prior to the Board meeting on September 15, at 6:00 p.m.

- B. Annual Meeting and Awards – Marion Dumond, Chair reported she has just become aware that the nominations for the children/teen award have been lost. The packet left the Ellenville Public Library and no one has seen the packet since. The missing packet needs to be located or an appeal made to the libraries to resubmit their nominations. Because of this development, the Committee does not have its nomination choices. A meeting has been scheduled at RCLS following the Legislative Breakfast on September 5.

DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE

Joanne Sininsky, Directors Association Chair, reported the September 24th meeting of the Directors Association (DA) will make use of teleconferencing. Directors will be able attend the meeting by going to one of three locations – RCLS headquarters, the New City Library or the Fallsburg Library. This will be the first time teleconferencing is used for a meeting of the DA. The intent is to reduce travel time and the cost of travel.

The System Services Evaluation Committee has been looking at the new RCLS Website and working on suggestions to enhance the site.

Under continuing education Joanne Sininsky is arranging an information session with NYSHIP, an agency that works between Civil Service and benefits, about legality and laws relating to benefits.

The Direct Access Committee will be meeting the morning following the Legislative Breakfast regarding the Haverstraw King’s Daughters Public Library Board’s motion to begin the process to implement Direct Access relief from Finkelstein Memorial Library (Spring Valley) and Rose Memorial Library Association (Stony Point). This is the first library to submit such a request under the new Direct Access Plan.

The ANSER Committee has been working on consolidating circulation policies. Robert Hubsher noted that the level of cooperation between the member libraries has been unprecedented compared to the last ten years. In September, Directors will vote to end all activities related to migration and revisit this issue in 2010.

Robert Hubsher reported that he had asked member library directors to submit to him a brief report on what their libraries do for fundraising. Joanne Sininsky stated that some libraries find it hard to get volunteers to do their fundraising. She told the Board not to count on the member libraries’ staff to help with any RCLS fundraising activities, as they are busy with their own. She also expressed her feeling that fundraising may be easier for the libraries as they are engaged

in direct services to the public, whereas RCLS provides services to the member libraries. Samuel L. Simon expressed his hope that library directors would help RCLS as they have a stake in RCLS fundraising. Joanne Sininsky feels if the Board does a nice event, the libraries will want to support the effort.

Joanne Sininsky thanked Robert Hubsher for scheduling the OverDrive Digital Bookmobile as Haverstraw King's Daughters Public Library is hosting the bookmobile on Tuesday, August 19.

Joanne Sininsky has volunteered to work with the Rockland Coalition for Democracy and Freedom on banned books. An event will be held in New City on Sunday, November 30 focused on children and young adult books that have been banned.

Samuel L. Simon asked Joanne Sininsky to speak at the next LARC meeting to invite Library Champions to the Legislative Breakfast.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Samuel L. Simon moved and Ira Simon seconded the motion to adopt the adjusted IRS standard mileage rate for 2008 at \$0.585 per mile, effective for all travel after August 1. The motion passed unanimously. (motion 08-063)

FINANCIAL REPORTS

- A. Mary Ellen Leimer moved and Patricia Soto seconded the motion that the Treasurer's Reports for June 30 and July 31, 2008 be accepted as submitted. The motion passed unanimously. (motion 08-064)
- B. Mary Ellen Leimer moved and Samuel L. Simon seconded the motion that the Fiscal Officer's Reports for June 30 and July 31, 2008 be accepted as submitted. The motion passed unanimously. (motion 08-065)
- C. Samuel L. Simon had examined the Vouchers for June and July 2008 for irregularity and moved approval. Ira Simon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. (motion 08-066)
- D. Brenda Adams drew the Board's attention to her memo showing that State Aid was received with a 2% cut. She noted budget adjustments will be made next month.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Board did not have any communication.

VISITORS' COMMENTS

Ruth Daubenspeck reminded the Board that the Legislative Breakfast is Friday, September 5 at the Wallkill Golf Club at 8:30 a.m. Responses are needed by Friday, August 29.

Robert Hubsher invited the Board to visit the Digital Bookmobile at the Haverstraw King's Daughters Public Library on Tuesday, August 19 and at the Orange Plaza in the Town of Wallkill on Wednesday, August 20.

TALKING POINTS

Patricia Soto will write the Talking Points

ADJOURNMENT

Melvin Wesenberg moved and Mary Ellen Leiver seconded the motion that the meeting adjourn at 9:36 p.m. The motion passed unanimously. (motion 08-067)

MOTIONS

- 08-055 Approve June 16, 2008 minutes
- 08-056 Abolish the Continuing Ed and Marketing / Public Relations Committee
- 08-057 Abolish the Electronic Resources and Central Library Committee
- 08-058 Accept the Bylaws as presented as the first reading
- 08-059 Approve the letter for signature that addresses the legality of public library systems charging service fees
- 08-060 Approve the RCLS construction project
- 08-061 Approve all the Construction Grant applications and the allocation of Grant funds as presented
- 08-062 Approve the Plan of Service revisions
- 08-063 To adopt the adjusted IRS standard mileage rate for 2008 at \$0.585 per mile, effective for all travel after August 1
- 08-064 Approve Treasurer's Reports for June 30 and July 31, 2008
- 08-065 Approve Fiscal Officer's Reports for June 30 and July 31, 2008
- 08-066 Approve Vouchers for June and July 2008
- 08-067 Adjournment