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Library Trustees Minutes 09-09-2003

Robbins Library Board of Trustees
Minutes of the Meeting
of the
September 9, 2003

Call to Order

Chairman Frank Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:25 p.m. In attendance were the Director of Robbins Library, Maryellen Loud, and library trustees, Patricia Deal, Katharine Fennelly, Barbara Muldoon, Joyce Radochia, and Susan Ruderman. David Castiglioni, trustee, arrived at the beginning of the discussion of the Director's Report.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the August meeting were approved as read.

Community Time

No members of the community were in attendance.

Communications

Ms. Loud presented two requests for the board's consideration. The first request came from a skin care consultant who offered to donate some of the proceeds to the library if she were allowed to use the library to provide skin care services to the public. After some discussion, the consensus of the board was that this was not an appropriate activity for the library.

The second request was from an organization, asking for permission for an author to sell books at one of their programs. The consensus of the board was that this would be appropriate, provided that the meeting was open to the general public.

Mr. Murphy announced that tickets were available for the Friends fundraiser (a light mystery play) at the Arlington Friends of the Drama on Thursday, October 9.

Director's Report

Trustees read and discussed the Director's report.

Since the Friends' Town Day Book Sale is successful and the number of books donated for the sale is almost overwhelming, the Friends are considering the possibility of holding two sales a year.

The Friends of Fox Library fundraising event will be held on Saturday,

October 18 at Arlington Town Hall.

Ms. Loud is in charge of the community read, a program sponsored by the library as part of the month-long celebration of diversity. A discussion of Seedfolks, a short novel appropriate for both children and adults, will take place at the library at 7:30 p.m. on October 14 in Robbins Library. Ms. Loud needs additional people to help lead the discussions.

Ms. Loud asked for guidance on the appropriate disposition of several boxes of old children's books (dating to 1923). After an appraiser evaluates the collection the board will make recommendations for their use. One suggestion was that the collection could be useful to Simmons College for its Children's Literature program.

Schedule of Holiday Closings – 2004

After reviewing the schedule of holiday closings the board considered the topic of Town Day closing. The library has been closed for Town Day for most of the years Arlington has been celebrating Town Day. When it was open in the early years of Town Day celebrations, the library engaged a special duty police officer. Due to the size of the library and the persistence of the perpetrators the officer was unable to contain all the vandalism and disruptive behavior. For patron safety and for protection of the collections and the facility, the recommendation has been to close the library. Ms. Fennelly moved that Robbins Library be closed on Town Day. Ms. Deal seconded the motion. The board approved.

Russell Fund Budget Update

To follow up on a question arising from discussion of the Russell Trust Fund at the last board meeting, Mr. Murphy asked John Bilafer, the Town Treasurer, about meeting the Russell Fund requirements for spending annual income from the original fund. Mr. Bilafer advised that current practice is consistent with standard banking practices. From the town perspective it is simply a processing issue. Mr. Murphy will study the trust instrument itself.

Trustee Committees

At the August meeting, Mr. Murphy had recommended that the board establish standing committees (planning, development, and public relations) and he had asked that each trustee consider on which committee he/she would like to serve as a primary or secondary person. Mr. Murphy assured the board that there would be flexibility in assignments, and commitments to a committee would not necessarily be permanent.

Long Range Planning Process

The library is at the end of the 2001 – 2004 Long Range Plan and will begin the process of creating the next Long Range Plan. Ms. Loud asked for help from interested trustees in deciding on a format for the Long Range Plan. Also, the board will consider whether including questions about the library in the next Vision 2020 survey would be useful.

Since the FY 2004 budget does not meet state requirements for state aid Ms. Loud will submit an application for a waiver. The Board of Library Commissioners requires town officials to present their case at a hearing.

On October 18 the MBLC is sponsoring a workshop on making a case for libraries in tough economic times.

Bequests

Ms. Deal asked about plans for expressing our appreciation to Mary Barry for the bequest made in the will of her sister, Evelyn Barry. The board discussed possible ways of reaching out to Ms. Barry and Ms. Deal will ask John Worden, Ms. Barry's attorney, about the appropriateness of approaching Ms. Barry.

Timeline for Trustee Projects

The timeline for trustee projects supplements the calendar, which consists of what actually goes on the agenda. Mr. Murphy asked that trustees think about this for discussion at the next meeting.

Trustee Agenda Calendar

The trustees discussed revisions and additions to the trustee agenda calendar.

Preliminary Discussion of FY05 Budget Preparation

With the agreement of the board the chairman moved this agenda item ahead of two other items.

Ms. Loud told the board that department heads would be having a meeting the following day with acting Town Manager Nancy Galkowski. At that meeting Ms. Loud expected that she would be hearing something about the budget on which we could base budget discussions at the next trustee meeting.

Town Day Booth

At the library booth on Town Day trustees will be serving on the following shifts:

9 – 11 – Ms. Fennelly and Ms. Deal
11 – 1 – Mr. Castiglioni and Ms. Radochia
1 – 3 – Ms. Ruderman and Mr. Murphy

At the booth flyers publicizing the author program will be available.

Author Program

At that time, Ms. Deal had not yet spoken with Sue Miller's agent to discuss the speaker's fee, but she will do so.

Ms. Loud said that the major press release will appear in the October 16th edition of the The Arlington Advocate. A shorter article will appear in the October 23rd edition.

Adjournment

The board moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce H. Radochia
Secretary Pro Tem.

