

Board of Library Commissioners

November 17, 2004: MINUTES

Barbara Garvey, Chair, called the meeting of the Springfield Library Board of Commissioners to order at 5:35 p.m.

Library Commissioners Present :

- Helen Boyle
- Janet Denney
- Barbara Garvey
- Vera O'Connor
- Rudy Ruggeri
- Bettye Webb

Library Staff Present:

- Emily Bader, Library Director
- Lee Fogarty, Assistant Library Director

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2004 Library Commission Meetings passed unanimously.

Library Commission Committee Reports :

Planning and Program : Ms. Webb reported on a recent meeting held with the Urban League in response to concerns raised by the Library Commission about recent statistics reflecting under usage at the Mason Square Branch. The purpose of the meeting was to develop some strategies for improving usage at the Branch as well as to address cooperation between the Urban League and the Springfield Library. Ms Webb reported that the tone of the meeting was very positive. Mr. Thomas and his staff were fully prepared to answer questions and offered suggestions for improving communications. Specific issues and recommendations discussed include:

- a. Reconfiguration of the Mason Square Branch space to create more seating and study areas.
- b. Develop procedures with the Urban League to schedule events and programs for Neighborhood Schools, daycare centers and Youth in the Reading room area of the Urban League.
- c. Issue joint public communications to the public.
- d. Ms. Bader and Ms. Williams will draft a media announcement.
- e. Specifications will be developed for a new sign on the exterior of the building. Library will purchase the sign.

- f. The Annie Curran plaque will be moved to the inside of the building.
- g. The bathroom in the Mason Square Branch is a major structural problem and the Urban League does not currently have the funds to repair it. This issue will be referred to the City Code Enforcement department.
- h. Communications between the Mason Square Staff and the Urban League staff will be improved.
- i. Parking lot sign needs to include the word library. After some discussion, it was the general consensus of the Commissioners that the Urban League should be responsible for the cost of the new parking lot sign.

A preliminary plan and budget for the Mason Square reconfiguration will be presented to the Commissioners at the January 19, meeting.

Ms. Denney reported on the on the "One Book, One City" grant. Library staff is checking with the Mayor's schedule to determine a March 2005 date for the kickoff event in the Rotunda at the Central Library. Ms. Keefe, Head of Technical Services and Collection Development, has scheduled four special events at the following locations: Forest Park, Sixteen Acres, Central Library and Brightwood. Ms. Keefe will also be planning at least 30 book discussion programs at a variety of locations throughout the city. Staff is working on getting copies of *The Color of Water* in Spanish. The Puerto Rican Cultural Center has offered to record the book on tape in Spanish.

Buildings and Grounds : Mr. Ruggeri reported on a meeting with Al Chwalek concerning parking at the Cathedral for the Central Library. Mr. Chwalek has submitted a concept to Mayor Ryan and it has been approved. Mr. Chwalek will draw the schematic for the parking lot. He is also researching an easement that the Diocese gave to the Library Association. There will be 15-20 spaces; a construction schedule will be presented at the next Commission meeting. Planning is continuing for creating 10-15 parking spaces in the vacant lot adjacent to the Liberty Branch.

Director's Report : Staffing Update: 14 vacant positions have been posted and Library administration and staff are in the process of interviewing prospective candidates.

Section 19 Budget Report: Ms. Fogarty prepared a report for the City Auditor outlining library services to Springfield Public School students. The purpose of the report is to define the value of these Library services for the City Section 19 accounting report. The value of library services to Springfield Public School students is valued at approximately 1.3 million for FY04.

Regional Reference. Ms. Bader and Ms. Fogarty attended the Annual meeting of the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System. The Springfield City Library is a Regional Reference Center for Western Massachusetts. We are currently receiving \$78,700 in funding from the Western Mass Regional Reference Center for these services.

A procedural meeting was held with the Strategic Planning Consultants to define scope of services and confirm dates for future meetings.

Ms. Garvey requested that Commission meetings be changed from monthly to alternate months on a trial basis for the next 6-8 months. Commissioners are engaged in several committees that require a significant number of additional meetings. Meetings will be scheduled for January, March, May and June. Ms. Denney entertained a motion to accept the new meeting schedule, seconded by Mr. Ruggeri. Motion Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Approved: January 19, 2005