

LIBRARY BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

May 13, 2008

- The Audit Committee reported that it had accepted the audit for FY 06-07.
- The Finance Committee met to discuss a bequest and make a recommendation on it and the endowment.
- The Nominating Committee reported that Trustees Shaw and Shapiro, whose three year terms as Company Trustees are expiring, will seek re-election by the Company for additional three year terms. Trustees McRae and Kabel have three year terms as City-appointed Trustees which are also expiring. Trustees Kabel will seek reappointment; Trustee McRae will not. The president submitted to the Mayor the name of a Middletown resident who has expressed an interest in serving as Trustee. The Nominating Committee will propose the following officers for one year terms, when the Board holds its meeting immediately following the Annual Meeting of the Russell Library Company on June 10th: President: Deborah Shapiro; Vice-President: Andrew Becker; Treasurer: Richard Kamins; Secretary: Susan Spaeth
- Notes from the May 3rd Board workshop with the State Librarian will be discussed at the June meeting.
- The Personnel Committee recommended and the Board approved a leave of absence according to Article 12 of the Union Contract. The employee's position would be held open provided she returns to work following the leave and that the position for which she has requested leave has been included in the revised City Budget for FY 08-09. During the absence, the Library will cover most of the responsibilities with Substitute Librarians and shifting of some of duties to other Children's Librarians.
- The City Council hearing on the FY 09 Budget was attended by Trustees Becker and Shapiro. As a cost saving initiative, the Library offered to eliminate Sunday service; the Council took no action at that time. At a Council meeting on May 13, electricity and natural gas costs have been removed and assigned to the Finance Department, Sunday openings have been removed, and other small reductions were made.
- The Connecticut Library Consortium approved the renewal of the lease agreement for the second floor of 234 Court Street. The new five-year agreement which becomes effective 7/1/08 provides for three per cent annual increases. The Board approved a 5 year rental agreement.
- The Health Department Grant, "Planning For Special Needs During a Disaster" has been completed as much as possible. The Director reported that a canvass of agencies yielded little in the way of evacuation resources. A balance of \$685 remains in the grant and the Health Department will permit the Library to use that money for educational resources.
- Donations: A previous donor offered additional funds for new materials in Arabic. Through the work of our Older Adult Specialist who is employed by Aetna, the Library has received a \$300 grant from the Aetna Foundation. The Library is gathering donations from the Friends and individuals for strengthening reader advisory service in the lobby.
- Personnel: A former Circulation Assistant is returning as a Substitute, effective 5/19/08.
- Trustee Activity: Trustee Nelson attended a meeting of the planned Community/Senior Center in Veterans Park and the Chamber of Commerce breakfast at which Wesleyan's President Roth spoke. Trustees Shaw and Rubacha attended a talk in Westport on the importance of libraries in our society. The speaker was Vartan Gregorian who has served as President of New York Public Library and is currently the President of Carnegie Corporation. Trustee Kabel visited Cheshire Public Library.
- The Assistant Director highlighted that he worked with office staff in reorganizing Personnel and Operation Procedures Notebooks were distributed on 4/21/08.
- The Director has completed writing a book on the Open Forum Lecture Movement.
- Calendar: Thursday, May 15, 7:30 p.m., Shenker Creative Writing Contest Awards Tea. Tuesday, June 10, 7:30 p.m., Russell Library Company Annual Meeting, Donna Baron, Executive Director, Middlesex County Historical Society, will speak on "Middletown's Historical Future." Thursday, July 3, 1:00 p.m., Naturalization Ceremony.
- The Director identified for the Personnel Committee an Administrative oversight on a staff member who had become eligible for promotion. The employee met the contract requirements to be eligible for advancement. The Board approved the upgrade and retroactive pay.