

Library Advisory Board

April 17, 2008

Members Present: Kemp Burdette, Tami Hinshaw, Eleanore Lipscomb-Warren, Conrad Luhmann, Frank Oddo, Gwen Rohler, Elizabeth Stanfield-Maddox, Paul Walker

Friends of the Library: John Danylyk

Staff Members: David Paynter, Harry Tuchmayer

Asst. County Mgr.: Chris Coudriet

Absent Members: Elizabeth Bryan, Mary Hatcher, Betty Harrison, Jacqueline O'Grady

Meeting began at 2:30 PM

PUBLIC COMMENT & AGENDA REVIEW:

The April Agenda was approved.

MINUTES:

March 2008 Library Advisory Board Minutes Approved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Marie Spencer, our AV Librarian, will be retiring soon. The Star-News recently ran an article on her in the Neighbors section. Mrs. Spencer received a very nice email from a patron complementing her on her work with the Library.

The Library Advisory Board recognized National Library Worker's Appreciation Day (April 15th) by mailing out thank you cards to the entire Library staff.

DIRECTORS REPORT:

1,500 tax forms were prepared through the VITA program. Over 2,200 individuals took advantage of this program. The stimulus package had a great deal to do with the surge in customers this year.

Recently met with RMG to finish the final draft. We will issue it contingent upon any county funding.

The Friends of the Library are looking into providing funding for prizes for the Summer Reading program.

Elsevier held a meeting today (4/17/08) at the Main Library. They are the world's leading publisher of science and health information. Elsevier serves more than 30 million scientists, students, and health and information professionals worldwide. Our Consumer Health Librarian, Alice Sheridan, will be a speaker at the meeting.

The County has implanted a new Agenda submission software, MultiAgenda. Once we have had a chance to use the program, we may find that it would be beneficial to use with the Library's other boards.

Play-A-Way is a portable audio book no bigger than a cell phone. This new product was demonstrated at the PLA conference. It is portable, like an MP3 player, but more secure from scratches & breakage. The cost is comparable to the books on CD that we are currently purchasing. The units do require one AAA battery and headphones, which the patron will have to supply. If necessary, the patron can purchase a battery and/or headphones at the cost of \$1.00 each. The Myrtle Grove branch has been selected as the test site for this product. We will purchase 150 titles to start with.

The new Courier's Van has proven to be fuel efficient. We have cut fuel cost by 20%.

FRIEND'S REPORT:

John Danylyk reported that the *Friends of the Library Board of Directors* met on April 15. Meeting highlights included the admission of a new interim Board Member, the status of our advocacy campaign, and a report on our successful Spring Book Sale,

New Board Member: John Day has joined the FOL Board and has agreed to chair the Advocacy Committee. John was inspired by our letter to the Editor of the Star-News.

Advocacy: In addition to a letter to the Editor, which ran prior to the start of the Book Sale, letters voicing the *Friends'* opposition to any cuts in the libraries budget were sent to each of the County Commissioners and to the County Manager. At the Book Sale, 988 residents of New Hanover County signed the *Friend's* petition opposing cuts in the library's budget, despite the fact that we were able to ask them only on a very irregular basis. Those petitions will be delivered to the County Commissioners. Our Advocacy campaign will get a further boost by Star-News reporter Chris Mazzolini. Chris "sat in" on our April 15 Board meeting and spoke to Library Director David Paynter, Book Sales Committee Chair Dennis Fuller, and the FOL president after the meeting to gather more information for an article he plans to submit early next week.

Book Sale: The Spring Book Sale (April 4-10) set another record: \$48,495. This is \$10,137 more than the Spring 2007 Book Sale, and \$4,181 more than our Fall 2007 Book Sale. The date for Fall Book Sale remains the same (October 3-9). Dates for the Spring 2009 Book Sale have been tentatively set for April 24-30. The Advocacy Table at the Spring Book Sale attracted considerable interest.

Membership: As of April 15, the *Friends* had 713 members, including 94 who joined and or renewed at the Spring Book Sale.

The *FOL Board* will meet again on Tuesday, May 13, at the Main Library at 2PM.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

NOMINATING –

The committee will have full report in June. The board will vote in September for the new slate of officers.

OLD BUSINESS:

Myrtle Grove: The Board would like to look at developing Battle Park and what impact that may or may not have on a new Library. The \$50,000 for the new park can not go directly to construction. David Paynter has contacted another developer who has 5 acres off of Myrtle Gardens Road.

The motion was made, and agreed to unanimously, that the Board will write a letter that the New Hanover County Board of County Commissioners consider the possibility of utilizing Battle Park for a library site if they retain the property. New Hanover County still have 6 years left to issue the debt from the bond referendum. (Conrad Luhmann will not be able to attend the next meeting, but requested that his signature be added to the letter.)

2009 Budget: A Budget meeting will be held on Monday, April 21st, to go over the recommended (draft) budget. On Wednesday, April 23rd, a meeting with all Department Heads will be held to present the budget. David will be able to outline the details of the budget at the next LAB meeting.

We do know that money for the ILS system has been reduced to \$80,000. We can only purchase additional licenses for the current system. To move forward would require a grant. Travel cuts and contracted services also required budget cuts.

NE Parking: Today there is a hearing on the parking variance. If approved, the project will go ahead in a modified form. If not granted, the project will be dead.

NEW BUSINESS:

Big Read Project: The Library is working with WHQR radio to obtain a grant for Big Read. We are linking this with “To Kill A Mocking Bird”. WHQR already has some great ideas for this project. The advantage is an opportunity to work with WHQR on a ready environment. We should hear back from them sometime this month. Phyllis Smith, our Reference Librarian, has years of experience on working on projects such as this one and will be our lead person.

Library Day: Library supporters will be gathering in Raleigh on May 21, 2008 to advocate for better funding for public libraries in North Carolina. Mr. Paynter is hoping for a large turnout from New Hanover County, especially since Julia Bozeman is sponsoring legislation to support library collections. The LAB will send a letter to Senator Julia Boseman to show their support.

The following board members will be attending Library Day: Eleanore Lipscomb-Warren, John Danylyk, Gwen Rohler, Elizabeth Stanfield-Maddox, Tami Hinshaw and

David Paynter. The group will meet at the Government Center on May 21st and leave at 7:00 a.m.

One Book One Community: We are still looking to participate with “One Book One Community” this year. The book is “Never Let Me Go”, by Kazuo Ishiguro. It is a novel that raises questions about cloning, genetic experimentation, and their consequences. We will also tie in with local universities.

Gates Grant: The grant will only be for those libraries with old equipment, not for those looking to upgrade. Our Law Libraries does qualify. Solinet contacted David Paynter and stated that we will be eligible for computers and will be giving us \$2,600 per unit.

Chambers Trust: The trust is managed by Wachovia and has approx. \$300,000 in a book endowment. We currently receive \$10,000 per year from this. We recently were assigned a new trust officer for the account. Unfortunately, we are unable to move the assets from Wachovia to the Library Foundation, which Mr. Paynter had requested.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Attachment: David Paynter’s April Director’s Report

April 2008 Library Director's Report

Harry and I both had the good fortune to attend the Public Library Association meeting in Minneapolis. Sessions dealt with marketing, building design, open source software, library administration, children's services, etc. All together there were Over 100 programs one could attend- needless to say, we didn't quite make them all. The most inspirational event was the session provided by John Wood, who wrote *Leaving Microsoft to Change the World*. Wood formed a non-profit organization, Room to Read, in order to promote literacy throughout the third world. Since its inception, Room to Read, has funded over 3,600 multi-lingual libraries and 280 schools. Our Summer Reading Club will be sponsoring a library in lieu of prizes thanks to the generosity of the Friends of the Library. I have also contacted Room to Read to see about John Wood's availability for a Library Foundation event. Harry came back from PLA very enthusiastic about developing a new service, which Mary Hatcher has been promoting, *Playaways*. A "playaway" is a portable audio book no bigger than a cell phone. We hope to have one to demonstrate at the meeting. Budget permitting, the library will provide this service at all locations in fiscal 2009.

The budget shortfall continues to be the primary issue facing New Hanover County. Revenue projections indicate that a 3 cent tax increase is necessary just to maintain departmental budgets at this year's level prior to the cutbacks. On a positive budgetary note, our reference position was filled. The library appreciates support of the Assistant County Manager, Chris Coudriet, on this issue. The library is concerned about potential cuts to its hours of operation if operational support is not maintained.

The Friends book sale was very successful. Dennis Fuller, the book sale chair, had hoped to make \$50,000 and latest figures show him very near this target. John Danylyk will provide more detail at the meeting. Apart from the book sale the library had two other very successful events. Our spring Cape Fear Camera Club exhibit was well received. The Club now has over 100 members and they credit the exhibits as sparking interest in membership. Our *Hatitudes* program with poet, Earl Bragg, was well received and participants asked us to repeat it next year. Tax returns processed at the Library now exceed 1200.

Basic library services are doing well. Library circulation continues to grow if only slightly last month (3%). Reference use in March was down at Main, but has been offset by an increase at the branches. Use of meeting space continues to be strong as is the use of the library's public access computers. Library visits are up by 33%.

David Paynter,
Director