

**Minutes of the Fort Collins Regional Library District
Board of Trustees – Regular Meeting**

**February 4, 2008
4 p.m.**

**Harmony Library – Community Room
4616 S. Shields Street
Fort Collins, CO**

FOR REFERENCE:

PRESIDENT:	Mary Atchison	217-9213
VICE PRESIDENT:	Mike Liggett	493-0361
LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	Brenda Carns	221-6670
ADMIN SUPPORT:	Cynthia Langren	221-6694

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mary Atchison
Nina Bodenhamer
Robin Gard
Shelly Kalkowski
John Knezovich
Mike Liggett
Bob Viscount

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Jacqueline Murphy
Lil Price
Larry Webber

LIBRARY STAFF PRESENT:

Jeff Barnes
Lu Benke
Carson Block
Brenda Carns
Ken Draves
Cynthia Langren
Rob Stansbury
Paula Watson-Lakamp

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Atchison called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

President Atchison declared a quorum of the board.

3. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

President Atchison stated that Ms. Murphy will have an item at the end of the agenda.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Viscount moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 7, 2008 as presented. There was a second by Trustee Gard. Trustee Gard stated that with regard to the discussion about Board Members' involvement in LMT hiring, a sentence that clarifies the intent should be added. She added that she would provide her wording to Ms. Langren. The motion carried unanimously, 6 – 0 (Trustee Liggett was not present at this time.).

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

**6. FINANCIAL REPORT – Jeff Barnes
2007 BUDGET UPDATE**

Mr. Barnes explained the document: *Budget vs. Actual December 31, 2007* that reports the District's revenue and expenditures for 2007 compared to budget and the remaining balance at 12-31-07. Mr. Barnes pointed out that these are preliminary 2007 numbers.

Mr. Barnes referred to a second document in the packets: 2007 Friends of the Library Requests/Expenditures requested by Trustee Liggett. This document reports the amounts requested and the status of spending those funds in 2007.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Brenda Carns

Ms. Carns briefly touched on some highlights of the written report included in packets, then distributed four additional documents:

- Spreadsheet of door counts and turnover rates for January 2008 and the programming stats for 2007
- Total circulation chart
- List of "How'd We Do" comments/responses for January 2008
- Calendar of Events for February

Several Board Members expressed appreciation of the return of the "How'd We Do" list and having the calendar of upcoming events.

Trustee Kalkowski stated that Studiotrope incurred about \$2,000 in costs to prepare the special presentation to the Friends of the Library. She believes this was over and above the contract for the SE Branch and suggested that the Board should reimburse the City. Ms. Carns mentioned that Studiotrope's additional billing costs that included numerous items were negotiated significantly downward by City staff. She felt that since she did not agree to pay additional

charges for the presentations by Studiotrope that it was not a billable charge that she would have authorized if discussed in advance. Therefore, she recommends we not pay this cost to the City.

Trustee Kalkowski commented that she participated in a book talk at her daughter's junior high school and expressed kudos to Diane and Sue-Ellen for their work in the Teen Program.

8. COMMITTEE UPDATES

a. HR COMMITTEE – *Trustee Gard*

Trustee Gard reported that the committee has been reviewing various Executive Director evaluations and recently discovered there is HR software available through the Internet.

A couple of employees asked about another Board of Trustees meet and greet. Since Trustees Kalkowski, Knezovich and Atchison have not met with employees yet, Trustee Gard suggested they should have the first opportunity to participate when it is scheduled. Ms. Langren will coordinate it.

b. MARKETING/PR – *Trustee Bodenhamer*

Ms. Bodenhamer reported that the committee will be meeting with Ms. Carns and Ms. Watson-Lakamp later this month to discuss a communications plan for 2008.

9. LEGAL REPORT – *Jacqueline Murphy*

a. DISTRICT/CITY/COUNTY IGA

Ms. Murphy stated the purpose of this item is to ensure that the entire board received a final, signed copy of the IGA and for purposes of the public record and asked the Board to ratify it in its final form.

There was a motion by Trustee Bodenhamer to ratify the final version of the IGA. There was a second by Trustee Gard. The motion carried unanimously, 7 – 0.

10. NEW BUSINESS

a. DDA MEMBERSHIP PROPOSAL – *Brenda Carns*

Ms. Carns introduced Mr. Steiner, Executive Director of the Downtown Development Authority.

Mr. Steiner gave some background information on the DDA and stated he isn't sure why the library and the park were not included in their district a long time ago. The only requirement for the Library District (Main Library) to become a member is to sign a petition that states the desire to be included. If the Library District comes in now, the entire

block will be included, but if the Library District waits, then only their portion of the block will be included. It does not cost anything to join.

Board comments/questions:

Trustee Liggett: Would there be any restrictions on things the District can do with the building if we join the DDA?

Mr. Steiner: No. We are not a regulatory entity. We have no say over what you do with your building unless you ask us for money. If you do ask for money, then we can impose our biases so to speak. If we're helping with a building, we will not permit the use of non-real materials. The DDA loves having the Main library downtown and the DDA would not do anything to jeopardize that.

Trustee Kalkowski: Can you explain more about Beet Street?

Mr. Steiner: A year after city voters voted down the levy for a new performing arts center and library, the board had a retreat. Someone suggested that the performing arts facility proposal should be resurrected and the group expand the vision even more. I had been to the Chautauqua in upstate New York and suggested Fort Collins try to adopt that model.

Basically, Beet Street provides the main headliner and then uses community resources to build around that. A partnership between Beet Street and the Library District would benefit both parties. Library Park could be an important addition to the effort because the facilities that Beet Street uses are supposed to be within the DDA footprint. Beet Street provides opportunities for joint programs that could save lots of valuable resources for the Library and the community.

President Atchison: What do you need from us?

Mr. Steiner: We have a template for the petition. As long as the City still has ownership, Darin will sign it, however, the Board should take a vote indicating you'd like to be included in the DDA.

There was a motion by Trustee Viscount for the Library District to go through the necessary steps to become part of the Downtown Development Authority including Library Park as part of the boundaries of the DDA. There was a second by Trustee Bodenhamer.

Discussion: Trustee Kalkowski stated that she has concerns with moving forward with this at this time due to the unknowns in the Long Range

plan. She stated she would prefer to table this item for that reason. After a lengthy discussion, *the question was called and the motion carried by a majority vote, 6 – 1.*

- b. **FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY UPDATE – *Trustee Gard***
Trustee Gard distributed a list identical to Mr. Barnes' with the exception of "2008 Requests". This year, they just approved another \$88,000, plus they still have \$25,000 unspent from last year. Therefore, the FOL will be providing \$113,000 for various programs this year. She stated this is incredibly generous of the Friends of the Library and is much appreciated by the Board of Trustees. President Atchison agreed and added that when the City was making budget cuts at the Library, the Friends is what kept the library afloat.
- c. **BOARD REIMBURSEMENT POLICY – *Jeff Barnes***
Mr. Barnes provided the current policy in the agenda packets and asked for feedback. He added that this is a starting point for the Board's request to review policies, starting with the financial ones.

The Board discussed the policy and made a few suggestions. Mr. Barnes will incorporate those changes and for Board approval next month. Ms. Murphy will prepare a document that acknowledges the Board is amending the reimbursement policy.

11. **OLD BUSINESS**

a. **COMMUNICATIONS & STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE – *Paula Watson-Lakamp***

Ms. Watson-Lakamp briefed the Board on recent activities, highlighting the following efforts:

- Meeting with local publishers to get the word out about the library and as a result, the District now has a monthly column in the Fort Collins Forum
- Working with other staff to refocus the look of the District's web site by incorporating more pictures and less text.
- Gathering statistical data for the 2007 Annual report
- Marketing work for the Summer Reading Program and the Annie Walk

Strategic Planning

The first meeting of the committee is on Thursday, February 7. There is a wall calendar in the Administration office at Main with all the important dates labeled. Board members requested that Ms. Watson-Lakamp share the names of the Planning Committee members with them.

Trustee Gard noted that the uranium forum ended up being a huge credit to the Library. Although people did have to be turned away, those folks were given a sheet of paper informing them of when the forum would be broadcast, when it would be available on DVD, etc. which helped turn a negative into a positive. She stated that everyone involved did a great job.

Trustee Viscount reported that he was present for the Harmony Birthday Cake event on Sunday which was also a success. Over 250 pieces were given out.

Trustee Knezovich stated that Front Range Community College also felt that the uranium meeting went well and that there will be some conversations in the future about incorporating some student groups into similar forums. On behalf of the Board, he expressed thanks to Front Range Community College for being so helpful this first time out and for offering to consider utilizing one of the facilities' larger rooms to accommodate more people for future programs.

Ms. Carns praised Ms. Watson-Lakamp for all her hard work and successes especially considering she's only been here for two months.

b. **MEETING ROOM POLICY – *Trustee Kalkowski***

Trustee Kalkowski asked if there is a policy on providing facilities for political or other controversial topics. Ms. Carns said that the library is neutral and offers the meeting room space to anyone for any purpose as long as there's no cost. All community groups have the same opportunity to reserve the room. Trustee Liggett requested that Ms. Murphy check into this issue and bring details back to the next meeting.

c. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT FORMAT – *Trustee Kalkowski***

Trustee Kalkowski stated that her comments at the last meeting were to find out the purpose of the Director's Report and how to figure out how the information that's in it can be most useful. Her objective is that the Board can get a better understanding of how staff is managing both efficiencies and effectiveness from the reports. She said that her comments were not meant in any way to create more burden for staff or to attack anyone's writing style.

Trustee Kalkowski reported that she recently met with Trustee Gard, Ms. Carns and Ms. Watson-Lakamp to discuss the format. She stated she would like staff to tell the Board more clearly what information they are using to justify management decisions. She would like to see some way of tying statistics to how staff budgets. As an example, she asked how does the staff know how much money to budget for teen circulation or

for DVDs? She explained that that's the kind of information she's trying to get at.

Trustee Gard added that she did query all Board members for any ideas or suggestions for the Director's report with no response. She personally would like to see numbers of programs broken out by library branch and further broken out into children, teens, and adults.

Trustee Kalkowski suggested that staff collect Director's reports from other libraries and check into books or other reference sources about how to calculate return on investments and how to look at best practices in terms of collecting and utilizing data to effectively make decisions. Perhaps staff can then bring examples to the Board on a regular basis about how they are doing that.

d. BOARD/STAFF RELATIONS – *Jacqueline Murphy*

Ms. Murphy stated that over the past year, the trustees have had a very "hands-on" approach to getting the work of the District done, clearly out of necessity. Now that the District has its feet under it, it's time to step back and examine the processes or the best way for the trustees to work with staff to get the District's work done. The board essentially endorsed a policy based governance model, which means that it is the trustees' job to formulate policy and the trustees hire staff to implement that clearly defined policy. In other words, trustees don't do the job of staff and staff don't do the job of trustees.

Another point Ms. Murphy made was that while trustees might have certain areas of expertise, it should be channeled in a proper way. She suggested that the expertise could be used to help with very clearly defining the goals for the year. Once those are established, then the Director's report can become a very important tool to share with the board each month. It can be used to show how those goals are being met. In other words, what should drive the content of the Director's Report are the Board's defined goals. She suggested that the trustees have at least a preliminary definition of their goals for 2008 and a good start is to have the Policy Governance training that was mentioned earlier.

Ms. Murphy stated that following the training, there should be a retreat for the trustees to set preliminary goals for the year that the Director that staff could address in the monthly report. When the monthly report is being reviewed at the Board meeting, that is a great opportunity to have dialogue between the trustees and staff about the status of meeting the goals. She added that this dialogue is beneficial to both trustees and staff.

President Atchison stated that she and Ms. Carns are meeting with Frank Lancaster on Friday about scheduling some training for the board with him. According to the Carver method, the board identifies the ends and the staff develops the process for getting to those ends.

There was a discussion about when it is appropriate for board members to directly contact staff and when it is not. The board agreed that if the board contact is burdensome on staff or if individual trustees have an agenda that requires activity from a staff member then it is not appropriate. Requesting information from staff is fine provided it doesn't require significant research. President Atchison added that if a board member would like a specific agenda item brought up, all they have to do is contact her.

Also discussed was the issue of the appropriateness of individual board members speaking on behalf of the board in public. Trustee Liggett clarified by sharing a general rule of thumb: Members should not predict what this board *will* do, however it is acceptable to talk about what this board *has* done in the past.

The question of whether or not it is appropriate to directly contact Ms. Murphy was raised. President Atchison stated that since the District is billed for each contact, any requests to Ms. Murphy should be emailed to President Atchison with a copy to Ms. Carns so they can manage how much expense will be involved. President Atchison stated that the ideal thing to do when needing to contact Ms. Murphy is to bring up any issues when she is present at the Board meetings.

President Atchison closed by stating that the intent of having some Policy Governance training is to have a model to look at, discuss, and decide from there what the board likes and doesn't like about it.

Trustee Kalkowski requested that if possible, the retreat not be held in March due to spring break and other conflicts with her schedule.

e. STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS/MISCELLANEOUS – *Trustee Knezovich*

Trustee Knezovich reported that he attended the State of the City address and that Mayor Hutchinson mentioned the success of the Library District formation.

He also attended a meeting in Timnath regarding the possible expansion of their urban growth area.

A recent topic has been that of Specific Ownership Tax. Trustee Knezovich stated that the bill isn't getting off the ground and that he is not concerned about it.

If members want him to stand for re-appointment in March, please email or let Trustee Knezovich know. He stated that he has given a letter to President Atchison stating his desire to renew his appointment. ***There was consensus of the board to authorize President Atchison to write a letter in support of reappointing Trustee Knezovich to the Board.***

12. ADJOURN

There was a motion by Trustee Viscount to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Trustee Bodenhamer. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Langren
Executive Administrative Assistant

Michelle S. Kalkowski
Secretary