

LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS™ OAK PARK / RIVER FOREST



Oak Park Library Board February 16, 2010

Megan V. Rose, Observer

The February meeting, held at the Dole Branch, began at 7:30 p.m. Trustees present: Guilette, Fruth, Hart, Johnson, Samuels, and Tellez. Executive Director Brennan and Assistant Director Madigan and Office Manager Rita Earle were also present. Trustee Kelenson was not present.

The Board approved January 19, 2010 meeting minutes and welcomed visitor comments. Visitors Steve Kirshenbaum and Jeff Kulay spoke to the Board regarding Oak Park's annual Book Fair. Mr. Kirshenbaum reported the 2010 Book Fair will not be hosted Oak Park/ River Forest High School for the first time in approximately two decades. The High School is unwilling to accommodate the Book Fair, as Mr. Kirshenbaum learned when he recently submitted his application for use, due to "air condition repairs" that will utilize the south cafeteria (traditionally the site of the Fair) for parts storage during the repairs. Mr. Kirshenbaum shared that in the seventeen years he has worked the Book Fair, the school accommodated the books and crowds through various remodeling projects, including one that involved asbestos removal. Mr. Kirshenbaum and Mr. Duley expressed serious concerns that a location change would result in confused annual attendees, lost opportunity for foot traffic from patrons of the nearby Farmer's Market, and a decline in book donations for the Fair (traditionally dropped off at the school in the four weeks preceding the Fair). Securing a new location at this date, while meeting those needs, would be difficult, Mr. Kirshenbaum said.

Trustee Hart called the Book Fair a "summer institution" in Oak Park, indicated the school's refusal to host was "not cooperative," and questioned whether the cited reason (air conditioning repair) was "masking a political decision as administrative."

The Board discussed the impact on the proceeds from the Fair, which go toward library events, and agreed to reach out to members of the School Board. Mr. Kirshenbaum and Mr. Duley discussed attending the School Board meeting set for February 25, 2010, to discuss the matter.

The Board next reviewed due dates for the Executive Director evaluations, approved January's disbursements, and noted that January's financial reports were under budget.

Lori Pulliam revealed the new floorplan for the Dole Branch, effective mid-April. The rearrangement will utilize more natural light, expand the Young Adult collection, provide more spots for sitting and reading, and bound the larger

Children's area by bookshelves. The change will use all existing fixtures, and accommodate the seven new computers to be received courtesy of a Gates grant.

The Board discussed revisions to the by-laws, including a provision to address Board vacancies and term limits. The final version will be adopted at the March meeting.

Assistant Director Madigan reported changes to the FOIA laws, highlighting the time to respond to a request (down to five days from seven), and that the first fifty pages of a request are free of charge. He also discussed an upcoming meeting with solar consultants to examine the feasibility of adding solar panels to Main Branch while federal money exists to support the project.

Executive Director Brennan suggested further development of the Library's technology strategy. Use of Twitter and other applications to communicate with patrons continues to be explored.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

(www.opl.org/about/board.html)