

**Cedar Rapids Public Library  
Board of Trustees  
Special Meeting – Public Hearing  
July 8, 2008**

**Board members present:** President Susan Corrigan, Vice President Doug Elliott, Maureen Engle, Phyllis Fleming, Susan McDermott and Dennis McMenimen.

**Staff and others present:** Interim Director Tam Glise; library staff members Marie DeVries (Foundation), Patricia Holderness, Chris North, Lola Shull (for the union) and Kit Wong; and representatives from the public and media.

**A. Call to order**

Corrigan announced the hearing held under Section 364.7 of the Iowa Code, regarding lease of the former Big Lots Building for use as a temporary library facility.

**B. Public hearing on proposed temporary relocation of library operations to “Big Lots” building at 2300 Edgewood Rd SW**

Marie DeVries reviewed the proposal in the Letter of Intent for lease of the 34,195 square foot property at 2300 Edgewood Road SW in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The term of the proposed lease is one year with a six-month renewal option. Rent is set at \$6.00 per square foot per year, a cost of \$17,097.50 per month. The tenant’s share of operating expenses is \$3.55 per square foot per year, an additional \$10,116.25 each month. The latter would increase by 3% under the six-month renewal option.

One member of the public addressed the Board. She explained her efforts to secure assistance for the library and offered suggestions on possible rental or relocation spaces and fundraising options.

**C. Discussion and possible action on location of temporary library facility**

It was learned today that libraries are not categorized as a service necessary for community public health and safety. Assistance from the federal government in funding a temporary location is in doubt. Further investigation will be conducted by Adjusters International on the City’s behalf. The downtown library building is cleaned out, but there are no firm answers as to occupancy.

Glise believes it is imperative that the library sustain its visibility and relevancy in the community. To accomplish this requires adequate space for the collection, staff and equipment. There is now about 20,000 square feet of material to be housed, and Westdale Mall does not currently have a space to meet our requirements.

Because of its size and location, Big Lots is a good fit for the library’s long-term plan, and remains an option, but other suitable space may become available as the local market continues to shift and readjust. Among the alternatives are to speed up

renovation of the main library while remaining in the Westdale spaces, seek less expensive rental property, or to use this as an opportunity to try out a larger west side facility.

The Board feels strongly that it must have better information on the status of the library budget and financial expectations before making this funding commitment. Glise will confer with City Management and attempt to learn the status of the library's budget. Staff can continue to gather feedback on other community models and research fundraising options.

DeVries noted the Foundation board will meet on July 9. The Foundation takes its direction from the Board of Trustees and stands ready to address specific requests on matters critical to the future of the library.

The Board meets again on July 14 to select an architectural firm and will defer further discussion and any decision until that time, when more solid information might be available.

With the backing of the Library's Board of Trustees, the Friends and the Foundation, Corrigan stated that we have the infrastructure in place to make it happen.

#### **D. Adjournment**