

**Cedar Rapids Public Library
Board of Trustees
Special Meeting – Public Hearing
July 14, 2008**

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

Staff and others present: Interim Director Tam Glise; library staff members Marie DeVries (Foundation), Patricia Holderness, Karen Johnson, Chris North, Lola Shull (for the union) and Kit Wong; Chris Schuety (Foundation); Greer Fry (Friends); library planner George Lawson; and representatives from the public and media.

This portion of the meeting was advanced to the start of the session to accommodate George Lawson's schedule.

D. Selection of architect for library building renovation

Four architectural firms were interviewed by the building committee (Engberg Anderson, OPN Architects, Substance, and Fanning Howey), and all brought significant strengths to the process. The committee recommendation is to move forward with OPN Architects. OPN is also collaborating on Cedar Rapids' downtown and riverfront development project.

Elliott made a committee motion to enter into contract negotiations with OPN Architects for the rejuvenation of the downtown library and the planning and design for a temporary library facility, with the intention of signing a formal contract for the main library and a letter of understanding for the temporary facility. Following discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

The standard city contract will be used for the downtown project. The documents will also be evaluated by Adjusters International (AI) to ensure federal government compliance. By contract, George Lawson will provide input on the downtown pre-funding design, but any involvement with the temporary facility entails a modification of his scope of services.

A. Flood recovery update

Reports are being run to determine what remains of the collection and where the items are located. Tam Glise and Karen Johnson will meet with vendors concerning an opening day collection. Relocation of the children's collection is on hold until there is space for storage. Plans are continuing to hold a grand opening for the temporary Westdale space on August 1. An upcoming staff meeting will feature EAP staff to disseminate information on dealing with personal and job-related stress in the aftermath of the flood. The library website should be fully functional soon.

There is no timeline as yet as to when an assessment team will evaluate the condition of the library building. Difficulty with an electrical transformer may leave the building without power for two months.

Elliott and Glise are invited to meet with JLG to discuss the downtown planning process, and a meeting is set this week with city finance to discuss the library's projects.

B. Foundation update

The Foundation is in unanimous agreement to sponsor the lease of a temporary facility if the federal government does not approve funding. Plans are also going forward in the search for a fundraising consultant. The organization remains committed to its support of the library, demonstrating its willingness to match these extraordinary times with measures beyond the scope of its stated mission.

C. Temporary library location update

Conversations with other flood-damaged libraries have unearthed no precedents on the funding of temporary facilities. What has been learned, said Glise, is that the recovery process is not quick and operational expenses are normally not covered. AI is investigating further.

The proposed lease on the Big Lots property is for a term of 18 months, not a one-year lease with an option for a 6-month renewal as stated in the Letter of Intent. The lease has not been reviewed by the city attorney and AI. A Letter of Intent was also received on a property on First Avenue, which committee members had toured earlier. There were several limitations, including meeting square footage needs and parking availability.

Discussion focused on the term of the lease for Big Lots, which is believed to be too lengthy and consequently too costly, and the overall expense at a time when the city budget is in flux. The objective is to resume full library service quickly, but time allowed for design, planning, construction and furnishing is estimated at up to a year for downtown and two or three months for an interim site.

Consensus favored the Big Lots property. This location dovetails with the library plan for a larger presence on the west side, while providing the operational space, access and community visibility the library needs to retain its base of support as the downtown library undergoes renovation.

Elliott moved to authorize the City Attorney to enter into negotiations for the Big Lots space, seeking flexibility in the term of the lease to begin at 6 months. Hill seconded and the motion passed unanimously, with McMenimen abstaining.

The building committee will set a date with OPN Architects for a planning session to include the committee and full board.

D. Selection of architect for library building renovation

This portion of the meeting was held at the start of the session.

E. Adjournment