

BERWYN PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

July 14, 2008 Special Meeting
Library Board Room, Riverside Drive & Harlem Avenue

Call to Order

President Deborah Cullen called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Members present: John Chrastka, Irene Martin, Eileen Pech, Jerome Pohlen and Doris Remp. Member Absent: Ann Marrone. Staff present: Director Bill Hensley, Verna Austen and Tammy Clausen. Guests: Alderman Nona Chapman, library liaison, and Thomas Edward Zeman, resident. Member Tardy: Louise Sommese, arriving at 8:01.

Public Comment

Mr. Zeman said he believes solutions to the budget shortfall are “beyond the scope” of the Library Board and must be addressed by the mayor and city council. He advocated no cuts or layoffs for the library and urged instead that staff and materials be returned to levels prior to the layoffs.

2008 Budget Cut Discussion

Director Hensley distributed a proposed list of budget cuts that would reduce operating expenses by \$83,759 and personnel by \$43,000. He said the list had been further amended to reinstate \$3,000 to the promotions line item to cover commitments already made. Thus, the 2008 library budget of \$2,044,575 would be reduced by \$133,850 to a new total of \$1,910,725.

Cullen said the cuts represented a 7 percent reduction in the budget. This was achieved through a 15 percent reduction in operating expenses to counterbalance personnel cuts and reduce them to 3 percent.

Following a discussion of possible next steps such as late payments that might be needed if the city’s financial situation worsens or if the library required major structural or system repairs, the Board adjourned into closed session to discuss the budget cuts in relation to personnel.

Closed Session

On a motion by Pech and a roll call vote, the Board entered closed session at 7:40 p.m. pursuant to Open Meetings Act Section 120/2 (c) (1) to discuss appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of employees. By invitation of the Board, Director Hensley and Aldermanic Liaison Chapman participated in the session. Trustee Sommese arrived at 8:01. After discussion, the Board reconvened in open session at 8:48 and unanimously approved these motions by Chrastka:

1. To approve an expense reduction of \$133,850 for the remaining fiscal year, comprised of \$90,850 in operating and \$43,000 in salary savings, and parenthetically, by holding positions open with a recommendation to rehire the five individuals terminated July 11 at the \$101,593 previously estimated reduction;
2. To authorize President Cullen to inform the mayor that the Library Board has taken this vote and to request that the City Council take up the library budget as an agenda item at its Committee of the Whole meeting on Wednesday, July 16;
3. To commend the staff for their hard work and judicious deliberations during these budget discussions.

Committee Meetings

The Strategic Planning Committee will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, August 5, followed by Policy at 8.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Eileen Pech, Secretary