

## Finance and Properties Committee

Meeting, May 30, 1984

### Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the Library. Present were Mrs. Jackson, Mrs. Moore, Mr. Susler, and Mr. Marshall, Chair. Also present were Mrs. Alpi, ex officio, Mrs. Rossiter, Mr. Dumas, City Librarian, and Mr. Plotzke, Executive Director of the Rolling Prairie Library System.

In his opening remarks Mr. Marshall explained that the Decatur Library was contemplating the acquisition of a standalone computer system, as Mr. Plotzke was aware, and that the purpose of the meeting was to make sure that all possibilities for accommodation within the present framework had been explored and that nothing had been overlooked in the negotiation. He asked Mr. Plotzke if there was in fact no possibility of a middle ground.

Mr. Plotzke replied that it had been his intention to solicit input from all parties concerned in the report issued by the Consultants, that this input had been received from most of the Libraries and that he was unsure of the position of the DPL with respect to the Consultants' report and to whether or not the Board was still going to meet with Hugh Atkinson. The other libraries in the cluster however had indicated a desire to get on with the expanded record and the public access catalog capability. Mr. Plotzke indicated that he felt personally that the problems anticipated by Decatur Public Library would turn out to be relatively unimportant. He is not a cataloger or a computer expert however and he felt that the questions the Board might have would be better answered by Hugh Atkinson.

Mr. Marshall asked of Mr. Dumas how important, that is how many titles would be affected by the question of authority control since ultimately it was the intention of DPL that all headings would conform to a national standard. Mr. Dumas stated that he could make no projection with respect to the number of discrepancies that would exist between the data base and the card catalog if, as had been proposed, a committee would oversee authority control of subject headings in the data base and DPL catalog staff controlled authority for the card catalogs. A problem of considerable magnitude could however be forecast with respect to the form of entry.

Mr. Marshall proposed as compromise to Mr. Plotzke the proposition that RPL defer action on the retroconversion of records in order to accommodate DPL's problems with form of entry, and that DPL experiment for one year with authority control for the data base being vested in a committee to determine the extent of discrepancy that developed between data base and catalog during that period. Mr. Plotzke again suggested the desirability of the Board discussing this question with Hugh Atkinson since he felt a mandate to move ahead on the matter and did not feel that problems existed. Mr. Marshall replied that he understood the Consultants' recommendation but that it was a process that needed to be agreed on and that he was trying to negotiate. To that end he was trying to find out whether Mr. Plotzke would defer action so that the extent of problems could be definitely established.

Mr. Dumas suggested that a measure might be had with respect to DPL acquisitions merely by establishing ratio of older headings retained due to work load to the number of headings changed. Mr. Plotzke offered to sample the data base to determine the rate of discrepancies.

Mr. Marshall excused Mr. Plotzke so that the Committee could discuss these matters and determine a course of action.

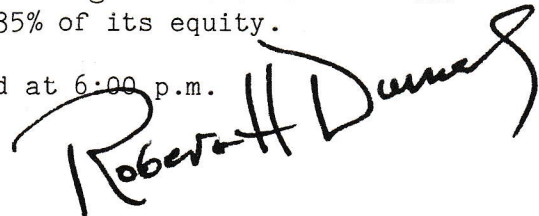
Mr. Marshall stated that he felt the future of the Library lay in cooperating with RPLS and that the Library should make every effort to maintain lines of cooperation. To that end he felt that the Library should agree for a period of one year to test the degree of problems occasioned by a discrepancy between disparate authority control in the data base and card catalog. Mrs. Moore stated that she too was for cooperation but that cooperation could exist without sharing a computer and that indeed cooperation could improve if the problem of a shared computer were eliminated. Mrs. Alpi agreed and said she thought there was a general distrust of DPL on the part of the RPLS board members. Mrs. Moore also said that there was a financial consideration to keep in mind in that the money was currently budgeted and that money to separate at the end of a trial period might not be available. Mrs. Rossiter agreed as did Mrs. Jackson who indicated that these were technical matters and that the Board must act not only with respect to this aspect but also with respect to its obligation to provide good service.

After considerable discussion, Mr. Marshall summed up the consensus of the Committee that the Library should move ahead with a standalone system.

The mechanics of the acquisition of a new system vis-a-vis the arrangement we have with RPLS was discussed. Mr. Susler expressed his opposition to acquiring the hardware at RPL. It was pointed out by others that at the price levels currently being discussed it was unlikely that RPL would elect to sell. Mr. Dumas noted that at such price level as 35% of equity he was not convinced that acquisition of the RPL hardware would be a bad thing.

It was decided that before the Board could let a contract to buy a new system, the question of disposition of Decatur's share in the present system must be settled. It was agreed that a special meeting of the Board be called as soon as possible to permit RPLS Board to make a response so that, if possible, the Decatur Board could move as soon as it wanted to act on the bid for a new system which is due June 15. It was agreed to offer RPLS the Library's share in the present system for 35% of its equity.

This decided, the Committee adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robert H. Dumas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "R".