

DECATUR PUBLIC LIBRARY
Decatur, Illinois

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING, JANUARY 31, 1964

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Decatur Public Library was held in the Board Room of the Main Library, 457 North Main Street, Decatur, Illinois January 31, 1964.

Members Present:

Mr. Hart
Mr. Burnett
Mr. Koslofski
Mrs. Stern
Mrs. Russell (late)
Mr. Sappington
~~Mrs. Nelson~~
Mr. Pilcher (late)

Members Absent:

Mrs. Pogue

Others Present:

Mrs. Hansen
Mrs. Edith McNabb
Mr. Rex Spires (newspaper reporter)
Mrs. Howe

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 PM by Mr. Francis Hart, president.

Mrs. Howe read the minutes of the November 29, 1963 meeting. As there were no additions or corrections the minutes were approved as read.

Mr. Burnett, chairman of the Finance Committee moved the bills for January be approved for payment. Mrs. Nelson seconded the motion. Roll call vote was taken. Mr. Hart, Mr. Burnett, Mr. Koslofski, Mrs. Stern, Mr. Sappington and Mrs. Nelson voted aye. Motion carried.

Bills for January 1964

Salaries:	\$16,120.71
Operating Expend.	6,482.81
Total	<u>\$22,603.52</u>

Mrs. Nelson, chairman of the Policy Committee made a report on their meeting. It was recommended the audio-visual presentation of the budget be revised and made shorter - confusing terms should be eliminated.

Mr. Sappington reported on the Heritage Committee (tourism). The group met twice, the first time to decide whether it should continue. The Mayor appointed a committee without Council approval so the Heritage Committee operates unofficially. The Illinois Tourist Commission publishes a brochure entitled "The Lincoln Heritage Trail". Cities list Lincoln lore items which may be seen in each city. To get Decatur into the booklet would cost \$300 per page. The Association of Commerce also did not give approval for booklet expenditures. However the Committee decided to continue operations and seek the \$300 elsewhere. The newspaper reported a demand for 100,000 copies of the booklet. The committee is hopeful the banks will contribute towards the project.

Mrs. Edith McNabb reported on an idea reported previously to the Policy Committee.

"The idea I had is this-- is there anything we could do to make more effective our fine library service? Maybe it would be best if we don't consider any action today on this - it is new and different, and there is no hurry. Why not think about it a bit. We have a fine library with a professional librarian at the head who has had long experience and knows what she is doing. We have a fine Board, we have a fine group of Friends of the Library. There is a lot of influence represented in the group of Friends, and I am fully aware of the fact that Friends of the Library is an important group. We have Board, Friends of the Library and the City Council. It seems whenever I think about this new idea in communication, I think that vertical communication is fine---we all need a good, strong chain of command, but the new idea and the one being stressed so much is that any successful system of communication has to have horizontal as well as vertical. We do have the vertical but do we have the horizontal? I have read that Friends of the Library in some localities were reluctant to take an active part in affairs. They were afraid they would usurp the power of the Board. I cannot conceive of that situation happening here.

"It isn't anything that is going to be done overnight - it will have to start at grass roots. If we had a sizable group--- more people than we could possibly hope to have in a small organized group as the Friends--- a sizable segment of the people of Decatur whether they are patrons or not. If we could bring into being a large group of persons well-informed about our library services, might there not be some kind of logical reasoning which would say that if we had such a group, the Friends of the Library would be strengthened. If we really had any sort of definite project we wanted to further, might it not be helpful to have a group already committed to the interest of the library?

"How to do this? I would be the first to admit I am not exactly sure how to do it. I am sure of one thing, I am sure that there is more interest in the Decatur Public Library than is being articulated.

"How to go about this--- just as a trial flight, in my own thinking, we could begin with the people who have recorded for "Decatur Reads." The people who are already committed to record for us will take us up to January of 1965. There are certainly people who are constant users of the library. All of this would probably total 450 people. It might be decreased to 300, but surely we have a nucleus of 300.

"All the obligation would be to read material sent to them from time to time. When the President of the Board and Mrs. Howe had decided the group was large enough, an organization of sorts could be developed by having members of the group nominate those whom they wish to be their officers. An executive board could consist of Mrs. Howe, the president of the Board, the president of the Friends, the officers elected by the committee and others if desired. It would be the responsibility of this group, should such a group be organized, to determine the number of communications sent to the committee together with their content.

"Is it premature if we are not going to take action on this to release it to the public? There seems to me to be a need to make articulate the needs of the Decatur Public Library in this community. Would this plan or some similar plan be effective? I am not thinking of something necessarily that would be perpetuated forever. No dues - no regularly scheduled meetings - no big job to be done. If they would be interested enough to read communications - that is all. It should be done quietly and without fanfare. Its effectiveness could not be measured for almost a year."

Mr. Sappington thought it would be worthwhile if we could get communications from the people who use the library. This would justify the committee's existence. Mr. Burnett said if the people in the group are really interested they will respond in one way or another as a result of normal procedure. He felt the idea had a lot of merit. Mrs. McNabb thought it might be a project of the Friends to back this and they might pay for the postage on the material sent out. "It will not be a success unless both the Friends of the Library and the City Council pull together. It is a common meeting ground."

After further discussion, Mr. Hart suggested that the Board might request the plan be solidified and put into a neat package. Perhaps the plan could be ready for Policy to bring before the Board by the February meeting.

Mrs. Nelson reported the League of Women Voters will have a meeting on February 11, and she will bring the library study before their Board prior to the meeting.

Mr. Burnett reported from the Finance Committee on the revised budget which Mrs. Howe prepared. Mrs. Howe commented on the new figures as being unrealistic. She reminded the Board the Council can only levy on a prior appropriation.

Mrs. Howe gave the audio-visual presentation of the appropriation request for 1964/65. She played the tape on Mrs. Frances Clarke Sayer's talk: "Young Feet on the Road." The Board members thought the two conflicted and were disconcerting. She then showed the slides without comment. The members thought the Budget Manual might be enough to send to the Council.

Mrs. Nelson moved that this presentation or one very similar to it be presented to the City Council. Mr. Sappington seconded the motion. After discussion, Mr. Burnett made a second motion, "I move that a committee of two made of the Board members of the Decatur Public Library appear before the City Council with the summarized budget. I would like to suggest Mr. Pilcher and Mr. Sappington make up the committee." Mrs. Russell seconded the motion. After much discussion as to which Board members should be present, the motion was called. All present voted aye. Motion carried. The vote on the audio-visual presentation was called. There were four ayes, one nay and two abstentions. Motion carried. Mr. Pilcher and Mr. Sappington were to have the authority to present the budget request in the manner they saw fit. An additional motion was made by Mr. Burnett and seconded by Mrs. Nelson that the committee have freedom of presentation, including audio-visual if they deem it advisable, but the content should remain the same. All present voted aye. Motion carried.

Mr. Burnett asked if the Board had to take action on the reduced budget made by Mrs. Howe. It was agreed that the original budget of \$310,278. was passed in July and this would not be reduced. The additional amount was put into the budget to procure a higher levy in August, 1964.

Mr. Sappington moved adjournment at 5:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary T. Howe
Secretary