

Unapproved

**Grace A. Dow Memorial Library  
Library Board  
Minutes  
Wednesday, August 20, 2008, 7 p.m.  
City Hall Council Chambers**

I. Roll Call

Soules called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Melissa Barnard, Maxine Brink, Sarah Galt, Tami Johnson, Kathleen Kinnish, Norm Neher, William Snover, Marilyn Soules

ALSO PRESENT: Virginia McKane, Assistant Director; John Palen, *Midland Issues*

II. New Member Introduction

Soules welcomed new board members, Tami Johnson and William Snover. Each of them gave a brief explanation of their interest in being on the board.

III. Acceptance of June 18, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Minutes approved as submitted.

IV. Additions or Changes to the Agenda

None

V. Public Comments

None

VI. Director's Report

From the Director's report, Barnard reported that the Library will be participating in "Be a Tourist in Your Town" on Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Board members are invited to volunteer for one to two hour shifts to assist staff and greet visitors during this program. The program attracts hundreds to the library and other community venues.

Barnard announced that three laptop computers were made available to the public for in-library use beginning August 4<sup>th</sup>. Since then, two to three have been checked out each day. The first hour is free, each additional hour is \$2.50. Most users have checked out the equipment for one hour.

The Summer Reading Program ended Saturday, August 16<sup>th</sup>. Barnard will provide statistics next month. Galt inquired about acknowledging area business that contributed prizes for the program. Barnard said that she will be writing a thank you letter and submitting it to Midland Daily News. Also, thank you notes will be sent to the individual businesses.

The library will close at noon on Wednesday, August 27<sup>th</sup> for a staff in-service. The Library will also be closed on Monday, September 1<sup>st</sup> for Labor Day. Sunday hours will resume on September 7<sup>th</sup>.

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Soules noted the large number of people participating in programs this summer.

Galt mentioned that the database numbers were low for June. She speculated that the school year might have something to do with the decrease. Barnard agreed that the school year does affect this number as evidenced by other non-school months. A statistical report will be available at the September meeting that will show significant increase in usage from 2006/07 to 2007/08.

### VII. Patron Compliments and Concerns

#### SIGNED COMMENTS:

1. I would like more large print books purchased. More people must read large print and many read large print because they are more convenient and faster reading. Also, I would like more Christian authors in large print.  
**There are 5600 titles in the Large Print Collection. New titles are added regularly that include a variety of genres. Staff has been alerted about the request for more titles by Christian authors.**
2. It would be very helpful if there were no books on the lowest two shelves in the large print section. Many of us have failing bodies and eyes.  
**The lowest shelf is raised from the floor and slanted. Eliminating the lower shelves would require a significant reduction in the number of books since there is not additional room to relocate the books.**
3. Although I understand the tax issue that brought about the demise of the Library Connection, I do not have internet and my only connection to the library programs is the newsletter. A great loss, I will miss your programs.  
**The Library Connection newsletter will continue to be printed and will be available for pick up at the library. The newsletter will no longer be mailed to individuals.**
4. We miss storytime and do not like the frequent interruptions. Is there a way to simplify the storytime and do it more often? Or can you bring in Children's School of Music again?  
**In addition to the variety of story times, Youth Services staff also plans programs for other age groups including teens. Combining these responsibilities with time spent on the desk assisting patrons and maintaining the collection, adding more story times is not feasible with the current level of staffing. The library does contract with storytellers for the month of January so staff can prepare for the Battle of the Books. The cost of additional contracted time is a budgetary issue.**
5. We need a drive up book return.  
**Ongoing research.**
6. I tried to get on the computer and it just kept on stalling then shut down. And I needed to get somewhere to give a friend a book and I couldn't cause I couldn't find it! And nobody was at the front desk.  
**No other reports of computers shutting down.**
7. The pleasure of being able to use computers for government responses and law and e-mail service should be a serious issue to those who live in Midland and their visitors. The computers continue to lock up and the money has issues of

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replacement. I come from a city that has top service and has more than one hour per day. I had City Council do a complete overhaul. If I need to speak to a senator I could not. I couldn't check Federal issues. Thank you please correct the issue. Visitor from Austin, TX

**Staff provided assistance to this patron.**

8. Phone call – patron requests that plastic bags be replaced with environmentally friendly product.

**The Welcome bags have been replaced with recycled paper bags. The Friends are funding a project to sell bags at the check out desk. Staff is researching possible replacements for the white plastic bags.**

9. A letter to the Board was distributed to the members at the meeting and is attached to the minutes.

### UNSIGNED COMMENTS:

1. Why is there no recycling in the main area?

**Recycling container located by computer area.**

2. New cards should be obtained at the reference desk not the check out line which causes long waits.

**The Check Out desk is always staffed with two people who do not leave the desk area. The Reference desk at times is staffed by one person and staff at this desk can be away from the desk helping patrons with inquiries.**

3. Computers are very slow. Magazine Room is too warm.

**Number of users and information being accessed do effect computer response time. HVAC equipment issues have caused temperature fluctuations in the building.**

## VIII. Old Business

- a. Board/Community Communications

Galt will provide the article for the January/February issue of the Library Connection newsletter.

- b. Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative Board Meeting Report

Soules reported that the White Pine Library Cooperative has released the Chippewa River District Library, the Pere Marquette District Library and the Coleman Library from their cooperative. The MMLC Board will vote in September on accepting these libraries in the Cooperative. If accepted, residents of these libraries' service areas will not have to pay the \$75.00 annual per person library card fee.

Soules announced that the Chippewa River District Library and the Coleman Library millage renewals were approved.

Soules shared that members received a copy of a letter sent by the American Library Association President Jim Rettig to the Democratic and Republic National Committees encouraging those organizations to support libraries and the role they play in our communities.

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The next MMLC Board meeting is September 11.

c. Library Board Annual Report Committee

The rough draft of the report was reviewed and changes were suggested. Kinnish will revise and distribute by e-mail. The report will be discussed at the September meeting.

### IX. New Business

a. Board Meeting Schedule 2009

The 2009 Board Meeting schedule was reviewed. Meetings will continue on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. with no meetings in July or December. Brink moved approval, Kinnish seconded. Motion passes.

b. Board Goals 2008-2009

Soules opened the discussion about the 2008-2009 goals by reminding the Board that they serve in an advisory capacity. She also explained that the Library Director answers to the City Manager and receives support services from other city departments such as legal, accounting and human resources. The Library Board serves at the pleasure of City Council. The duties listed in the ordinance governing the Library Board were reviewed.

Further, Soules explained that the 2008-2009 goals were developed in September 2007 in order to be included in the information provided to City Council for their retreat in January 2007. Normally, Board goals are set in the spring.

At their retreat, City Council did agree on community goals: ensure economic sustainability, provide outstanding quality of life via excellent services and amenities, and provide effective stewardship of community resources. These goals should guide the goals established by the Board.

Barnard provided information on the city's projected deficit of \$3.8 million in 2009-2010. Soules followed with reviewing the budget picture for the library in 2008-2009: staff reductions with natural attrition, reductions in expenditures, and maintaining a flat budget with the possibility of further reductions in the future.

Soules referred back to the 2008-2009 goals that may not be attainable because they are not within the scope of Board duties and require funding. In addressing the goals, Soules requested that Barnard give background information on the Library's Strategic Plan dated 2003-2008.

Barnard provided an overview of the strategic plan process and mission statement. She suggested the possibility of addressing a strategic plan and the mission statement in the future.

Soules mentioned the upcoming City Roundtable Talks that will seek input from the community on city services in light of the projected deficit. Participation by Board members could serve as a new goal for 2008-2009. Board members will be contacted by the City regarding the dates and times of the roundtables.

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With this introduction, Soules opened the discussion of the 2008-2009 goals. Members expressed the need for goals to be actionable and appropriate.

Goal 1: Increase the availability of computers and computer instruction in the library. Since the Board does not direct funding and additional funding is problematic, this goal was revised: Advise library staff and evaluate processes and procedures related to technology use and instruction at the library.

Goal 2: Seek community partnerships in order to share costs and to better meet the needs of the community.

It was the consensus of the Board that this goal had been adequately addressed in 2007-2008.

Goal 3: Fund new opportunities for youth programs.

The Board agreed that this was not an appropriate or attainable goal.

Goal 4: Fully utilize the resources of the Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative and the Library of Michigan.

This goal is being met.

Goal 5: Continue to participate in the Public Spaces initiative.

Staff will keep the Board informed so this goal was eliminated.

Two other goals were added for consideration:

- Participate in the review of the Library's Mission Statement and development of a strategic plan.
- Participate in the City of Midland Community Roundtable discussions regarding city services, including the services of the library, to provide input in identifying city budget priorities for the fiscal year 2009-2010.

Galt requested that goals 3 and 5 from 2007-2008 remain on the list for further discussion:

- Suggest innovative marketing strategies to communicate library services and programs to the community.
- Seek dialog/feedback from the community to determine needs through solicited comments.

Discussion of goals will continue at the September meeting. Soules thanked current and past board members for their work on the development of these goals.

### c. Michigan Public Library Trustee Manual

McKane is in the process of completing the Quality Services Audit Checklist at the Essential Level to obtain the Library of Michigan Quality Services Certification. One of the measures is that each Board member received a copy of the Michigan Public Library Trustee Manual. Since the manual includes information for both advisory and governing boards, Barnard noted items that are not applicable for an advisory

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board. Board members are encouraged to ask questions about any of the information contained in the manual.

The certification is not required but recommended by the Library of Michigan to examine levels of services at libraries and may in the future be used as part of the state aid funding report. Beyond essential, libraries can receive certification for enhanced and excellent.

### XI. Board Announcements

Maxine Brink announced that she has a Midland County Officers Township Association meeting on September 11<sup>th</sup>. The library will provide handouts for Brink to distribute.

Snover commented on a book, Once Upon Cape Cod, that he was able to interlibrary loan from the University of Massachusetts. Besides recommending the book, Snover was impressed with the interlibrary loan service at the library.

Soules attended the Touch-a-Truck program this summer and complimented the City and the Library on this program.

### X. Adjournment

Brink moved to adjourn. Johnson seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

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Grace A. Dow Memorial Library  
Library Board  
1710 W. St. Andrews Road  
Midland, MI 48640

August 19, 2008

The purpose of this letter is to make the Library Board aware of the Library staff's role in the life of our son, William Beacom. Earlier this month, William conducted his 90<sup>th</sup> Duck Tape Workshop at the library in Petoskey. His first was held here in Midland in December 2005. William was invited by Youth Services Librarian Becca Hastings to hold a workshop because she was aware of his hobby of making things out of duck tape. Becca met with William to help him plan the agenda. It was a success. After that event, Becca, Library Director Melissa Barnard and Assistant Director Virginia McKane told us that other libraries would very likely be interested in hiring William. Besides duck tape, the hook would be a workshop with a 15-year-old teaching other kids. They were right.

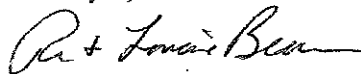
They put the word out through the library cooperative. William held over 20 workshops in the summer of '06, about 40 in 2007 and another 30 this year across the state. In addition to libraries, William has held workshops for 4-H, Parks and Recreation Departments, a Young Entrepreneurs program at Mott Community College and through one of those moments of serendipity, "The Late Show with David Letterman." He's had as few as five or six kids in a session and as many as one hundred including parents and senior citizens. He's been the subject of countless newspaper articles and has appeared on local TV newscasts.

William held a second workshop for the library here after his "Late Show" appearance in December 2006. He's met with Melissa, Virginia, and Becca for advice when he's prepared for his summer workshops.

The money he's earned is helping him pay for college. The experience he's gained has been worth even more. Our family is taking William to Northern Michigan University in Marquette this Friday. He plans to major in Entrepreneurship. He's also planning to go on tour again next summer.

We're grateful to the staff here for their encouragement, guidance, and support. Who knew that a unique hobby could lead to so much? They did. They're librarians!

Thank you,



Ron & Lorraine Beacom