

Friends of the Cambridge Public Library

Board Meeting with Trustees of the CPL January 11, 2010

Friends present: Laura Bjorklund, Judy Elstein, Martha Osler, Suzanne Pearce, Karen Price, Sue Robbins, Frances Srulowitz, Margaret Tiedemann, Hope Tompkins, Susan Twarog, Karen Kosko. *Trustees present:* Janet Axelrod, Andre Mayer, James Roosevelt. *Also present:* Susan Flannery, Director of Libraries

Judith Elstein described to the Trustees various Friends' initiatives:

- **Cambridge Voices** was published in December. It is available at Porter Square and Harvard Book stores, the Harvard Coop and Nomad. Sales at the library are brisk, More friends are needed for weekend sales. Sales of 823 books will be the break-even point for the project.
- A completed poster advertising *Voices* was shown at the meeting, and will be distributed to the bookstores and around the Library. Susan Flannery asked to receive a PDF of the poster for the Library website.
- Karen Kosko said that a meeting would be held within the week to plan for authors to come to the library for a special launch of the book.
- The **docent program** has begin in response to great public interest in the building. Twelve women are currently in the program, most of them Friends but not all are board members. Trial tours begin in February: three tours per week. Each tour will conclude at a desk where Friends' materials can be distributed or sold.
- **Membership drive** The January issue of *On and Off Broadway* features a letter on the front about the Friends. A renewal letter will be mailed in January. Our hope is to double our membership. Over 100 people have recently renewed.
- **Events program** We are looking for tie-ins to *Voices*, and investigating films, community events. **The Secret Gardens** tour is set for June 13. We need to focus on activities for the "off" years – i.e., when garden tours are not happening. An art show, format to be determined, is under discussion. A used book sale was suggested, and Janet Axelrod emphasized the success of children's books at used

book events. (King Open collects children's books during the year and then holds a parent-run book giveaway in the spring.)

Janet Axelrod commended *Cambridge Voices* — and that the new building was opened! She spoke of the success of the related dessert-and-tour event, acknowledging the help of Susan, Judy, and Martha.

Andre Mayer proposed, and the board members seconded, resolutions (1) thanking the staff of the library for their help and forbearance during the upheavals associated with the library construction and (2) congratulating Susan Flannery for her magnificent efforts on behalf of the project.

Susan Flannery reported on various matters, including budgetary guidelines from the City for the new fiscal year.

- The state's library regions are being consolidated. Cambridge relies on the delivery service to the regions that are funded by the Commonwealth and is "our lifeblood." The regions coordinate bids for library acquisitions and supplies. These are important services to the Cambridge Public Library.
- There have been large circulation increases since the re-opening of the library. Circulation in November was up by 13,000 over the previous year; in December the figure was 25,000 more than in '08. Also in December, self-checking represented 17% of circulation. Some of the increase could be due to the economic downturn, with people reading, borrowing and using the wireless Internet connection in the library rather than elsewhere. (She also noted the wide diversity of wireless users.)
- The library is receiving 10-20 phone calls daily requesting room bookings. In January and February the library will begin reserving rooms for meetings of city departments and agencies only. Security challenges need to be addressed and a policy drafted before they are available to community groups.
- The Collins branch may not be ready for reopening until after school vacation week.
- David Shaw in Circulation is retiring.

Susan Twarog reported on the **10th Anniversary Garden Tour**.

- A celebratory event preceding the tour might include gardeners from past and present tours as well as past and present Friends' board members.
- Anyone with suggestions for gardens to be included in the tour should get in touch with Susan T.

Grow Native Cambridge, with a focus on gardens and growing native vegetables, will hold a special event at the library on June 10. We should have information and tickets to the tour, as well as copies of *Voices* and *Gardens* available to sell there.

A desk for the various transactions (sales, memberships, publicity) of the Friends of the Library will soon be placed in the main library. A case for displays will also soon be available.