

## Minneapolis Public Library

The mission of the Minneapolis Public Library was to link people in the City and beyond with the transforming power of knowledge. An essential public institution for the active exercise of democracy and intellectual freedom, the library helped work toward a future where:

- people of all ages successfully navigated information for work, study, and play;
- the City, its businesses, and residents prosper;
- each library is a vital center in dynamic and diverse neighborhoods;
- cultural life is rich and varied;
- literacy is widespread; and
- everyone is enlivened by the joy of discovery, reading, and lifelong learning.

A 2003 study that ranked cities of 250,000 or more population in five different categories named Minneapolis the most literate city in the U.S. The Library Board began an extensive public participation process in Spring 2003 to chart a course for the Minneapolis Public Library (MPL) for the next three years. Heard consistently throughout this process was that people value the libraries, wanted to keep them open, and were willing to do what they can to support them. To respond to this feedback in the new environment of reduced public funding, the Library Board took measures to restructure staffing, hours, and operating expenses to accomplish:

- library service at all community libraries, Central Library Marquette, and Bookmobile;
- a balanced budget for 2004-06 responsive to MPL's mission and vision;
- a successful launch and adequate staffing for the New Central Library when it opens in 2006;
- all capital improvements planned for the 14 community libraries; and
- positioning the library for rebuilding system excellence in the future.

The library system served people through: the Central Library in downtown Minneapolis; 14 community libraries spread throughout the City; two technology centers and one literacy center; a bookmobile that visited more than 30 neighborhood location; reference service by phone and email; and 24/7 access at [www.mplib.org](http://www.mplib.org) to search the catalog; request and renew materials; link to search engines, databases, online periodicals, and book clubs; and visit Web for Kids and Web for Teens with links to activities and homework help.

### *Library Board and Administration*

The library was governed by an independent Board of Trustees. Six are elected at large for four-year terms and two are appointed for two-year terms, one by the Mayor and one by the City Council:

#### **Library Board 2003**

Laura Waterman Wittstock, President (*appointed by Mayor*)

Rod Krueger, Secretary (*elected at large*)

Anita S. Duckor (*elected at large*)

George A. Garnett (*elected at large; resigned August 2003*)

Gregory Gray (*appointed by the Board in October to fill unexpired term of George Garnett*)

Diane Hofstede (*elected at large*)

Virginia Holte (*elected at large*)

Kathleen M. Lamb (*appointed by City Council*)

Laurie Savran (*elected at large*)

The Library Board was responsible for overseeing the establishment, management, and maintenance of public libraries in the City of Minneapolis and had the authority to levy a tax for the support of the library system. The Board also appointed the Director, who administered and

coordinated the operation of the library within the basic goals, objectives, policies, and principles approved by the Library Board. On February 20, 2003 the Library Board selected Katherine G. (Kit) Hadley to be the 11th Director of Minneapolis Public Library. Ms. Hadley was most recently the Commissioner of the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA), where she provided cabinet level leadership under Governors Carlson and Ventura from 1994 to 2003. Jan Feye-Stukas, Acting Director since January 2002, returned to the post of Associate Director when Hadley assumed the Directorship on March 1, 2003.

The Library Board's 2003 budget was roughly equal to that of 2002, limited because the City-wide property tax increase was capped at 8%. This necessitated closing three additional holidays, two long weekends, and the full week of August 25-September 1, 2003, an action unprecedented since 1933. Also due to budgetary cutbacks, the Municipal Information Library in City Hall, established in 1972 through the cooperation of the City Council and the Library Board, closed in March; the librarian and portions of the collection were transferred to Central Library. On March 25, the Library Board was required to further reduce its 2003 Operating Budget by approximately 10%, due to anticipated cuts in Local Government Aid from the State of Minnesota. This reduction was accomplished by enacting one-time cuts, including reducing the personnel budget and deferring building repair projects and computer upgrades.

In April, the Board initiated a public participation process that resulted in three potential scenarios for delivering library service under a severely reduced budget. After extensive community input (received through an online survey, written comments, and at public meetings), the Board forwarded a 2004 budget that retained service at all libraries, with reduced hours, staffing, programs, and services. The 2004 budget adopted in November, 2003 was set at \$18.5 million, approximately 20% less than the already-reduced 2003 budget of \$22.9 million.

In order to accomplish MPL's goals and meet the City's information needs, the Director initiated an administrative reorganization that reduced the number of administrators and realigned staff into four Divisions: Patron Services, Collection & Technical Services, Library Operations, and Community Partnerships & Development. In place by October, the new management team cooperated to reallocate staff and make the necessary cutbacks through lay-off of approximately one out of every four positions by year's end.

### *Central Library*

December 2003 marked the first full year of operation at Central Library Marquette, the interim downtown library at 250 Marquette Avenue. Due to the unfamiliar location, reduced hours, and portions of the collection being in long term storage, usage showed an overall decline from 2002, but was on the rise again by year's end. A series of "Getting Down to Business" workshops in the Fall drew in new users as it highlighted the Central Library's extensive business resources. Meanwhile, the New Central Library Project moved forward, on budget and on schedule. Highlights in 2003 included:

- The demolition of the 1961 Central Library and the start of construction for the new library, opening in 2006;
- Opening the 1959 time capsule in a public event focused on urban renewal;
- A groundbreaking celebration on May 20, 2003 to mark the construction startup milestone; and
- A process to select artists for public art projects in the new library, and a public event in November to preview the artists' designs.

### *Community Libraries*

Minneapolis' community libraries were thriving centers of community gathering and lifelong learning. They provided access to the entire library collection as patrons requested materials for pickup at their nearest library. They also were places for neighborhood meetings, book clubs, free public computers, homework help, and more. Continuing its commitment to complete capital improvements at all 14 community libraries by 2010, the Library Board reached the following milestones in 2003:

- The start of restoration and redesign at the historic Sumner Library on the near north side, with an expansion and new main entry, designed by KKE Architects, commencing in April;
- The May approval of design development for renovation of Franklin Community Library by Meyer Scherer & Rockcastle Architects, with the library closing in August and, thanks to a community fundraising initiative, the opening of interim service next door in October; and
- The May 31, 2003 grand opening of the new Pierre Bottineau Community Library, replacing a former storefront location with a 12,000 sq. ft., accessible, state-of-the-art library, located in two reclaimed buildings plus a new wing in the historic Grain Belt campus in northeast Minneapolis.

### *Partnerships*

MPL collaborated with a number of organizations and institutions in 2003 to enhance programs and outreach. The Minnesota Twins Community Fund sponsored the Summer Reading Program kickoff at Central Library Marquette in May. CONNECT/US-RUSSIA hosted a June visit from a group of librarians from Moldova. Marshall Fields piloted a new community service program, *Field Trips*, providing third grade students with arts experiences enriched by books and music from the library.

The American Library Association partnered with the National Institute of Child, Health and Human Development as one of 14 libraries participating in a nationwide study on early literacy. Through its "Neighbors Supporting Neighbors" initiative at City Center, Brookfield Properties supported displays about the New Central Library and support to The Friends of MPL for the New Central Library Capital Campaign. Minneapolis Public Schools assisted with deposit collections, class visits to the library, and librarian visits to schools. The Friends of Franklin, an ad hoc advocacy group, took on the challenge of raising operating funds for the Franklin interim location.

The Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board funded the library's Homework Helper program, in its 10th year of supporting student success. The Minneapolis Institute of Arts provided classroom support materials in conjunction with the Touring Exhibition of "George Washington: A National Treasure." Minneapolis MOSAIC, a project of the City of Minneapolis and the office of Mayor R.T. Rybak to celebrate the arts and cultures of the city, participated with programs and a resource list. The Minnesota Board on Aging sponsored Senior Surf Days, helping seniors learn to surf the Internet. Hennepin County Medical Center and Friends of Libraries USA collaborated in Verizon's "Books for Babies" program, which distributed books and library information to parents of newborns.

### *Grants and Gifts*

Through the generosity of lead donors and many others, the New Central Library Capital Campaign conducted by The Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library met its goal of reaching \$7 million in private support by the end of 2003, nearly halfway to the overall target of \$15 million. The Friends also received a \$250,000 capital grant from the Cargill Foundation to fund the addition of a community room as part of the Sumner Library restoration/redesign project.

Other funding supported and enhanced library programs and projects in 2003:

- \$10,000 procured by Hennepin County Community Health Department to support *Libraries Plus You*, a truancy prevention project that placed students for six hours of community service in a library of their choice;
- \$31,000 from the Youth Coordinating Board for the 2003-04 Homework Helper program,