

**Minutes
Special Meeting of the Board of Directors
of Hartford Public Library
12 August 2008**

A Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of Hartford Public Library was held on Tuesday, August 11, 2008.

Present: Jo Champlin Casey, Gregory Davis, Stephen Goddard, William Large, Jackie Lilly, Thea Montanez, Brad Noel, Cynthia Reik, Paul Shipman, and Geraldine Sullivan.

Absent: Enid Rey, Romulo Samaniego, Annette Sanderson and Carlos Valinho.

The meeting was called to order by President Geraldine Sullivan at 12:10 p.m.

The chief librarian introduced Matt Poland, the new deputy administrator.

The special meeting of the Board of Directors was called for the purpose of discussing the following resolution passed by the Court of Common Council on Monday, August 11, 2008.

President Sullivan welcomed the visitors and asked everyone in the room to introduce themselves. She stated that it has been an incredible process and said the chief librarian should be proud of the validation of the good work the library has been doing. She thanked the community for the important role they have played and Councilman Deutsch for keeping the ball rolling and presenting the resolution that prompted the solution. She asked Greg Davis to report on the activities at the council the previous evening.

Davis gave a full report on the conversations and small meetings that took place discussing what might be done with an additional allocation of \$200,000. The council wanted all branches open in time for the start of school on August 25; he said that everyone was looking to make it happen.

Following the conversation Councilman Ken Kennedy presented a resolution; a small amendment was added by Councilwoman Veronica Airey-Wilson and the following resolution was passed unanimously by the Court of Common Council late Monday evening.

Resolved, That the Court of Common Council shall allocate from the city budget for the fiscal year 2008-2009 to the Hartford Public Library provided that the Mark Twain and Blue Hills library branches are open no later than August 25, 2008 with hours consistent with other library branches.

Davis said it was a good night for the city, an excellent civics lesson, where people put aside their differences and mediated a solution. He said like all good mediations, no one is happy but you know you have done a good job.

Chief Librarian Louise Blalock was asked to outline a concept for neighborhood library service based on the additional allocation.

Blalock provided an overview of a concept that will ensure a fair and equitable solution throughout the neighborhoods. The library will reduce hours at all branches effective Monday, August 25.

The three cluster lead branches will maintain their current hours Monday through Friday as full service branches. Six satellite sites - Mark Twain, Blue Hills, Park Street, Barbour, Dwight, and Camp Field - will be open Monday through Thursday, 2:00 – 6:00 p.m. and Friday, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. These locations will be staffed with a focus on afterschool youth services. All branches will be closed on Saturdays. The Downtown Library will remain open six days at the current schedule and on Sundays from October through May.

The senior staff is working on the new schedule and the new staffing model for the reopening of the two branches and the change in hours throughout the system. In order to accommodate these changes, staff will be redeployed and 4.25 FTE will be called back. With implementation on a fast track, it will be possible to open on the first day of school, August 25.

President Sullivan reminded everyone that this does not solve all the problems; that the mayor is interested in strong consolidation of city services; and the council president is ardent about the library being a city department and the budget will be worse next year. These will be very tough times for the city.

The board asked questions; shared their opinions and thoughts on the on the proposed concept; and acknowledged hard work will need to be done to find a long term solution for stable library funding.

Action: A motion was made, seconded and approved to authorize the chief librarian to move forward with the proposed plan to re-open the Mark Twain and Blue Hills library branches with the supplemental \$200,000 appropriation dated August 11 by the city council in accordance with the conditions set forth in the attached resolution.

Greg Davis clarified that he would like the council to be informed of the plan for re-opening the branches and that there be ongoing conversations about the library's funding needs.

The president invited comments from the community; Councilman Larry Deutsch, and several community members spoke.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Louise Blalock, Acting Secretary