Board of Trustees
July 28, 1953
(moved up from July 31)

The regular meeting of the Board was called to order at 4:00 o'clock.

Members present: Mr. Felts, who presided until Mr. Hull's arrival, Mr. Hull, Chairman, Mrs. Gage, Mrs. Bailey, Mrs. Ridgley, Messrs. Blackford, Felts, Gore and Rollins (the latter present at his first meeting since sppointed). Mr. Schroeder, also new, was out of town.

Mr. Walter Stone and Mr. Ernest Reece of the Library School faculty, University of Illinois, were present to discuss with the members the possibility of a survey of the library system.

Mr. Felts gave a brief background of the project stating that it had been started by an inquiry into the wisdom of closing the Evans Branch and adding another Bookmobile or of continuing and building up the Branch.

Mr. Hull asked the visitors if they would explain some of the things to be covered in a survey.

Mr. Stone mentioned the relationship of the Bookmobile to the neighborhood, e.g., occupations, economic background and education of the people; location of the Branch in relation to residential areas who use it; relationship between the Branch librarian and the library director; where the processes such as cataloging are done; the background of the staff (are they appropriately cast in the rolls of service in which they are placed?); the children's work; finances of the Branch in relationship to its service and to the whole system; the actual conditions under which the Branch operates; the possibility of Bookmobile stops.

Mr. Reece explained that one person would have the job of directing the thinking of the survey team in order to get what the Trustees want out of it. There would be a good deal of visiting in Decatur by the surveyors - here and at the Branch and throughout the neighborhood. The team would gather statistics, personnel records and correspondence, ledgers, book stock, services to groups such as business and industry, and public relations.

Mrs. Bailey asked if there were any place between the situation at present and the actual survey which would give the Board the answers they seek.

Mr. Blackford wondered if a town of this size needed a Branch.

Mr. Felts thought that with only $300.00 difference between a survey of the Branch and the whole system the Board would be getting a great deal for a small sum by taking the whole survey.

It was Mrs. Gage's opinion that with a survey report the Board would have something as a definite guide for future development which is especially important because of the lack of continuity in the Board membership.

Mr. Stone mentioned that surveys are often made through the American Library Association who assigns a librarian of reputation to conduct it.

This is more in the nature of a one man project and carries more expense since the surveyor receives compensation.

Mr. Felts observed that a survey by the University of Illinois would have a great deal of meaning to Decatur tax-payers.

Mr. Hull asked if the survey would be an official University of Illinois survey or a survey by individuals. Mr. Stone replied that the survey would be by contract with the University of Illinois. Since the Board is not interested in publication, the survey would become the property of the University which would hold the right of publication. The Board, however, would be given assurances that nothing detrimental fo the library would be made public. The contract wording would be according to the Board's request.

Mr. Stone and Mr. Reece retired to permit Board discussion.

After a lengthy discussion the motion was made by Mr. Blackford, seconded by Mr. Felts and unanimously passed by roll call that such a complete survey be made and that Mr. Stone and Mr. Reece ask the University to submit a contract, the expense not to exceed $750.00.

Mr. Hull explained this motion to the visitors when they were recalled to the Board Room.

After they had left the minutes of the meeting for May 22nd were read and approved.

The minutes of the special meeting for June 8th were read and approved.

The motion was made by Mrs. Ridgley, seconded by Mr. Rollins and unanimously passed that bills for June - maintenance, $2531.32; salaries, $5708.54; total, $9714.87; and bills for July - maintenance, $3258.36; salaries, $5770.17; total, $9028.53 be paid.

The Librarian's report for June was examined and ordered filed.

The Librarian was instructed to call a meeting of the Building and Grounds Committee to take action regarding the repair of the exterior of the main building.

A discussion took place regarding the purchase of an electric buffer for the building staff. The motion was made by Mr. Rollins, seconded by Mr. Felts and unanimously passed that the Librarian investigate the possibility of renting a buffer from another agency and if this was found to be impractical, to purchase one.

The Librarian reported that there was a situation in the janitorial staff which should be corrected. She asked the Board if she was to correct this or if the Board wanted to review the situation. After a brief discussion the Librarian was told to clear the matter up.

Mr. Hull reported on the visit he and the Librarian made to City Hall where they discussed the budget for 1954 with the Mayor and Mr. Merris. Both officials had assured him that collection fees would not be deducted from the 1953-54 budget or from the 1954-55 budget. Mr. Merris gave this year's appropriation as $101,832.82 less cost and losses which he believed would average about 5%. The Board, therefore, could expect about $96,741.18 for the current year.

It was reported that Guy Ballard had been appointed Head Janitor on May 28th, that the roof had leaked during the last rainstorms in the Lincoln Room and the office hallway, that two library tables had been sold to the Masonic Temple for $20.00.

She asked permission to buy one or two fans to relieve the intense heat in the building. No action was taken.

The Librarian reported that she had just learned of the death of Miss Garrett's mother. The Trustees made arrangements to send flowers.

It was agreed that the Librarian was to call an early meeting in August upon receipt of the survey contract.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 o'clock.

Respectfully submitted,

Muriel E. Perry

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Secretary

MEP/gh