

Special Meeting
Royal Oak Public Library Board of Trustees
Minutes of May13, 2008

Trustees present: Dave Palmer, President; Nancy Hollyer, Secretary; and Trustees Ronald Halstead, Frank Houston, Joan Koelsch and Kenneth Rosen.

Trustees Absent: Christopher Ahn, Vice President; Amy Schell and Lauren Wolfe.

Also present: Director Metta T. Lansdale, Jr. and Library employees

Guests Noted: Eric Hayes, Library Technology Coordinator

I. Call to Order

President David Palmer called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. after the Library Director provided an informal overview of the correction of the problem with the Library ceiling tiles.

II. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted as distributed.

III. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

IV. Report of Internet Access Committee – Ken Rosen, Chair

K Rosen reviewed the activities of the Internet Access Committee at its two meetings on May 1st and May 8th, which included

- Examination of filtering product options, costs and capabilities
- Investigation of the concerns around “unblocking” on request
- Discussion of capabilities for application to the wireless network

K. Rosen offered a MOTION on behalf of the Internet Access Committee that the Board adopt the distributed “Resolution of position regarding the Royal Oak Public Library Internet and Computer Access Policies”. After friendly amendments to the resolution were accepted by the Committee the Motion was APPROVED by all present and reads as follows:

Royal Oak Library Board
Resolution of Position Regarding the Royal Oak Public Library Internet and
Computer Access Policy

WHEREAS, there have been significant concerns raised regarding the internet and computer use policies in place at the Royal Oak Public Library as they relate to minors and access to sexually explicit content and images;

WHEREAS, the Royal Oak City Commission, out of concern for the public wellbeing, has drafted an ordinance intended, “TO REQUIRE THE ROYAL OAK PUBLIC LIBRARY TO RESTRICT A MINOR’S ACCESS TO THE INTERNET BY RESTRICTING TERMINALS FROM RECEIVING OBSCENE MATTER OR SEXUALLY EXPLICIT MATTER THAT IS HARMFUL TO MINORS” ;

WHEREAS, the Royal Oak Public Library has time-tested policies in place to actively discourage use of the internet and/or computers to access sexually explicit, illegal and other inappropriate content and images, and prevent viewing of any such materials by minors including:

- Creating separate adult, teen, children and database computer sections of the library;
- Placing filters on all teen and children computers;
- Requiring Library staff to grant access to database computers by children with their parents/guardians; and
- Library staff actively monitoring all computer areas for potential violations;

WHEREAS, the Royal Oak Library Board has requested and/or enacted several new policies that have been successfully implemented to ensure that sexually explicit and inappropriate materials and use of the computers at the Royal Oak Public Library be prevented through:

- Library Staff limiting use of the computers to Library Card holders, including patrons with a Royal Oak Library Cards and visitors with permanent guest cards;
- Library Staff requiring identification of the visitor before granting a permanent guest card;
- Library Staff preventing minors from the Adult Computer Lab regardless of if they are accompanied by an adult;
- Regularly communicating with the Library Director as to the effectiveness of our priorities;
- Modifying policy to provide for the constant presence of Library staff in the adult computer lab; and
- Institution of an Internet Access Committee

WHEREAS, the Library administration has taken the initiative to develop a process for authenticating registered users as a condition of access to the wireless network, thereby extending the requirement for identification to users of the wireless network;

WHEREAS, the "Royal Oak Public Library Code of Conduct " clearly prohibits, "improper use or abuse of Library materials and equipment," "engaging in sexual acts or behaviors or indecent exposure," and "harassment, intimidation or threat of any person by word or act;"

WHEREAS, the Royal Oak Public Library staff are currently enforcing a zero tolerance policy whereupon users of inappropriate web sites are asked to shut them down – enforcement of which may include police being notified;

WHEREAS, the vast majority of public comment has supported the Library Policies that are in place and indicate overwhelming opposition to placing additional filters on adult computers;

WHEREAS, the Royal Oak Library Board suspects that the before-mentioned proposed ordinance will result in costly new technologies to be purchased out of the Royal Oak Public Library budget and will fail to prevent sexually explicit and inappropriate images from appearing on Library computers as well as personal laptops that are brought into the Library by patrons;

WHEREAS, the Royal Oak Library Board believes the current policies and monitoring practices by Library staff are properly being utilized and enforced by the Library staff;

WHEREAS, the Royal Oak Public Library was established pursuant to the Charter of the City of Royal Oak and the Royal Oak Library Board has been vested with ultimate authority and responsibility for governing, controlling and monitoring the business and affairs of the Royal Oak Public Library;

WHEREAS, the Royal Oak Library Board reviews all Royal Oak Public Library policies in an ongoing fashion as pursuant to the responsibilities entrusted in the Charter of the City of Royal Oak;

WHEREAS, the Royal Oak Library Board is committed to the Royal Oak Public Library mission of being an informational, intellectual, cultural and recreational resource for all people; to inspire the spirit, educate the mind, and be a center of community pride;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Royal Oak Library Board hereby requests the Royal Oak City Commission to table or reject the before-mentioned Ordinance;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Royal Oak Library Board requests the Mayor of Royal Oak with the consent of the City Commission to appoint at least one member from the Commission to serve on the Library Board committee regarding internet access issues;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Royal Oak Library Board supports the Library Director and Staff's recommendation to explore other filtering options for the children's, teens' and adults' computer sections of the library; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Royal Oak Library Board opposes filters being placed on computers designated for serious research.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM

Nancy Hollyer, Secretary