Minutes from University Library Committee 1/20/2015

Present: Karl Broman, Chair (Biostatistics and Medical Informatics), Darcy Little (Latin American, Caribbean and Iberian Studies Program), Joan Weckmueller (Classified DoIT), Ron Harris (English), Nilay Vaish (student representative), K-Sun Kim (SLIS), Allison Kaplan (SLIS), Josh Calhoun (English), Cecile Ane (Botany and Statistics), Dan Klingenberg (Chemical and Biological Engineering), Mary Trotter (Theatre & Drama), Ed Van Gemert (GLS, Ex-Officio), Phillip Braithwaite (VC for Administration), Alan Wolf (CIO Office), Steve Barkan (Law), Anna Lewis (MERIT Library), Michael Enyart (GLS, non-voting member), Natasha Veeser (GLS), Doug Way (GLS), Jeanette Casey, (GLS), Lisa Wettleson (GLS), Maria Saffiotti Dale (Friends of the UW-Madison Libraries; Chazen Museum of Art), Lesley Moyo (GLS).

Karl Broman, Chair of the University Library Committee (ULC), opened the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves. There was a motion to approve the minutes from the last ULC meeting on October 14th. The motion passed. K. Broman then asked Ed Van Gemert to proceed with the agenda for the meeting.

E. Van Gemert stated that there is a good deal going on in campus libraries. He thanked Maria Saffiotti Dale, President of the Friends of the UW-Madison Libraries and Curator of Paintings, Sculpture, and Decorative Arts at the Chazen Museum of Art, for attending. He mentioned that he could not remember the last time the President of the Friends visited the ULC and gave an overview of what the Friends do for the UW-Madison Libraries. He then asked her to elaborate on what the Friends do and noted she will also be asking the ULC for assistance.

M. Saffiotti Dale said the Friends of the UW-Madison Libraries group was founded in 1948 and is currently one of the oldest organizations of its kind in the country. Currently there are 16 volunteer board members composed of former University employees, academic staff, community members, student representatives, and library staff. Their essential purpose is to support the UW-Madison Libraries.

A few years ago the Friends received an endowment of $1,000,000 from Douglas Schewe. The guidelines of the endowment were to support print culture and print materials. The Friends has a “broad definition” of what that means and it has allowed the Friends more flexibility. Prior to that endowment, most of the Friends’ income came from the annual Book Sale that usually yields about $20,000 annually. Those proceeds combined with the funds from the Schewe endowment mean the Friends have more resources to support acquisitions, preservation, special events focusing on the wonderful collections of UW-Madison Libraries, and special projects that assist scholars in furthering knowledge using those same collections.

The Friends have two grant programs that have been in existence for many years. The first program is Grants-to-Libraries, a competitive program open to all bibliographers and selectors of campus libraries that awards grants are in the areas of acquisitions and preservation. Applications are submitted to the Friends who then review the applications and award up to $1,200 per recipient. The Friends receive about 30 to 40 of these grant applications per year. Often these grants allow the awardees funds for material or preservation services that would be
beyond the buying power of their budget. Some of these awards go to the smaller libraries and smaller programs that do not have much in the way of a budget. The preservation grants have allowed preservation treatments and equipment (hydrothermographs) to be purchased. The Friends work closely with Doug Way to insure that the bibliographers and selectors are aware of these opportunities.

The second program is Grants-in-Aid, a competitive program which helps fund the travel expenses of scholars wanting to use the UW-Madison Libraries (scholars must live outside of a 75-mile radius of Madison). These grants have enabled a number of scholars to travel to UW-Madison to use the important special collections of UW-Madison Libraries, such as a young African scholar from Kinshasa who came to do research using the collection of African materials that Jan Vanzina built on this campus. In this particular case, the grant provided professional academic assistance but also was inspirational for the scholar who got to meet J. Vanzina.

E. Van Gemert said such a story reinforces the need to invest in and maintain special print collections even in this day of electronic collections. M. Saffiotti Dale spoke about how the acquisitions grants allow the UW-Madison Libraries to collect specific print resources that were rare even at the point of time of publication. There are short time frames to acquire these rare and important print resources.

The Schewe endowment allowed the Friends to expand their contributions to UW-Madison Libraries. The Friends set up 3 “block grants” in the areas of acquisitions, preservation, and collaboration. These block grants are in the amount of $15,000 for each area. The collaboration grant guidelines are still being defined. In the recent past some of these funds have allowed bibliographers to travel to various parts of the world to acquire local print material for UW-Madison Libraries.

Special events are one of the other major activities that the Friends supports including lectures, displays, and the like. It is interesting that sometimes a straightforward request has the potential to advance scholarship on campus. An example of this sort of serendipitous occasion was an event to celebrate the conservation of Deutscher Sprachatlas that was in Der Rathskeller in Memorial Union. This publication charts all of the German speaking people throughout the world. Preservation staff and other German scholars gathered to talk about this major work, and it was in the midst of students going about their everyday life.

M. Saffiotti Dale then went on to talk about the workings of the Friends. The Friends schedule about nine meetings a year (none in December, June, and July). There are six to seven working committees, and it is all volunteer. Currently there are 16 board members. Below are some of those committees:

- Publication
- Finance
- Grants
- Special Events

- Book Sale
- Finance
- Membership
M. Saffiotti Dale on behalf of the Friends is requesting the assistance of the ULC in recruiting current faculty to serve on the Friends Board of Directors, and especially to serve on the grant review committees. The Friends feel that current faculty input is important for they know the current state of affairs in various disciplines, other grant opportunities, regulations, and practices. Faculty have the knowledge and background to evaluate these grant requests and to publicize the benefits of those grants. The Friends have had active faculty in the past but at this time there is no one on the board that has that perspective.

E. Van Gemert and the Friends are working on a new relationship as far as membership. In the past, membership in the Friends was tightly defined as paying a membership fee. Now, membership in the Friends is starting to be more broadly defined as people that who have contributed dollars to the UW-Madison Libraries. E. Van Gemert also agrees with M. Saffiotti Dale that having active faculty on the Friends makes a significant difference.

M. Saffiotti Dale said she is happy to talk to any ULC member about service on the Friends board or if they have ideas on faculty who could be recruited for this effort. Her contact information is as follows:

Ms. Maria Saffiotti Dale
msaffiottidale@chazen.wisc.edu
(608)-263-4368

In answer to a question about the “scholar” grants, M. Saffiotti Dale said the Friends have received about 30 Grants-in-Aid applications over the past year. The applications for both grant programs are available online.

E. Van Gemert asked D. Way to speak on the various proposals that the UW-Madison Libraries have at the UW System and the UW-Madison level to provide funds for collections.

D. Way outlined a proposal that has been submitted to the UW System. The proposal is asking for funds to provide access to Elsevier’s Freedom Collection for the UW System. This will allow campuses beyond UW-Madison and UW-Milwaukee to access these important STEM resources and it will enhance the research and technology transfer efforts of all UW campuses. If the proposal is funded this will provide between one and two million dollars of relief to the UW-Madison Libraries collection budget.

At the UW-Madison level, the GLS is employing a two-part approach. The first part is asking campus administration for inflation relief – that the collection base budget be increased by 4% or 5% per year. D. Way noted that over the past 10 years of relatively flat budgets, campus libraries have lost over four million dollars in buying power. The second part is to ask the campus for funds in the short term to allow the GLS to participate in some of the CIC group deals that many of UW-Madison’s peers purchase. These consortial purchases are usually focused on e-books and journals.

E. Van Gemert elaborated on D. Way’s approach that this was in addition to the dollars that can be used for collection that may be generated by library consolidation. E. Van Gemert went on to
say that the inflation part is very important, that without that sort of financial support UW-Madison Libraries will find themselves in the same place five years from now but with less staff. E. Van Gemert made a plea to the committee that any assistance in these fundraising efforts on the part of the members of the ULC would be greatly appreciated.

D. Klingenberg asked E. Van Gemert if he wanted a letter of support from the ULC that could be sent to the Chancellor. A. Kaplan wondered if a letter from the faculty senate would also assist in lobbying efforts for more collection funds to campus libraries. E. Van Gemert commented that a somewhat more graduated approach might be a better way to proceed. E. Van Gemert and K. Broman will be attending a university committee to lobby for more collection dollars for campus libraries.

E. Van Gemert mentioned that the Library Consolidation working group would have its first meeting tomorrow.

E. Van Gemert said having off-site storage is very important. The campus libraries are now in the process of moving our off-site storage from multiple places (Middleton and Steenbock) to Verona. That consolidation will take time. At the same time campus schools and colleges are making demands on our off-site storage. There is definitely support at the campus administration level to expand the Verona storage facility but that may take years.

E. Van Gemert reported that campus libraries in partnership with the other UW System libraries will be implementing a new Integrated Library System (ILS) called Alma at the end of May 2015.

Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Enyart