

Summary of the Proposed Merger of The Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library and the Library Foundation of Hennepin County

Background

On January 1, 2008, the Hennepin County Library and the Minneapolis Public Library merged into a unified 41-library system. As a result, the two support organizations for the library systems, The Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library and the Library Foundation of Hennepin County, engaged in a process to consider merging into one united organization, supporting one unified library system. The united support organization would continue to build upon the great work of both organizations. In particular, the merged organization would be charged with private fundraising, programming and marketing, and supporting the important work of the independent branch library friends groups across the county.

The Boards and Executive Committees of both The Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library and the Library Foundation of Hennepin County have voted to approve the merger agreement. The Hennepin County Commissioners and the Hennepin County Library Board also have expressed support for the merger of the library support organizations.

Details of the New Merged Organization

The new organization merging the functions of The Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library and the Library Foundation of Hennepin County, if fully approved by both organizations (including the membership of The Friends), would consist of or have the following organizational features:

- The merger will take effect legally on December 1, 2008.
- The board of directors of the united organization will consist of 38 members – 19 each from the Foundation and The Friends.
- Until the first annual meeting of the merged organization, the current officers (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary) will serve together as co-officers for each of their positions.
- All current contracts and programs of both The Friends and Foundation in place on November 30, 2008 will continue in place until December 31, 2009, unless completed before that date.
- The merged organization will work collaboratively with and support local branch library friends groups, including inviting participation by local branch representatives in the merged organization. Additionally, the united organization will support creation of new local branch friends groups where there is sufficient local interest.
- All donor-restricted funds of The Friends or the Foundation will be maintained by the united organization as per the donors' wishes. Restricted funds for Minneapolis libraries will be maintained as such in the merged organization.
- The book endowment originally created to support collections purchases in Minneapolis libraries will support collections for the Hennepin County Library as the collections of the two library systems are now unified as one library collection.
- Following the merger, the united organization will not have voting members. Responsibility for and oversight of the united organization will rest with the unified board of directors.
- To minimize legal costs, the name of the merged organization will be the Library Foundation of Hennepin County, although The Friends name will continue to be referenced in all materials in the coming year. An identity and branding effort for the combined organization, including the possible creation of a new organizational name, will be initiated in 2009.

The united library support organization for the Hennepin County Library will remain committed to enriching our libraries by raising private dollars for programs and services so critical in today's environment.

For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact The Friends office at 612-630-6174 or friends@hclib.org.