

Special Village Board meeting called for 7:30 p.m. Wednesday

[Trustee Johnson real mean to Kellie Lang](#)

[A unique opportunity to judge the Gang of Five](#)

[AG looks at possible criminal acts in Shorewood Library/Village Center financing scheme integrity](#)

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Village Board capitulates to realities of Library's screwed up finances; forgives \$100,000 loan

SHOREWOOD, Wis. (March 1, 2004) — The Village Board voted 5-2 to forgive a \$100,000 "loan" to the library.

For the motion were trustees Vida Langenkamp, James Rice, Guy Johnson, Michael O'Brien and Ellen Eckman, who is up for re-election this year.

Eckman at first questioned the need to vote on the matter, saying Budget and Finance Committee Chairperson Kellie Lang had not obtained all possible documents and information that would indicate whether trustees who voted 18 months ago to allocate an additional \$100,000 to the library had intended it to be a loan or a grant. "Some of us take better notes than others," Eckman said, presumably of herself, although she did not have any with her.

Voting against the measure were Village President Mark Kohlenberg, who said he considered the money a loan that could be repaid over time with no interest, and Trustee Lang, who said it was "deceitful" to give the library funds by calling it a "loan," when the trustees who voted to loan the library the money did not intend for it to be repaid.

Board wrestles with public records, legal meetings

The Village Board will continue to operate without e-mail communications among themselves because they are not satisfied with Village Attorney Raymond Pollen's inexplicit opinion on how they should proceed in light of evidence that some trustees have been meeting illegally by e-mail and destroying documents because they don't fully understand the concept of open government and public records.

Trustee Vida Langenkamp, who called a lawsuit arising from failure of the Village to practice lawful record retention "meritless," now says she agrees that trustees need some training on public records and open meetings requirements. Langenkamp, who had preserved just four e-mail messages over nearly six years as a trustee, suggested in a statement to the Shorewood Herald that she did not have to retain records, then said even if she did no one told her that she did. A document from a "Blue Skies" meeting, however, indicates Village Attorney Pollen told trustees they had to retain e-mail.

But even Pollen, who recited events in years past at which he had professed knowledge to other municipalities on open records requirements, as recently as two weeks ago argued at a Village Board meeting that he disagreed that E-mail messages among a quorum of trustees was in violation of the state open meetings law.

Pollen, who bills the village from \$3,000 to \$6,000 a month for his advice, apparently has not provided trustees with information they need to act lawfully. The decision at Monday night's meeting to not use E-mail because trustees are uncomfortable with Pollen's advice may indicate a change in the Board's attitude toward whether Pollen's advice is good enough in other matters, as well, and worth the money.

Village will review security policies following intrusion by youths into library

Police Chief Michael Meehan wasn't taken to the wood shed for not reporting to the Village Board that the children of two library employees illegally entered the Library after hours during a weekend crime binge that included criminal damage to property, breaking and entering and theft of school property. But trustees were not pleased that there is no policy in place to direct the chief on what to do when such incidents occur.

Meehan said the Nov. 14, 2003 incident was trespass, and was no more serious than "cutting across your lawn."

But President Mark Kohlenberg disagreed, saying the Village had put \$20,000 to \$25,000 into a video surveillance system that no one was apparently monitoring. A Village committee has been assigned to develop a policy.