



Summary of Meeting of Readers Association Board Members with the Library
Administration—8 Nov 2018

Attended by:

Administration members: Orly Simon, Tomer Hadad, Nachum Zitter

Readers Association board members: Dena Ordan, Benjamin Richler, Cana Werman, Nadia Zeldes

I The New Building

* *Construction company*

Orly informed us that Electra has been chosen as the construction company for the new library building. Our chairperson, Cana Werman, noted this company's negative record for accidents on building sites. It was agreed that Cana would send a letter on this matter to the library Board of Directors.

Update: Library director Oren Weinberg contacted Cana. In the course of the conversation Oren reported that the construction company had obligated itself to adhere to the strictest safety guidelines. The library building committee has also hired its own inspectors to keep track of safety issues. Mr. Weinberg explained that only three companies in Israel have the capacity to undertake such a large, long-term project.

* *Bookshelves*

Our representatives stressed the importance of adjustable shelving (given that in other libraries the shelves are not adjustable and the folio-sized books are lying on their sides): Orly reported on many, time-consuming discussions with the architects, who tend to stress esthetics at the expense of functionality. Nachum noted many intensive meetings devoted to decisions regarding smaller details of the plans. Regarding the "sea of books" planned for the center of the reading rooms which is lower than the central level, we inquired



if there will be a ramp to make this level wheelchair accessible and that will also enable the library staff to use trolleys to return books to the shelves. The response was that there will be access via a spiral route. Another question raised was that of “noisy areas”: the reply was that many public areas are planned for the new library as well as different types of study rooms.

II Merhav

Orly reported that the Aleph catalog will be phased out (the company no longer provides support) and will be replaced by the Alma program. Readers will continue to use the Merhav interface. Nadia’s contention that the Merhav search engine is inadequate and does not always provide results when typing in a book title received the answer that the company (which is located in Israel) is aware of the problems and invests time and effort in improving the system. The library is seeking volunteers to comment on problems and suggest improvements to Merhav. The administration informed us that there will be many informational and instructional workshops before Aleph disappears. We suggested that guidance video clips be uploaded to the library website.

III Workshops on databases

A request was tendered that video clips of the workshops or summaries of the main points of the workshops (fall semester) be uploaded to the computer, which will enable readers to use the databases more effectively. The question of the list of databases purchased by the library was also raised: databases disappear and there are difficulties accessing some databases even though they are ostensibly available. Orly and Nachum asked that readers use the



library "what's app" to report immediately on problems in accessing specific databases.

IV עיול ראשי: Library newsletter for researchers

The administration would like feedback on this newsletter aimed at researchers. Two issues have appeared to date. Orly asked that we let her know what topics interest this audience.

V The Current Building

* *Cleanliness*: We (again) asked that the bathrooms be cleaned more frequently.

* *Eating in public areas*: We (again) requested that signs be posted forbidding eating in the Ardon lobby and the entrance level lobby. Nachum noted that such signs are problematic because the library provides food to organized groups in these areas.

* *Study rooms*: We raised the issue of electronic ordering of these rooms. Tomer responded that there was no budget line for purchase of such a system but that the library would be implementing a freeware system. Another comment on the study rooms was the lack of supervision of their use by library staff, which has led to individuals or pairs taking over the rooms for extended time periods.

* *Notices to readers*:

We noted that the notices on the electronic boards are not updated regularly and that events that have already taken place still appear.

The readers association representatives also suggested that notices regarding changes to opening hours or other disruptions also be posted on the electronic boards.



VI Financial Reports

We inquired as to how to acquire access to the library's financial reports, which should be available to the public by virtue of the library's status as a "public-benefit corporation." Our aim is to gain greater insight into how the budget is divided among the various divisions and services offered by the library. Orly directed us to the Freedom of Information law. We hope to submit such a request to the Justice Ministry in the future.