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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Board Meets

(PITTSBURGH, PA – October 18, 2010) Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's Board of Trustees held its quarterly Board Meeting on Monday, October 18. During the meeting, the Board received an interim report from the ten-member Public Private Task Force on Sustainable Library Funding, was briefed on the outcome of the Library's year-long community engagement process and voted to move forward with the next projects in its *Libraries for LIFE* capital campaign -- a renovation to CLP – South Side and the potential merger of CLP – Carrick and CLP – Knoxville.

Public Private Task Force

Over the past seven months, the Task Force on Sustainable Library Funding has gathered information and met several times to discuss Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's financial outlook, benchmarks from other American public libraries and the Library's ability to obtain stable and adequate funding. Task Force chair and Board member, the Honorable Frank Lucchino reported that the group has explored 19 library funding opportunities to sustain the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh system. Of these, three have been found to have the most potential for further study; some could require a ballot initiative or other legislation and therefore take some time to implement. A final recommendation to the Library's Board of Trustees is expected in December.

Community Conversation Workshops

Since May, twelve Community Workshops have been held throughout the City of Pittsburgh to explore strategies to ensure the long-term financial and operational health of the Library. More than 1,400 people participated (either in person or online) in the workshops. The net result of the process has been three-fold: (1) a group of people now understands the challenges facing the Library (2) the Library has inspired communities to support their branches through advocacy and fundraising; and (3) the Library has good qualitative information from the public to inform strategies for the future.

Building upon the Community Conversation process, the Board is continuing transparent two-way communication between the Library Board, Library users and community stakeholders. One idea being implemented involves identifying community members to serve one year appointments on Library Board committees. Representing a cross-section of Pittsburgh neighborhoods, these committee members would help the Board better engage the community in the decision making and work of the Library; provide an ongoing dialog with the community and increase diversity on the committees.

Capital Projects

During the meeting the Board unanimously approved a resolution to proceed with capital plans to renovate CLP – South Side and continue the process of a potential merger of CLP – Carrick and CLP – Knoxville. While the Library works on these projects, the Board of Trustees plans to continue to seek long-term sustainable funding for operations.

CLP – South Side is a priority for renovation due to its accessible location, the neighborhood status as the third-largest employment center after Downtown and Oakland, and its relatively high visitor count and high county use. Through the *Libraries for LIFE* capital campaign, the Library has received restricted funding for building improvements that cannot be used for operating expenses. Currently, \$2.7 million in capital funding is specifically restricted to CLP-South Side. If not spent in a timely manner, these dollars will be lost.

The Library will continue its process of identifying sites and working with the community on the potential merger of CLP-Carrick and CLP-Knoxville. The Library has many reasons to pursue this project. A single, larger library facility will accommodate more materials, services, computers and programs and serve more total customers than the two current locations combined. Overall, a new merged location will enable the Library to reduce long-term operating costs, while providing valuable library services to Carrick, Knoxville and other communities in the southern portion of the city.

Fundraising and Advocacy

Since 2002, the Library has more than tripled the number of donors from 1420 (2002) to 5081 (2009). The Board's Development Committee reported that year-to-date, the Library's fundraising program is performing ahead of 2009. The Library has preliminary indications that a large number of donors contributed during the Pittsburgh Gives match day. A fundraising appeal letter sent in October and another in November are expected to generate increases in total gifts from individuals. Private contributed support is critical to the Library's ability to achieve long-term sustainability.

Community members interested in learning more about Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh and how they can support Pittsburgh's library system may view information online at www.carnegielibrary.org.

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About Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Engaging our Community in Literacy and Learning

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh contributes to the educational attainment, economic development, and cultural enrichment of the region. Through critical services such as early learning programs for children, job search assistance and computer and Internet access, the Library fosters lifelong learning and is a renowned leader among the nation's libraries. With more than 2 million visitors and 3.5 million items borrowed each year, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh is the region's most visited asset and one of the largest public libraries in Pennsylvania. Established in 1895 by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie as a public trust to be funded by the community, the Library derives approximately 90% of its annual operating budget from public or government sources, including the Allegheny County Regional Asset District (RAD), the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the City of Pittsburgh.