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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Neighborhood Libraries to Remain Open

*Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's Board of Trustees votes to keep all branches open for 2011.
Long-term sustainable funding still uncertain for system's future.*

(PITTSBURGH, PA – December 13, 2010) At its December meeting, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's Board of Trustees voted unanimously to keep all Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh branches open, officially repealing the portion of a 2009 Action Plan that would have reduced the number of branches in the system by the end of 2010. The board also approved a \$23,956,000 operating budget for 2011, cautioning that next year is another critical funding year for the Library. Without stable funding in place, the Library will not be able to sustain its current system long-term.

"This past year was a year of listening to and working with the public," said Jacqui Fiske Lazo, Chair, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's Board of Trustees. "Our communities demonstrated how much they value their neighborhood libraries. We are grateful for their support and for their advocacy." To continue the productive dialog about the Library's funding options and services, the board plans to host a series of meetings community-wide in 2011.

The Library was able to balance its projected 2011 budget due to prudent spending and additional financial support from private donors and public funders; however, long-term funding remains uncertain. The 2011 budget includes projected revenues from Table Games of an estimated \$500,000 and an increase from the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD) of 3% or \$528,000, bringing the total of RAD funding for the Library's operating budget to \$18.1 million.

For the Library, 2010 was a year to engage the community in an open and frank discussion about the status of library funding and the future of library services. The Library expects to realize revenues that will exceed expenses when the budget year ends on December 31, 2010. Cost savings are primarily the result of staff vacancies as related to the voluntary retirement program, turnover and unfilled positions as well as reductions in utilities. These one-time budget savings do not address the Library's long-term rising costs and uncertainties in public funding.

Earlier this year, the Library's Board of Trustees appointed a Public Private Task Force to explore alternative models and sources of funding to sustain the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh system of neighborhood libraries. "Organizations like libraries live in a precarious existence from year to year. Cutting back essential services and relying on volatile funding that does not keep pace with inflation is not a sustainable model," Lazo said. On behalf of The Honorable Frank Lucchino, Public Private Task Force Chair and Library Trustee, Task Force members Senator Jay Costa, Councilman Bruce Kraus and Scott M. Lammie provided a final report to the board for consideration, which contained a multi-pronged approach with both short-term and long-term recommendations. Over the past seven months, the Task Force gathered information and met more than 10 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 funding for a vibrant system and services.

Since there is no single solution, the Task Force believed a multi-pronged approach to library funding would be the best approach. They recommended that the Library Board pursue six recommendations in tandem, which would be combined to generate long-term sustainable funding: improve advocacy and increase individual giving by building a culture of library supporters; secure annual increases from RAD; provide citizens of Pittsburgh an opportunity to vote on whether dedicated funding support should be provided to the Library; secure increases in corporate contributions; launch a library

endowment campaign; and work with local/state entities to develop tax incentive programs for corporate and individual donors.

Thanking the Task Force for their exceptional leadership and thoroughness of their work, the board created a special joint committee of task force and board members to further examine the report. The board will reconvene at a special meeting in January to discuss recommendations.

The Library's 2011 approved operational budget will be available on the Library's Web site, www.carnegielibrary.org/background, after 11 am on December 14, 2010.

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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.