

**Montana State Library Commission
Meeting Minutes for April 11, 2001
Helena, MT**

Attendees:

Commissioners David Johnson, Michael Schulz, Linda McCulloch, Rosemary Garvey, Al Randall, Dorothy Laird, Mary Doggett

Guests: Debbie Schlesinger, Broad Valleys Federation; Bridgett Johnson, South Central Federation; Mike Hamlett, Sagebrush Federation; Bonnie Williamson, Pathfinder Federation; Emory Robotham, Golden Plains Federation

Staff: Karen Strege, Darlene Staffeldt, Kris Schmitz, Bob Cooper, Tristen Shinnick

Meeting called to order at 8:40 a.m.

Announcements and Introductions

It was announced that Linda McCulloch and Al Randall would be arriving later.

Minutes Adoption

Chair David Johnson asked for any changes, corrections or additions to the draft minutes for the February meeting.

Dorothy Laird moved to accept the minutes of the February 14, 2001 State Library Commission meeting. Rosie Garvey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

State Librarian's Report

Karen Strege, State Librarian, announced that Jim Hill would not be present and therefore she would give the NRIS report. Strege announced that Barbara Sawitzke was hired as the new Administrative Assistant to replace Amanda Broadwater.

Darlene Staffeldt reminded everyone that the public library standards would take effect July 1, 2001. A letter will be sent on April 16 stating what the standards are and will include the certification form and a form for requesting a deferral. The forms will be due on June 1. The administrative rules give the State Librarian the power to accept or deny a deferral. A library can appeal a decision to the Commission. Strege noted that she believed that there are about 10 libraries not in compliance. Most just need to enroll in the certification program.

Strege stated that her work during the last two months had been mostly legislative. She had attended two federation meetings. Strege stated she would be going to MLA Conference and then to the ALA Legislative Day in Washington, D.C.

At the federation coordinators meeting it had been pointed out that the Commission meeting scheduled for June 20, 2001 was during the ALA conference. Some discussion followed on what an appropriate date would be for the June meeting.

Program Seven Updates

Strege passed on Jim Hill's regrets for missing the reception for outgoing commissioners, Mary Doggett and Michael Schulz.

Strege announced that NRIS has contracted with the census and economic development center, that wants to employ mapping to make the census information more useful. The drought web site is being hosted and managed by NRIS.

NRIS has a position open, the User Services and Support Section Manager. Fourteen applications have been received so far and are being screened.

Funding for the Metadata Coordinator position ends on June 30. Jim Hill projects that NRIS might need another person, so they may hire someone for a temporary one-year position. Hill is reluctant to increase staff given chance of a rif becoming necessary.

Mary Doggett showed the Commission an article in Vision magazine on tracking the fires of 2000.

Program One Updates

Darlene Staffeldt gave the Statewide Library Resources report. She stated that members of the Library Development Department attended federation meetings. The Library Directory is now online. A letter was sent this past week announcing that libraries could update their information online.

The Collection Honor Roll had been announced.

Staffeldt will be going to Great Falls to interview the consultant candidate. The candidate was the only qualified person who applied.

Christie Briggs, the Talking Book Library Supervisor, hurt her back and has been on sick leave for two weeks. She will be out at least another week and a half. The Talking Book Library staff are very busy, but are coping with being short staffed.

Library and Information Services Department statistics for the last month show more agency contacts and more reference calls from other state agencies. The department

has received positive feedback on bibliographies they have produced that link agencies to the local library resources.

Some discussion followed on whether salary was a reason why only one qualified application was received for the Great Falls Library Consultant position. Michael Schulz said his library had received many qualified applications and that they may be able to give MSL some names. Schmitz replied that if MSL re-opens the position the announcement could be sent to such people.

Staffeldt announced that Jonathan Nehring was offered the position of web manager. He had orally accepted, but the letter of acceptance was not yet received. He will start in August.

The State Publications Center position had been offered to a candidate, but had been turned down.

Legislative Update

Strege announced that for the most part things were going well in the Legislature. Some of NRIS's budget was designated as a one-time item. Strege chose not to try to change that and felt that that was a good decision based on how other agencies fared when trying to get similar changes made. The Legislature had reduced agency travel by 25% and then restored 39% of the 25% to MSL.

HB105, which would have established a GIS trust fund, was tabled in the Senate Finance Committee, making it essentially dead. The Governor has signed HB 130, the federation law, and HB 149 was signed in a ceremony last week. A picture will be available for the June meeting of the signing ceremony.

Strege stated that she was already getting calls about library districts. There seems to be lots of enthusiasm for library districts.

SB 139 and 140 which would have mandated filtering and allowed parents access to children's library records were killed. The federal bill on filtering is alive. It will affect libraries that receive federal funding. It is effective April 20, but is being challenged constitutionally.

There was an article on HB 124, the big bill, in the IR today. The full Senate heard the big bill and stripped many provisions. Strege had not seen the changes so could not comment on them. The bill will go to a conference committee. As it stood, local public libraries would receive the same funds as in the last year plus 2%. Strege stated it would be important to keep libraries informed as to what the big bill will mean to them.

Strege stated that this was her third legislative session and that as before, she and staff would go through a debriefing when it is over and try to learn from the experience.

LSTA Reports

Staffeldt stated that there were not many updates. Summer Institute applications have been sent and have a May 1 deadline. Topics for the institute will be similar to last year's.

In regards to networking projects, Bruce Newell is traveling to forge agreement on the western shared catalog project. The highline project is going well.

Bob Cooper gave a brief update on the Madison and Lake County Library Improvement Projects. Cooper explained that Madison County had two ballot issues. One approved the consolidation of the library system in the county, and the other would have funded it. Voters passed the first and voted down the second. The legal interpretation was that the consolidation issue was an unfunded mandate, which meant that the county did not have to do it. However, they want to consolidate, and significant progress had already been made toward cooperation between the libraries, so they are making plans to have the levy voted on in 2002. The original measure had been defeated in the rural areas, so they will be working hardest in rural areas to educate the voters on the advantages of this new system. They have had two people resign from the board and are working to replace them. Cooper will report more on their progress as progress is made.

Cooper reminded the Commission that at the last meeting they had approved an extension for the Lake County Library Improvement Project. Cooper assured the Commission that Erica Allen, Chair of the Lake County Library Board, carried the news of the extension, and the wishes expressed by the Commission to her board. The board made successful presentations to tribal council and Salish Kootenai College. The Tribal Council approved a representative and also a representative from the Charlo public schools.

The Library Board is wrestling with survey data. They received a great deal of input from the rural areas as well as the urban areas. The Board is developing profiles of the libraries. The Board is looking at contracting with Sanders County to have the bookmobile serve certain areas in Lake County. The bookmobile only operates twelve days a month.

Long Range Plan and LSTA evaluation

Strege handed out a memo stating that MSL selected Himmel and Wilson to evaluate the state library. Debbie Schlesinger suggested that other means for giving input be provided for those not invited to the focus groups. Strege said she would pass that suggestion on to the consultants and mentioned that the consultants planned to do a follow-up survey. State library staff will not attend the focus groups so that participants can feel free to say whatever they want to say.

Library Services Council and Task Forces Recommendations

Strege reminded the Commission that at the last meeting she had given them a memo recommending that the executive order for the Library Services Council be allowed to expire, along with a recommendation for two addition members for the Networking Task Force and a recommendation that the Law Revision Task Force be dropped and lastly, that a new task force be established to review the state aid to libraries and federations. This task force would begin its work in June of 2001 and end in 2002.

Some discussion followed as to who will be on the new task force and what the process would be for appointing them. Strege stated that in the past she had been allowed to appoint people to the task forces. It was suggested that names be submitted to the Commission informally by e-mail and then approved informally by them. Commissioners expressed the desire to have people of different backgrounds, ages and ethnicity appointed.

Federations Report

Bridgett Johnson, the new Federation Coordinators Chair, presented the Federation report. She thanked Debbie Schlesinger for her work over the last couple of years as the Federation Coordinators Chair. Johnson stated that the coordinators had talked about the base grants and the expectations of the federations were now that all libraries can participate. She said that most of the Coordinators were new to the job and were not sure yet what would be expected of them. Most have had their spring meetings and are working toward MLN shared projects.

Staffeldt stated that the Commission had asked that each Federation Coordinator present their own plan of service to the Commission.

Debbie Schlesinger of the Broad Valleys Federation presented their plan of service. She stated that they meet all the Commission's standards and guidelines. The federation faces the problem of going from a small cohesive group to a much more diverse group. She believes that their plan of service accomplishes this. They have money in their budget for training.

Staffeldt was asked a question on base grants. She stated that they had been in effect since 1989, but administrative rules were only put in place last year. The plans of service are good and valid, but the base grants still need work, they need to be more careful about the expenditures of the base grants.

Schlesinger stated that she has a philosophical difference of opinion with MSL on how base grants should be spent. She said some small libraries need money to expand their collections, but this is not allowed under the rules.

Staffeldt stated that collections development is allowed, but expenditures must be for collection development that serves the whole Federation, not just individual libraries.

Emory Robotham, Golden Plains Federation Coordinator stated that their plan of service was self explanatory. What he found most pleasing about the process was that most of the plan was approved via e-mail. This saved the Federation a lot of time and money by minimizing the travel involved. The Golden Plains Federation has a newsletter online as well. Technology is working for their Federation. Robotham was ask if his Federation was having the same problem with getting the expanded base of libraries in the Federation to coalesce. Robotham stated that they divide their money equally. The by-laws try to focus the money on public libraries, but also allow the board to spend as needed for other libraries. He felt that their way of spreading the money among the libraries helped libraries to realize that they are all in it together.

Robotham was ask if school libraries attended the March meeting. Robotham stated that he didn't think there were as many as at the previous meeting due to scheduling problems, but that by in large they were supportive, that the school people come to the meetings and are vocal. Robotham state that while the ideal of sharing resources and having a shared catalog was good, there are libraries that are too small and don't have the funding to participate. The goal would be more balanced if the state not only pushed for the ideal, but provided a viable alternative for those libraries that cannot afford the ideal.

Bonnie Williamson of the Pathfinder Federation stated that their plan of service should also be self explanatory. One thing that is different in their Federation is that they have librarians sign a statement of how they would be using the base grant money and attach that to the plan of service. She stated that it is hard to instill the philosophy that united we stand and divided we fall. Some people won't come to the meetings unless they see how they will benefit. At the last meeting a school librarian was elected chair. Williamson stated that they have a pretty good relationship with other libraries in the Federation.

Mike Hamlett reported for the Sagebrush Federation. He stated that the current plan of service was a condensation of past plans. He echoed the idea that the base grant administration was not very effective in the Sagebrush Federation. They are losing population which kills the mill levies. Some libraries are despondent due to the losses. Hamlett reported that they have had some response from other types of libraries. The Federation is working to educate members on what can be purchased with base grant money and what cannot.

David Johnson, Commission Chair mentioned that Hamlett had sent the Commission a letter inviting them to have a meeting there in 2002. The Commission will consider the request at a later meeting.

Bridgett Johnson presented the South Central Federation plan of service. She stated that she is proud of the Federation. She referred the group to page three of their plan of service, where they state their goals. They have included consideration of multi-type libraries. Each library can apply for a grant. They state what they will do with the money and how it helps the Federation meet its goals. Grantees submit receipts to show how

the money was actually spent. The goals are broad, following the MSL Commission goals, yet allow the libraries flexibility to do what they need to do. Johnson report that because of MSL help and a Gates Grant, one library got a telephone for the first time. The South Central Federation pays travel costs for attending Federation meetings, which has made a big difference in attendance.

Al Randall reported for the Tamarack Federation. Randall reported that of the three public libraries that are not legally constituted in their Federation, two are working for legal status. Jocko Library will soon have a paid staff member for the first time. The Federation Vice Chair elect is a school librarian. Tamarack Federation also pays mileage, but only for one car from each community. This is to encourage car pooling and to get people to communicate.

Financial Report:

Kris Schmitz presented the third quarter financial report. She apologized for not being able to send the report to Commissioners sooner, but as the quarter ended on March 30, that was impossible. There are no significant changes for Program 1. The fourth quarter is when funds need to be reallocated to meet program needs. Program 7 had three new contracts. Function 90, personal services, has a balance positive, reflecting how hard it has been to recruit for certain positions. MSL has achieved the required vacancy savings for the year.

Schmitz stated that Peggy Guthrie had called and said that she wanted to come to the Commission reception for outgoing Commissioners Mary Doggett and Michael Schulz, but weather prohibited it. She sent her best wishes.

Goals and objectives

Michael Schulz stated that he attending the MLA Conference. He also announced that there was over a 50% response to the school survey. They are working to get even more in, hoping to reach 100%. Tristen is inputting the data.

David Johnson wrote an article for the Big Sky Libraries newsletter.

Mary Doggett testified before the legislature.

Al Randall attended the federation meeting, attended Offline, and e-mailed legislators when asked to. He volunteered to take over Michael Schulz's role in keeping the goals and objectives in front of the Commission at all times.

Action Items:

A motion that Commission follow the advice given by the State Librarian for the future of the Library Services Advisory Council and other task forces was made by Mary Doggett and seconded by Michael Schulz. The motion passed unanimously.

Rosie Garvey moved to approve the federation plans of services for all of the federations based on the coordinators willingness to work with the state library in May and June for clarification of the authorized base grant expenditures. The motion was seconded by Michael Schulz and passed unanimously.

Dorothy Laird moved to accept the third quarter financial report. The motion was seconded by Al Randall and passed unanimously.

Dorothy Laird moved to provide \$500 each (total \$1,000) for Mary Doggett and Mike Schulz to attend ALA Legislative Day in Washington, D.C. The motion was seconded by Linda McCulloch and passed unanimously.

Literature Samples

Strege pointed out that most of the literature was about HB 139 and 140.

Adjournment

Commission adjourned at 1:45 p.m.