

State Librarian's Report February & March 2013

Prepared for the April 17, 2013 Commission meeting
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Goal Four – Consultation and Leadership:

The first several weeks of February and March were devoted to continued support for our legislative initiatives. We are well positioned as we enter the last month of the 63rd Legislative Session. More detailed information is provided in my legislative update.

My monthly website chats continue to be well attended and I welcome the opportunity for direct communication with the Montana library community. The February 15 website chat focused on Commission and legislative updates. We used the March chat to communicate transition plans for the conclusion of the Broadband Technology Opportunity Program grant that is rapidly concluding. Due to the Montana Library Association (MLA) conference, I will not host an April chat. Instead I will share a report during the MLA membership meeting.

On March 19 I chaired the Montana Land Information Advisory Council meeting. Highlights of this meeting included the introduction of the new State Chief Information Officer, Ron Baldwin, and presentations on climate data from the State Climate Office at the University of Montana and wetland and land cover web services from the Montana Natural Heritage Program. At their June meeting, the Council will be asked to vote on whether or not to accept climate data as a new Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure theme. The process to determine new themes is described in the Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure Selection Criteria:

http://msl.mt.gov/About_MSL/Montana_Land_Information_Advisory_Council/archive/2012/11/20121129MSDI_Selection_Criteria_Update.pdf.

If the Council votes to recommend the additional of climate data to the MSDI, that recommendation would come to the Commission for final approval.

On March 23 I had the opportunity to attend and to share the State Library report at the South Central Federation meeting in Big Timber. The meeting was well attended by librarians and trustees from almost all federation libraries. It is a very positive group of library representatives; it is heartwarming to see how well they work together to

support library services in their region. I was also pleased to note the active participation of the Rosebud County and Bicentennial library representatives who joined that federation last summer.

Goal Five – Collaboration: MSL promotes partnerships and encourages collaboration among its users.

While on a personal visit to Billings I was honored to be given a tour of the new Parmly Billings Library, currently under construction. The visit included a review of design plans with the architect and a tour of the construction site with the contractor and Library Director Bill Cochran and Assistant Director Dee Ann Redman. The new library will truly be a reflection of the needs of the community. It will be fully equipped with the latest information technology resources and the design of the building will allow for easier adoption of new technologies in the future. The Library will have extensive children's and teen spaces, a Montana room to support research and the needs of genealogists, classrooms, and a community room. The space also mirrors the natural landscape of the surrounding area with elements including glass, sandstone walls and a water feature. Not only will the library be a dynamic presence in the Billings community, I believe it will set the standard for library facilities in Montana.

On March 28 I was invited to participate in a community strategic planning session with the Bozeman Public Library. The session was led by the consulting team, Library Strategies, and was attended by approximately 60 community leaders including the city manager. The consulting team lead small group activities that helped attendees identify and prioritize community needs and opportunities for library support. I was pleased to be able to lend my perspective to their discussion and also benefitted from participating in another library's strategic planning process. Their involvement of key stakeholders helps to assure strong support for the library in the Bozeman community and is essential to their on-going success.

During this period I also visited the Flathead County Library in Kalispell. Director Kim Crowley gave me a tour of their newly remodeled spaces and we discussed their plans for continued improvements. I was impressed by how welcoming the library is with the changes made to the entrance. In particular, the shift in staff focus from behind the circulation "fort" to smaller, more approachable information desks manned by friendly, knowledgeable staff has made a huge difference to modernize their approach to library services. The children's area has also undergone considerable change and is bright, dynamic space that was crowded with children.

As I reported in February, I was asked by the president of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) to serve as their liaison to the Schools, Health and Libraries Broadband Coalition (SHLB). SHLB is a Washington, DC-based, member organization dedicated to increasing access to critical services including education, information, medical and public safety resources by supporting broadband access to community anchor institutions. Specifically, SHLB interfaces with the Federal Communications Commission and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration on a wide variety of broadband issues. They often serve as information witnesses for hearings and submit comments and testimony on behalf of members on issues that come before these federal agencies. Of particular relevance to Montana and COSLA are discussions about the future of E-rate, investigations into the Broadband Technology Opportunity Program grants, and the national Broadband Mapping and Planning initiatives. As liaison, I try to attend biweekly conference calls and share comments on written documents. I will also serve on a broadband mapping panel at their annual meeting the first week in May. More information about SHLB is available online here: <http://www.shlb.org/about>.

Goal Six – Sustainable Success: MSL is efficient and effective (measured against partner and patron outcomes) and is engaged in fulfilling its mission.

In mid-February I had an introductory meeting with Governor Bullock's Chief of Staff, Tim Burton. During our meeting I shared orientation information that our staff prepared that described the State Library's services with a focus on services to state government. We discussed our budget and legislative agendas, plans for the state website and our future working arrangement. Following our meeting, Tim invited me to attend a cabinet meeting where I shared orientation information with directors from other agencies are. We've planned quarterly meetings which we plan to initiate following the session with a tour of the State Library. Additionally, I have a meeting scheduled in late April with Stacey Otterstrom, the Governor's Boards and Councils Advisor, to educate her on the purpose and role of the State Library Commission.

As referenced above, the State of Montana has a new Chief Information Officer, Ron Baldwin. Ron replaced Dick Clark who retired at the end of 2012. Ron and I have worked closely over the last couple of months as he has come up to speed on the State's GIS activities in order to support House Bill 38. Ron has committed to serving on the Montana Land Information Advisory Council which I believe will further elevate the prominence GIS as a key tool for making policy and budget decisions in the state. Additionally, Evan Hammer and I met with Ron to discuss the wide variety of IT services and needs the State Library supports. I look forward to a positive,

collaborative relationship with the new CIO and the State Information Technology Services Division.

The State Library's Financial-compliance audit, which is conducted by the Legislative Audit Division, started the week of February 25, 2013. Two of their staff was on site for approximately two weeks. These first two weeks were focused on learning about the State Library's structure, reviewing our internal controls and processes, and setting the parameters for the audit which is tentatively scheduled for November. The auditors' mission is to determine whether our agency's financial operations are properly conducted, that financial reports are presented fairly, and the agency has complied with applicable laws and regulations. They will then issue an official Single Audit Report for the two fiscal years ending June 30, 2013 which will be presented to the Legislative Audit Committee.

Former State Data Coordinator, Stacy Bruhn is now the GIS Web Developer. Over the last several years Stacy has done an enormous amount of work to develop tools that improve the usability of the MSL website and the data we maintain. We are excited about this opportunity for her to work more closely with Tom Marino, the web manager, and the other members of the IT group to provide more dedicated programming support to the MSL web pages.

Kris Schmitz led the recruitment for the State Data Coordinator. Kris was pleased to offer that position to Colleen Hamer. Colleen comes to us from the Office of Public Instruction where she was responsible for several similar functions. We look forward to welcoming her to the State Library on April 8.