

## NEBRASKA LIBRARY COMMISSION

Lincoln, Nebraska

July 8, 2011

### MINUTES

The Nebraska Library Commission met on July 8, 2011, at the Library Commission office, 1200 N Street, Lincoln. The meeting notice was posted on the Commission website.

Commission members present: John Dale, Charles, Gordon, Patricia (Pat) Gross, Diane Boyd, Sherry Crow and Steve Batty via telephone. Staff present: Rod Wagner, Mary Geibel. Public: Brenda Ealey and Kathleen Tooker.

Chair John Dale called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. This meeting is in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

**Approval of Agenda:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda. Motion carried on roll call vote: Diane Boyd – aye; John Dale – aye; Charles Gordon – aye; Patricia Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye. Motion approved.

**Approval of the Minutes:** (May 27, 2011) A motion was made and seconded to approve the May 27, 2011, meeting minutes. Motion carried on roll call vote: John Dale – aye; Charles Gordon – aye; Patricia Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye and Diane Boyd – aye. Motion approved.

### Public Forum

Brenda Ealey, Southeast Library System, commented on news and activities in the Southeast region. Ealey said the Southeast system's annual meeting will be held on July 26. She distributed copies of the system's annual report. The Southeast Library System has a friends group that organizes fund-raising activities to support system services.

Kathleen Tooker, Eastern Library System, said that she has been working on arrangements for the Nebraska Library Leadership Institute to be held July 10-14. The institute will include 29 participants. Tooker commented on visits with new library directors in Scribner and Hooper. She mentioned the controversy over Spanish language instruction and reading materials in Hooper that led to the previous Hooper library director's departure. Kathy noted the contrast between the two communities, located near each other, in their approach to Spanish speaking populations.

### Chair's Report and Commissioners' Comments

Chair John Dale reported that he read for the Summer Reading Program in Wayne and that was lots of fun. John commented on the Lincoln City Libraries' budget. He said the mayor's budget will be released this week and then will be taken up by the city council. Budget decisions will be made toward the end of August. John commented that Pat Leach, Lincoln City Libraries director, said Lincoln is having terrific attendance as far as their summer events are concerned. Highest attendance was 523 at Eiseley library for Harry Potter Day. Good size crowds everywhere, registration for summer reading programs in Lincoln, which includes some of the public school media centers, so far is at 13,500. This number is an increase over last year. Voting for the One

Book, One Lincoln program finalist will come out in August. Also, Lincoln is about to renew its study for the main library. The last study was done in 2003. John said that there is a view that the study needs to be redone to determine what Lincoln wants or needs in the way of a main downtown library. John mentioned he ended up at the police department by invitation because they have taken an interest in its history. John said this is a personal interest as his father was employed with the Lincoln police force. The Lincoln police department needs help to go through scanned and printed materials. John agreed to assist. John said that the Library Commission has already helped as part of the Nebraska Memories project and several photographs are already online, plus some annual reports. John said there are “tons and tons” of materials to be made available.

Charles Gordon shared information from the Fremont public library’s friends group. The friends’ book sale collected \$14,000. Charles said that Fremont city government departments have been told to cut personnel. The library must cut two full-time employees. The library must also reduce book purchases and initiate a volunteer program. Charles expressed concern for a lack of consideration by the city for who will oversee and evaluate volunteers.

Diane Boyd commented on flooding and flood threats in northeast Nebraska. The Dakota City public library has had water damage. This was especially disappointing due to recent facility improvements. Diane said that it is very interesting to watch small towns and what they do to promote their libraries, even though they can only be open part-time. Diane referred to the Ponca public library and the work they are doing in relation to the “12 Ways Libraries are Good for the Country” article that was published in *American Libraries* (December 21, 2010). The library is addressing one of the twelve items each week. Diane commented on a library program in Sioux Falls, SD, the United Way Foundation’s Success by Six Program. Age appropriate books are sent, once a month to every six weeks, until the child’s sixth birthday. Diane found that the only other state with such a program is in Florida. She asked why other states don’t have similar programs. Rod Wagner said that he would seek further information on this program.

Sherry Crow said the Meridian Library System office has moved as a cost savings measure. A few libraries in the region have installed new automation systems. Grand Island, for one, is among the first of the Pioneer Project libraries to install the open source integrated library system software. Sherry said the Kearney Public Library is continuing internal shuffling to maintain library operations during the library’s renovation and expansion project. The project is expected to be finished in early 2012. Sherry mentioned that her new book (with Nancy Pickering Thomas and Lori Franklin) *Information Literacy and Information Skills Instruction: Applying Research to Practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Library* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) was recently published. Sherry donated a copy to the Library Commission. Sherry commented that city councils don’t understand library science, thinking that volunteers can do the job and not understanding it doesn’t happen that way. Sherry said that school libraries have some good public relations pieces and research that connect student achievement with school librarians and school libraries. There is good research available on public libraries, too.

Pat Gross reported that the Lied Scottsbluff Public Library recently held a grand re-opening event. This project has a long history and it was especially enjoyable to celebrate the library renovation and expansion. Pat shared a flyer on the new library and mentioned the library is taking donations for landscaping. Pat described fundraising strategies used during the course of

the project from seeking out major sponsors to involving children collecting small change. The children's involvement in fundraising resulted in publicity that followed with others getting involved. Pat said the Panhandle Library System will hold its annual meeting on July 29. She said that the system office has moved due to exposure to water leakage.

John Dale referred to a statement from Pat Leach, Lincoln City Libraries Director, pertaining to the future of libraries. Pat attended the ALA annual conference in New Orleans in June. She said that there were many discussions of libraries and books as the library brand. E-books and e-readers are technologies that are having an impact on libraries and library services. Even among well educated people there is a sense that printed books are in decline and libraries will no longer be needed. John said that when Lincoln mayor Chris Beutler held his news conference about possible budget cuts the only question from the news media was whether libraries needed to continue in the age of the E-reader? What we're all trying to figure out is how to articulate the many things libraries do in regard to reading and information within the community regardless of the form of the book itself.

Steve Batty reported that the McCook public library foundation is in position to purchase land adjacent to the library. The purchase will provide additional parking space. Parking space is needed and the land will also be available for future library expansion. Steve reported that the McCook library elevator is being installed. The elevator project is being funded by the library foundation. The McCook library's summer reading program has over 200 kids involved. McCook's Green Screen project has recruited two students. Training is in the works. Demonstrations have been given. New equipment has been installed, an indirect result of the BTOP project, all of these resulting in better customer service. Steve commented that Denise Harders, Republican Valley Library System Director, is visiting libraries in the region and posting comments and photos on the RVLS blog (*Tales from the Trails*). Steve expressed that her blog commentary and photos are very effective. Steve said that he received a question about Omaha's Qwest Center and a sales tax provision related to the Center that permits libraries to receive a portion of tax revenues. Staff will check with the Department of Revenue for details.

### **Director's Report**

*New NLC Website* –Rod Wagner asked if commissioners had any comments on the Commission's new website. Steve Batty said it looks great and it's easy to navigate and he is really impressed with it. Rod mentioned the website team will be glad to hear that.

*State Librarians' Meeting, Columbus and Dublin, Ohio* – Rod Wagner reported that he attended meetings for state librarians sponsored by the State Library of Ohio and the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) on June 7 and 8. The meetings were split between the State Library of Ohio located in Columbus and OCLC in Dublin. The theme was "Games Changers." The game changers were identified as Ever-expanding Expectations for Services, the Changing Landscape of E-books and E-book Readers, Mobile Delivery, Economics and the New Value Proposition, and Cloud Computing. The meeting included presentations and discussions among OCLC executive staff (including Jay Jordan, OCLC President and CEO) and the 35 or so state librarians. Rod said that the game changer topics will be used as part of the next State Advisory Council on Libraries meeting on July 15.

*Nebraska Arts Council Grant for “One Book for Nebraska Teens Author Tour”* – Rod Wagner reported that the Commission was successful in obtaining a \$5,700 grant from the Nebraska Arts Council to help pay for the Neal Shusterman author tour. Shusterman’s book, *Unwind*, is the 2010-11 One Book for Nebraska Teens. Grant funding will support fees and expenses for Neal Shusterman to visit a number of communities across Nebraska.

*State Advisory Council on Libraries meeting* – Wagner reported that the State Advisory Council will meet on July 15. The meeting will be held via the state’s video-conferencing system, saving expense and shortening travel time. The agenda will include an update on LSTA activities and issues, further discussion concerning the “new normal” theme including game changer trends and their effect on library services.

*Public Library Accreditation Guidelines Project* – Richard Miller reported on the Public Library Accreditation Guidelines revision project. Miller said that a Gates Foundation initiative may influence the guidelines. The foundation initiative will result in creation of benchmarks for technology services.

*American Library Association Conference, New Orleans* – Rod Wagner commented on the ALA annual conference held in June in New Orleans. He said that the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) holds a symposium at the conference. This year the symposium topic was “The Infinite Collection: Resources in the Digital Age.” Clifford Lynch, executive director of the Coalition for Networked Information, was the main speaker. The symposium was recorded and will be available online from OCLC. Rod mentioned that he is on the board of the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations (ALTAFF). ALTAFF is changing its name to Citizens for Libraries. This is still a new organization following the merger of Friends of Libraries USA with the American Library Association’s Association of Library Trustees and Advocates. Citizens for Libraries – ALTAFF is experiencing the effects of the transition. The staff has worked hard to build the organization and has made good progress. The organization has excellent resources for library trustees, advocacy activities, and friends groups. One of the more recent programs is the Trustee Academy. The Academy is available to Nebraska library trustees and library directors free of charge as part of our state membership. Citizens for Libraries – ALTAFF had a good number of programs during the ALA conference. Some of the more popular programs featured author presentations.

## **Financial Report**

Rod Wagner stated that in addition to the May and June financial report summaries the Commission submits quarterly reports for federal grants. Reports are also sent to the Gates Foundation for the projects the foundation funds.

Wagner said that the June report completes the fiscal year but encumbrances are not reflected. He said that LSTA funding is now also a concern with recent federal appropriations. The budget finally enacted by Congress for the remainder of the federal fiscal year (ending September 30), resulted in an approximate \$70,000 reduction in Nebraska’s state program allocation. The reduction had not been anticipated. Action on the federal FY 2012 budget isn’t expected until before the Congressional Christmas recess in December, if by then.

Wagner stated that the Commission was notified a week ago that Nebraska did not meet the LSTA maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement and is subject to a reduction in its LSTA state program allocation. State library agencies can submit a maintenance of effort waiver request and a request can be approved if it meets requirements for a waiver. The Institute of Museum and Library Services has indicated that waivers are rarely granted. However, many states are in a similar position due to economic declines and state budget cuts. The Nebraska Library Commission's state budget cuts within the past two years were the basis for falling below the MOE level. LSTA funding reductions resulting from failure to meet maintenance of effort requirements are proportional. The most recent reported state expenditures are compared with the average state expenditures over the past three years. The three year average is compared with the last year reported. If the most recent year's state funds expenditure is below the three year average then the state fails to meet the MOE requirement. The percentage difference is used to calculate the fund reduction. The reduction would come from the following year's allocation. Wagner said Nebraska could lose approximately \$100,000. Wagner said that Doreen Kuhlmann, the Commission's recently retired business manager, has helped with reviewing LSTA financial reports. She believes there is a discrepancy in how the IMLS calculated Nebraska's MOE. If so, we may resolve the issue without submitting a waiver request.

If a waiver request must be submitted the basis for the request would be the state's economy, the state's balanced budget requirement, significant state tax revenue declines, and across-the-board state agency budget reductions. One of the factors to be considered in waiver requests is whether the state library agency received a disproportionate budget reduction in relation to other state entities. For this reporting period, that is not the case. If a waiver request is submitted and not approved the Commission could consider submitting a deficiency appropriation request for consideration in the next legislative session. If the state economy continues to improve there may be a better basis for obtaining state funds to offset the loss.

### **Unfinished Business**

*LSTA Five-Year Evaluation Report and Five-Year Plan* – Rod Wagner stated that there is no activity to report at this time concerning the LSTA Five-Year Evaluation Report or the Five-Year Plan. These items will be on the State Advisory Council on Libraries' agenda for discussion next week.

### **New Business**

*Election of Commission Chair* – A motion was made and seconded to elect John Dale as Commission Chair. Motion approved on roll call vote: Charles Gordon – aye; Patricia Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye; Diane Boyd – aye; John Dale – abstain.

*Election of Commission Vice-Chair* – A motion was made and seconded to elect Steve Batty as Commission Vice-Chair. Motion approved on roll call vote: Patricia Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye; Diane Boyd – aye; John Dale – aye; Charles Gordon – aye.

*State Advisory Council on Libraries Appointment* – Rod Wagner reported that there is a vacancy on the state advisory council on libraries. Susan Warneke from Norfolk resigned. Wagner said that the council has usually had a regional library system representative on the council. Currently

Denise Harders, Republican Valley Library System Director, is serving in a liaison capacity. Wagner recommended appointment of Denise Harders to fill the vacant council position.

A motion was made and seconded to appoint Denise Harders to the State Advisory Council on Libraries. Motion approved on roll call vote: Sherry Crow – aye; Diane Boyd – aye; John Dale – aye; Charles Gordon – aye; Patricia Gross – aye.

*State Employee Pay Policies (FY 2011-2012)* – Rod Wagner stated that state employee pay policies for the 2011-2012 fiscal year beginning on July 1 were issued following the close of the legislative session. The Governor issued employee pay policies through the Administrative Services Personnel Division. The pay changes for the 2011-2012 fiscal year include a 1.5% pay increase for non-contract employees (generally administrative and supervisory personnel). These employees did not receive a pay increase this past year. Contract employees received a 2.5% pay increase last year, but were required to take three furlough days without pay. Employees under the labor contract did not receive a pay change on July 1, 2011. The pay changes for non-contract employees were automatic with the exception of non-classified employees and agency heads. Salaries for agency heads are made by their appointing authorities. Wagner said that funding for the pay changes was included in the 2011 legislative session appropriations.

A motion was made and seconded to increase the Library Commission director's salary by 1.5%. Motion approved on roll call vote: Diane Boyd – aye; John Dale – aye; Charles Gordon – aye; Patricia Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye.

*Next Meeting Date* – John Dale stated the next meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 9, 2011, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by John Dale at 10:50 a.m.

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Mary Geibel, Secretary