

NEBRASKA LIBRARY COMMISSION

Lincoln, NE

July 9, 2021

MINUTES

The Nebraska Library Commission met on July 9, 2021. The meeting notice was posted on the Commission website and the Nebraska.gov public meeting calendar.

Commission members present: Arun Pondicherry, Lois Todd-Meyer, Vernon Davis, and Julia Tye. Staff present: Rod Wagner, Jennifer Wrampe, Sam Shaw, and Tessa Terry; via GoToMeeting: Christa Porter. Arun Pondicherry called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. This meeting complies with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act and Governor's Executive Order Limited Waiver for Public Meetings.

Approval of Agenda: A motion was made by Vernon Davis and seconded by Lois Todd-Meyer to approve the agenda. Motion carried on roll call vote: Vernon Davis – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer – aye; Julia Tye – aye. Motion approved.

Approval of Minutes: (May 14, 2021) a motion was made by Julia Tye and seconded by Vernon Davis to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried on roll call vote: Vernon Davis – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer – aye; Julia Tye – aye. Motion approved.

Chair's Report and Commissioner's Comments

Arun Pondicherry – reported he has heard good things about NCompass Live. *The Lincoln Journal Star* collection from NewsBank now includes complete full text and audio content of local and regional news from June 1996 to present. Lincoln City Libraries Summer Reading Program is currently underway. LCL also has Outdoor Library Learning Time and Bike LNK passes for check out.

Vernon Davis – no report.

Julia Tye – no report

Lois Todd-Meyer – reported that one of her former students is working at a library and posted about the library's summer reading program. Lois contacted another small library, in a town with a population of less than 100, to let them know there will be funds available for them. The library is unaccredited.

Director's Report

Personnel – Rod Wagner reported that Eric Saxon was hired to fill the Talking Book and Braille Circulation/Studio Support position. Chelsea Lemburg, who previously assisted with the Library Innovation Studios project, is now a government documents staff assistant. Chelsea will continue to assist part-time with the LIS project during the project's final six months.

Library Innovation Studios Project Status – Wagner reported JoAnn McManus has arranged for a Nebraska Library Association pre-conference session to be held at the LaVista Public Library in October. The session will include a panel presentation and makerspace equipment demonstrations. Work is proceeding toward a November 2-3 event at Nebraska Innovation Campus to bring together representatives of the libraries that have been part of the project. The event will be open to others interested in library makerspaces. The project ends on December 31 with a final project report due after December 31.

American Rescue Plan Act Allocations – Wagner reported that the first round of funds is available for applications. These are the direct payments to public libraries, state institutional libraries, and tribal libraries. Sam Shaw said that the application went live on July 6 and 23 applications have been received thus far. Shaw and Christa Porter have received calls and messages regarding the application process. The application deadline is December 31. Grant completion reports will be due in June 30, 2022. A webinar will be held on July 14 to provide information about ARPA funds.

State Institutional Libraries – Sam Shaw said there are eight state correctional facilities in Nebraska. Each facility has a library that functions similar to a public library. One exception is a legal component that provides legal resources for inmates. All correctional libraries have an electronic legal database. A computer is provided to access the database online. Inmates are not able to access other websites. Correctional libraries also have a recreational component that provides inmates with access to books, books on tape, compact discs, newspapers, and magazines. Most correctional libraries are understaffed, with one facility having 1300 inmates and 1 librarian. The libraries have inmate clerks that work with the librarian. Many correctional institutions do not provide programs, as public libraries do, due to a lack of staff and not having volunteers. With the ARPA grant, the libraries are looking into programs to provide.

Nebraska Center for the Book – Tessa Terry reported nominations closed on June 15 for the 2022 One Book One Nebraska selection. Thirty-five books were nominated. The 2021 NCB Book Awards submissions closed on June 30 with 70 books submitted. Book award winners will be announced in early September. The Celebration of Nebraska Books will be held on Saturday, October 23, in Lincoln at the Nebraska History Museum.

LSTA State Program Five-Year Evaluation (2018-2022) – Wagner reported that state library agencies are required to conduct a five-year evaluation of their LSTA Grants to States program. Evaluation reports are to be completed independent of the agency. The Library Commission has contracted with Sally Reed, former executive director of United for Libraries, to complete the program evaluation. The program evaluation reports are due by March 31, 2022.

Nebraska Department of Education Proposed Rule Changes re School Librarians – Wagner reported that the Nebraska Department of Education is revising rules for K-12 education. NDE's

Rule 10 includes requirements for school libraries and librarians. The first draft of Rule 10 changes would reduce requirements for school librarians to a minimum half time position for each district. Those opposed to the change are encouraging the NDE to require a school librarian in each school building. The committee working on rule changes is expected to issue a second draft soon.

Nebraska Library Association Annual Conference – Wagner reported the annual conference will be held October 13-14. Virtual sessions will be presented on October 13 and in-person conference sessions will be held at the Hilton Downtown Omaha on October 14.

Financial Report

June Budget and Financial Report – Wagner reported that the end of fiscal year June financial report does not include encumbrances that will be paid after July 1. Those expenditures will come from FY 2021 appropriations. As of June 30, \$26,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds have been spent.

LSTA FY 2022 Appropriation Status – Wagner reported that Congress has not yet acted on appropriations for the coming federal fiscal year beginning October 1.

Build America's Libraries Act – Wagner reported the BALA would provide money to states for public library construction projects. The legislation was introduced in both the House and Senate. At this time, the BALA is not included in any infrastructure funding proposal. However, there is bi-partisan support and funding could be included in the coming months if infrastructure funds are appropriated.

New Business

Next Meeting Dates –September 10, November 12.

Adjournment

Arun Pondicherry adjourned the meeting.

Jennifer Wrampe