

Nebraska Library Commission

Lincoln, Nebraska

November 4, 2011

MINUTES

The Nebraska Library Commission met on November 4, 2011, at the Library Commission office, 1200 N Street, Lincoln. The meeting notice was posted on the Commission website and the Nebraska.gov public meeting calendar.

Commission members present: John Dale, Charles Gordon, Diane Boyd, Patricia (Pat) Gross, Sherry Crow and Steve Batty. Staff present: Rod Wagner, Mary Geibel, Devra Dragos and Beth Goble.

Chair John Dale called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. The 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: Steve Batty – aye; Diane Boyd – aye; John Dale – aye; Charles Gordon – aye; Patricia (Pat) Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye. Motion approved.

Approval of the Minutes: (September 9, 2011) A motion was made and seconded to approve the September 9, 2011, meeting minutes. Pat Gross requested corrections on page 2 under her report, the name “Laurie Bauer” be corrected and in the same paragraph Pat said “the patrons are loving it” add “according to Tammy Covalt.” Motion carried on roll call vote: Diane Boyd – aye; John Dale – aye; Charles Gordon – aye; Patricia Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye; and Steve Batty – aye. Motion approved.

Public Forum – No comments.

Chair’s Report and Commissioners’ Comments

John Dale reported that he attended the Nebraska Library Association (NLA) – Nebraska Educational Media Association (NEMA) joint conference and commented that there were some excellent programs. John said the conference was a wonderful opportunity to see people and see what’s going on with libraries around the state. John said the conference was also a good opportunity to get in touch with our NEMA cohorts to learn about what they’re doing these days. John shared a news article from the *Wayne Herald* about the open house at the Wayne Public Library and featuring the Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities Project. John also mentioned that Wayne State College is seeking a consultant for a library building renovation project.

Charles Gordon commented that the NLA-NEMA conference was excellent and he was very impressed with Lincoln High School’s media center (location of the conference reception). Charles said that his grandson is a student there and his grandson remarked that the library is one of the “neatest places in the whole school.” It was mentioned that Lincoln High’s school library

media center is one of 35 high school media centers recognized nationally this past year. Charles said that Fremont public library's interim director, Laura England-Biggs, is doing a "super job" and that Fremont has finally opened the library director position for applications. Charles commented that the Fremont public library still does not have a children's librarian.

Pat Gross reported on the Panhandle Library System coordinator position vacancy. Pat said that Debbie McCall, PLS administrative assistant, is doing a wonderful job keeping the PLS office open and functioning. Pat highlighted two author visits to the region held within two weeks of each other. Author Diane deGroat visited the Panhandle region October 18-20. Over 5,325 specially designed bookmarks were given out. deGroat gave a couple of public presentations and six school presentations. The school presentations were for 2nd and 3rd grade students. There were 2, 300 some students and 207 adults she visited with. Pat complimented school administrators for getting on the ball and superintendents for figuring out how important it is for these kids to attend the author presentation. Pat said that public and school librarians worked together to plan and arrange the author tour event. Diane deGroat's visit was followed four days later by a visit and presentations by Neal Shusterman as part of a statewide project funded by the Library Commission with additional grant support from the Nebraska Arts Council, Nebraska Humanities Council, and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment. Regional systems assisted with arrangements. Shusterman's author tour was for the One Book for Nebraska Teens project featuring his book, *Unwind*. Shusterman's presentations took place at the Scottsbluff and Alliance public libraries. Pat credited Scottsbluff public library's Nancy Escamilla with arranging a middle school session. Pat commented that she had requested information from Panhandle region libraries to share. Stephanie O'Connor responded from the Alliance public library. She sent information about a variety of Alliance projects and activities including information about use of the library broadband project computers. Pat said that Stephanie arranged a Tech Boutique – a special room within the library that provides a quiet space for patrons. Pat passed around copies of the Alliance public library's programs and upcoming events. The library provides space for testing and an education resource center. In addition, the Alliance library provides a monthly program for kids to learn about their community.

Steve Batty reported that he attended and enjoyed the NLA-NEMA conference. Steve noted the conference program session on project based learning as one of the excellent programs. Steve said that the McCook library foundation purchased the lot and house next to the library and plans to give the property to the city for library use. The McCook library elevator project is on hold. Funds are available for the project but the work is to be managed through the city. Steve said he contacted Denise Harders, Republican Valley Library System director, and she gave him some information on activities within the region. The RVLS board will hold its January board meeting via a conference call. Elwood Public Library broke ground on its new 3,500 ft. facility on October 13. Arapahoe Public Library is finishing up a major remodeling project and will host an open house on November 15. The Red Cloud Auld public library held an open house that included County Judge Michael Offner to talk about court services that can be accessed online. Steve said the Red Cloud library event was part of the Commission's library broadband project. The RVLS has a new service to provide disc cleaning and repair. RVLS is updating the rotating Spanish language kits; they went from six to ten due to demand for the kits. The Meridian Library System and RVLS are coordinating several workshops together to stretch resources

(story time strategies, eBooks and a hands-on workshop for libraries to develop policies and procedures).

Sherry Crow reported that Neal Shusterman spoke at two Meridian system sites this past week – Lexington Middle School with a group of over 400 students and Doniphan-Trumbull Schools with several hundred there. Sherry said that she also attended the NLA-NEMA conference. In addition to attending conference programs she was the co-registration desk director and joined Judy Henning in a conference program presentation. Sherry said the conference gave her an opportunity to meet with her students face-to-face and it was a highlight for her to see them there. Sherry said that the University of Nebraska at Kearney Calvin T. Ryan Library is having a ribbon cutting ceremony this afternoon for their Learning Commons. Sherry will attend. The Learning Commons combines resources and provides one place for people to come and gather. The UNK commons combines the tutoring and writing centers and houses them within the library. The commons also includes a production center for which they brought in extra technology, terminals and printers. Sherry mentioned the story time strategy workshop coming up with RVLS. The Meridian system is encouraging a week of library weeding and offering an incentive. Participating libraries can enter a drawing for a Kindle e-Reader. The Valentine public library will have an open house for the BTOP grant. Sherry said that she attended the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) conference last month. With support from UNK, UNO and NEMA, a chartered bus took 30 librarians from Nebraska to the conference in Minneapolis. Sherry said the conference was especially valuable for UNK's library science education program and its efforts to obtain national recognition.

Director's Report

Rod Wagner asked Devra Dragos to report on the Commission's NebraskAccess and Nebraska Memories programs. Devra said that NebraskAccess includes licensed databases and information included by the Commission's reference services team. These sources include websites selected for their relevance and value. The reference services team keeps an updated set of frequently asked questions and responses. The two most popular databases are the Wilson Omnifile and the Wilson Biographies. Devra commented that H.W. Wilson, a company that has been in existence for over 100 years, has been purchased by EBSCO, an information services and publishing company. EBSCO is a major vendor of databases and other services. The Commission has not previously purchased their products, largely due to cost. Devra commented that this change has caused concern in regard to the transition and pricing of products and services. EBSCO has assured Wilson customers that price increases are not planned. However, that is for the short term. The company has also said they will keep all the features of the Wilson databases or improve them. Devra said that EBSCO has actually removed the help pages for the Wilson databases and haven't replaced them with new versions. And they haven't migrated the databases to their platform. Commission staff members are working with EBSCO to make the transition as smooth as possible, setting up accounts ahead of time and making sure that IP recognition is in place for those libraries that have IP recognition. EBSCO representatives have said that the Wilson interface platform will be gone at the end of the year and the entire set of databases should have migrated to their EBSCO host platform by that time. They have said that the Omnifile database will continue to be available. Devra said that Omnifile covers a lot of different topics; it has academic research, but not as many subject areas. It also has popular magazines and new types of materials. EBSCO did not have anything that was a close match. Instead they break

out subject areas into separate databases. One benefit is that EBSCO has a sole provider license agreement with Time publications. When EBSCO obtained sole provider rights for Time publications these publications were no longer available through the Wilson Omnifile.

Devra reported on other online resources licensed and made available via NebraskAccess. Products and services licensed through ProQuest include eLibrary and Heritage Quest. eLibrary is also a general full package database including newspapers and other publications. However, it's not a match for the Wilson Omnifile, although it does include full text. Devra said that HeritageQuest is an especially popular resource for genealogy information. Devra said that she recently attended a BTOP library open house in Paxton and a couple people there commented on how much they use HeritageQuest and how much they appreciate having it available. The databases are promoted in many different venues.

Books in Print (BIP) is licensed from Bowker, a ProQuest unit. BIP is an online book and eBook bibliographic reference source used primarily by librarians, booksellers and publishers. In addition, the Commission subscribes to OCLC online services including FirstSearch and WorldCat. These are services essential to interlibrary resource sharing.

Devra reported on Nebraska Memories, the Library Commission's digital library of historical and cultural heritage materials. Devra said that there are currently 30 collections included in Nebraska Memories. A new participant will be added this month, the Nebraska Children's Home in Omaha. The Children's Home materials will include items from the Home's over 100 years of existence. The Commission uses CONTENTdm for managing access to the digital collection. It houses images and provides the search interface. Five Commission members alternate in contributing blog posts weekly on the Commission website about Nebraska Memories content.

Devra commented that she and Beth Goble participated in an American Library Association Office of Information and Technology Policy (OITP) sponsored webinar on "Digitizing Hidden Collections" this past week. Devra and Beth gave a presentation on Nebraska Memories. There were three other presenters involved in the webinar (archived and available from the American Library Association). Devra commented on being amazed about some of the comments that are received from the Nebraska Memories homepage. People comment about how they are linked to Nebraska and about their ancestors, etc., and how they appreciate the different images we have.

Rod Wagner asked Devra to comment on the Nebraska OverDrive Libraries project. Participating libraries now number 99 libraries and an additional four are planning to join in January. Devra was asked about Amazon.com and its Kindle eBook reader service. Devra said that the service doesn't provide near the number of titles that are available through OverDrive or some of the other vendors that are starting to become established. Amazon makes this service available to its Prime membership which reduces participation by a significant amount. Steve Batty asked how decisions are made about purchase of eBooks versus audiobooks. Devra said that the ratio of eBook to audiobook purchases has changed and now is split 50/50. There is intent to build the eBook collection and there are now over 3,000 titles in the collection. There are multiple copies for some high demand books.

Sherry Crow commented that the single most frequent topic that comes up for her, as a commissioner, is the Commission's database subscriptions. She said that she loves the databases, but for some reason, the Commission has a public relations problem with school librarians with regard to our database subscriptions. Sherry said that she doesn't know if it is warranted, but believes we should do something about this, whether we do some surveys, or take some other action. Sherry said that she would like to see something happen in order that school librarians feel that they have been heard and that we evaluate our databases and access in light of school library media centers. Pat Gross commented that if it had not been for the Commission databases she wouldn't have been able to do her high school job. Pat observed that she believes most of the concerns are coming from the elementary and middle schools. Pat said that she was fortunate because in her area ESU 13 contracted with World Book and other vendors. Different ESUs are doing different things and that's probably where some of the PR needs to be. Unfortunately vendors want to charge the Commission a lot more for schools because of the numbers.

Rod Wagner said the database subscriptions don't fit the needs of all libraries, and schools are not included for some subscriptions due to cost. Online encyclopedias are an example. Wagner said there is some history in this regard. Several years ago the Commission, with help from some school library media specialists and the Nebraska Library Association, sought funding to acquire a subscription for an online encyclopedia. It would have been available for use throughout the state including all libraries, schools, businesses and homes. The request was tied to Department of Education requirements for school library resources. The proposal, for approximately \$250,000, was successful in getting full support of the legislature's appropriations committee and the legislature approved the funding as part of the state appropriations bill. However, the governor vetoed the appropriation. The appropriation would have included funds for some companion licenses that would have appealed to the elementary and middle school levels. That was the last opportunity we had to fund additional online resources, in a significant way, and that would have addressed the gap we have in coverage.

Rod Wagner reported that Sally Snyder was recognized at the NLA-NEMA conference and was given the School, Children's and Young People's Section Mad Hatter Award. The award is one of the most prized within the NLA. Rod commented that John Felton, the Commission's Planning and Data Services Coordinator, recently received the John Lorenz Award from the Institute of Museum and Library Services for timely and accurate submission of public library statistics. Rod thanked all of those who were able to attend the NLA-NEMA conference. The Commission had a number of staff involved, and especially because the conference was here in Lincoln. Michael Sauers was local arrangements co-chair and other Commission staff assisted as committee members on local arrangements and conference support. Many stopped by the Commission exhibit. Next year will be a Tri-Conference including the Mountain Plains Library Association (MPLA). The MPLA includes twelve states and MPLA members will likely add a few hundred additional people to the conference and additional programming. The date is October 17-19, 2012, at the Embassy Suites in La Vista.

Wagner reported on the Nebraska Center for the Book annual meeting and Celebration of Books which was held on October 22 at the Lied Center for Performing Arts in Lincoln. The program included presentation of the Jane Geske Award to The Backwaters Press and Nebraska Book Awards for the several book categories. The program included remarks and readings by book

award recipients. The program also included the announcement of the 2012 One Book, One Nebraska choice Joe Starita's book *I Am A Man: Chief Standing Bear's Journey for Justice*. Starita's book was previously the book chosen for the Lincoln City Libraries One Book – One Lincoln program. Joe Starita is on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln journalism school faculty. The Celebration of Books event concluded with a reception, book sales and signings.

Wagner reported on his trip to Santa Fe, New Mexico, in October to attend the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies meeting and Western Council of State Libraries meeting. During that time the Board of the Institute of Museum and Library Services held its meeting in Santa Fe. State librarians were invited to attend the IMLS meeting as part of the week's activities. The IMLS board includes 18 or so members, equally representative of museums and libraries. Board members are presidential appointees. Wagner said that this was the first time he had attended one of their meetings and it included some interesting presentations. The COSLA meetings covered numerous topics and included presentations from representatives of a number of organizations that affiliate with COSLA including the Institute of Museum and Library Services, American Library Association, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Urban Libraries Council, and the U.S. Government Printing Office - Federal Documents Depository Program. COSLA is significantly involved in projects related to eBooks, everything from policies and standards to collaboration with organizations that are involved in publishing eBooks. One of the actions at the meeting was approval of an agreement to collaborate with the Brewster Kahle's Open Library digital books project, a project of the non-profit Internet Archive.

The COSLA meeting included a discussion with Ruth Scovill, Acting Director of the National Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped at the Library of Congress. There are some exciting developments in the NLS's digital books program. It was significant to have Ruth Scovill present to discuss the program with the state library agencies that serve as the national program's regional libraries. The experience nationally, as well as here in Nebraska, is that the introduction of the new digital talking book players has resulted in a dramatic increase in use. There were people who didn't want anything to do with cassette players who are now using the new players. The next generation of these digital book players will include wireless capability so that books can be downloaded directly.

Rod Wagner reported that next week he and Mary Jo Ryan will travel to Seattle to participate in a meeting at the Gates Foundation headquarters. The foundation is interested in supporting state libraries and in building their capacity to carry out their statewide missions.

Wagner said that the State Advisory Council on Libraries will meet on November 18 at the Library Commission offices. A major topic for the Council will be discussion of trends and issues that will build into development of Nebraska's next five-year LSTA state program.

Wagner reported that the library broadband project is moving forward very well. The project staff is continuing to acquire, arrange delivery and install technology in the project libraries. We are moving closer to the day when all the libraries will have their technology in place and in use. Rod said that for those libraries that have their computer equipment, there are some great stories coming back on how the equipment is being used and the benefits of having the new and additional technology. John Dale said that the Wayne Public Library is a great example.

Everything they do there is just top notch. The Wayne library had a really good event to showcase and introduce the new computers and technology. The library also served as a site for a workshop to help area librarians learn how to use the ADA software, software provided for those who have special needs. The Wayne staff really embraced that and promoted it. Wagner said that project participating libraries are encouraged to hold local events to introduce and promote the project. The Commission provides information helpful in arranging and promoting these events. Commission staff members schedule attendance for the library events with an effort to cover each of them.

Financial Report

Rod Wagner presented the most recent financial report. Wagner said the Commission's budget is on track and within budgeted funding. Wagner said that travel expenses are high at this point in the year but that reflects a lot of travel activity during September and October. Travel tapers off during the late fall and early winter months.

Sherry Crow expressed that she would like to commend the Commission staff for their activity at the NLA-NEMA conference this year. A motion was made and seconded to approve the commendation to the Commission staff. Motion carried on roll call vote: John Dale – aye; Charles Gordon – aye; Patricia Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye; Steve Batty – aye; Diane Boyd – aye. Motion approved. Commissioners asked John Dale if he would write a letter to Commission staff expressing the commendation from Commission members to the staff.

Wagner reported on the Commission's deficiency appropriations' request. The request was submitted last week. The request includes funds to restore state aid program appropriations back to last fiscal year's state funding level. The actual amount that was included for the state aid portion was \$88,138 and that amount was included both for this year and next fiscal year. The other part of the deficiency appropriation request is for digital talking book supplies – flash memory cartridges and mailers. The request for this fiscal year is \$4,900 and next year is \$19,600. Wagner said that he shared the good news previously that the Institute of Museum and Library Services granted our LSTA state program maintenance of effort waiver request. Had the waiver not been approved the Commission's LSTA funding allotment would have been reduced by approximately \$100,000 (for the October 1, 2011, through September 30, 2012 federal fiscal year). The current concern is that this year's LSTA funds are appropriated based on a Congressional continuing resolution which provides short term funding. Nebraska's allocation thus far represents 16% of the year. Congress will need to act soon to either extend funding for an additional portion of the year or for the remainder of the fiscal year. Current allocations are based on last fiscal year's funding level. Wagner said that the best outcome is funding at last year's level and it is possible that funding will be further reduced. Federal funding is tentative. Rod said that last year's LSTA funding level was \$70,000 less than the prior year and we had not anticipated that. In the coming months work will begin on the next biennium budget period. State agency budget requests will be due September 15.

John Dale asked if we went through the entire last year on the basis of continuing resolutions. Wagner said that Congress finally acted on appropriations in April for the remainder of the federal fiscal year (ending September 30). Even worse, LSTA funds were reduced by about 11%.

It was expected that LSTA funding would remain at the prior year level. Nebraska's LSTA state program allotment was reduced by about 6%, or nearly \$70,000.

New Business

Out-of-State Travel Request – Rod Wagner requested approval to attend a Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) meeting and the American Library Association Midwinter Meeting in Dallas, from January 20-24, 2012. COSLA holds a full day meeting prior to the start of the ALA meeting. Wagner said that his primary obligation is that he serves on the ALA ALTAFF division board and the board will meet during the Midwinter Meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Out-of-State Travel Request. Motion carried on roll call vote: Charles Gordon – aye; Patricia Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye; Steve Batty – aye; Diane Boyd – aye; and John Dale – aye. Motion approved.

Next Meeting Date – The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 13. Charles Gordon stated he would not be able to attend the next meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the next meeting date. Motion carried on roll call vote: Patricia Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye; Steve Batty – aye; Diane Boyd – aye; John Dale – aye; and Charles Gordon – aye. Motion approved.

Adjournment

John Dale adjourned the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

Mary Geibel, Secretary