

## Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries

Lincoln, Nebraska  
November 18, 2011

### MINUTES

State Advisory Council members present: Merrillene Wood, Vickie Retzlaff, Deb Carlson, Steve Fosselman, Ellen Weed, Francine Canfield, Christine Walsh, Janet Stoeger Wilke, Kate Borchman Hassebrook, Denise Harders, Beth Falla, Ceri Daniels, Glenda Willnerd, Pat Leach, Jayne Hlavac, Robin Bernstein. Commission staff: Rod Wagner, John Felton, Mary Jo Ryan, Laura Johnson, Michael Sauers.

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Merrillene Wood opened the meeting with a welcome and introductions of those present.

**Approval of the Agenda:** Merrillene Wood remarked that the NLA report would be moved to an earlier place on the agenda since Christine Walsh needed to leave by noon for another meeting. A motion was made by Kate Borchman Hassebrook and seconded by Deb Carlson to approve the agenda as revised. Motion approved.

**Approval of Minutes (March 11 & July 15, 2011):** Glenda Willnerd, Pat Leach, and Janet Wilke requested corrections to the July 15, 2011, meeting minutes. The corrections were noted. A motion was made by Ceri Daniels and seconded by Steve Fosselman to approve the March 11, 2011, minutes. Motion approved. A motion was made by Ellen Weed and seconded by Francine Canfield to approve the July 15, 2011, minutes with corrections. Motion approved.

**Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

#### **Reports / Discussion**

*Nebraska Library Commission* – Rod Wagner reported that funding for the Library Services and Technology Act is being distributed under a Congressional continuing resolution. The resolution provides funding for a portion of the year until Congress completes appropriations for the full fiscal year. The current resolution expires in December so Congress will need to act to extend funding beyond the expiration date. Allocations are based on this past fiscal year's appropriation level.

Wagner said that there is legislation under consideration to include school libraries in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization. Wagner said this is legislation to watch and support and to contact Congressional representatives about. The American Library Association Washington Office has issued information about the ESEA legislation.

*Technology Game Changers* – Michael Sauers

Rod Wagner introduced Michael Sauers, Library Commission Technology Innovation Librarian. Wagner had asked Michael to provide his perspective on the technologies that are prominent and that librarians should be paying attention to in their planning and programming. Michael said that in some cases there are things we ought to be doing and in some cases we ought to be

thinking about. He mentioned technologies that have been around for a long while – the first web server, Nintendo, and the Rodney King video - what do these have in common? Michael said this all happened in 1991 – so the web has been around since 1991. We still have a lot of libraries in the state without any web presence. Michael said the Commission's Nebraska Libraries on the Web project is supporting libraries in developing websites. There are currently 30 libraries involved, but could we say that the web is a technology game changer? It has been for 20 years and some of us are still not necessarily up to speed with that. Michael said that email has been available since 1982 and there are still libraries and librarians without email addresses. Email is a technology game changer. Michael said that he could talk about those things coming in the future, but we really have these things that some of us are still trying to catch up with. What are the things that are coming up and they are not in the future, they are here already, but we need to be dealing with within the next five years?

Michael mentioned a workshop he had just taught on e-books and e-readers. What are the issues that go along with these technologies? The obvious is the death of print. We are moving to these electronic formats. What issues do these actually raise? Digital rights management is one of the issues, including access to and use of e-books, transferring e-books among devices, and content ownership. Licensing of digital content is a difficult issue. In most instances libraries are licensing this content and what happens when prices go up and we can't afford it, or the content just gets pulled out of the system? We've been licensing databases for a very long time and now we are licensing e-books.

Sauers mentioned standards as another issue. There are different technologies in use. There are privacy issues to be addressed. Amazon's initiative to loan e-books was noted as another facet of e-book trends. Digital rights management, pricing, competitive technologies, privacy, are all in the mix of issues for libraries to contend with in relation to the availability and use of e-books and e-reader devices.

Michael noted that mobile devices are among the game changers. He said that there are more mobile phones than people in the U.S., and that 40% of the devices are smartphones. That number is growing dramatically along with use of full data plans, web browsing, email, the whole "shebang." Michael addressed the question of how the growth in use of mobile devices affects libraries. He noted the proliferation of apps and the complication of requiring them to be platform-specific along with different formats. Michael said that for libraries, assuming they have a website, making sure the website works really well in a mobile environment. He said there are ways to do that without a lot of work. More and more smartphones are starting to get very good browsers in them that are very functional. Michael said that libraries don't necessarily have to make a whole separate version of their website for mobile, but at least make sure it works.

Curating versus creating content was noted. Michael said the idea is that we don't necessarily need to be just a location that curates. Maybe we need to be the wizards that can find the stuff that people are looking for. Maybe we don't necessarily need to just have it there. If we do this, we can't all have everything, but we can encourage creation in two ways – one is we need to be creating content ourselves. He said that at the Commission we create podcasts and video-casts. It doesn't have to cost a lot of money. We are having these events anyway. Record them. Put them up. It's easy to get a YouTube video up and you can buy a \$30 camera to do it. You can live stream off the web to do it in HD.

Michael mentioned Steven Johnson's ideas and a video Johnson produced. The video is a cartoon drawn as he's talking. Very few new ideas come out of nowhere. Usually these separate pieces are pulled together. Shouldn't the library be a place where they can get all those connections and pull them together? Michael said that we tell people to come to the library and we'll help find a job. Why not help people make connections and let them know that this is the place where these connections can be made.

Michael referred to an article about the [Fayetteville Free Library](#), near Syracuse (NY). The article described a different role that this library is providing. The library is involved in creation. It provides "Fab Labs" or places where people can literally create physical objects. Not every library has this type of situation, but the Fayetteville Free library is in an old furniture factory. They got space and turned the entire basement into the "Fab Lab." They have a 3D printer for the public to use. They have a lot of space and work benches where people can physically make things. They are creating.

Michael said that the [Pew Research Center](#) is starting a new project to study the changing role of public libraries and library users in the digital age. They are actively looking for libraries to participate in the first stage of research. If nothing else, watch for the research that comes out of this if you're trying to figure out where the public thinks we're going, and what they are actually using the library for. This is the opportunity where your library can participate in the study. I think we have to have at least one library in Nebraska represented in this project.

Mary Jo Ryan responded to Michael's mention of NCompass Live. She reminded everyone that the Commission presents a webinar every Wednesday. The presentations cover a variety of topics and are archived for later listening and viewing. She also mentioned the Commission's blog postings and encouraged subscription to the blog for a weekly listing of blog posts. She said that many programs and presentations are recorded for reuse and repurposing as much as possible.

*Nebraska Library Association Update* – Christine Walsh thanked everyone for attending the October NLA-NEMA joint conference. She said that planning is underway for the tri-conference (including the Mountain Plains Library Association) to be held next October. Volunteers to help with conference activities are most welcome. The NLA has hired an editor for the first eJournal that NLA will be publishing. It has been a long road developing job descriptions and getting this venture put together. Christine said the first eJournal will be a practitioner Journal and won't be peer reviewed. She said that an intent is to give attention to the practitioner side of NLA membership. The goal is to launch the journal within the next six months. Christine said that the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will provide server space. A second journal is also planned. This one will be peer reviewed. Christine said that this journal will provide an opportunity to publish research. Christy invited those interested in involvement in the NLA journals to contact the NLA publications committee.

#### *2013-2018 State LSTA Long Range Plan – Council Discussion*

Merrillene Wood introduced the Council discussion topic and past meeting discussions of the "new normal" for libraries. Merrillene said that the new normal is characterized by economic conditions and their effect on libraries. The new normal also includes technology evolution and how that is affecting libraries. The state of the economy is such that libraries have experienced reduced budgets and corresponding cuts in staff, library resources, and less funding for

technology needs. Libraries are challenged to respond to the new things patrons are asking for, such as e-books, e-book readers, access to online information, smartphones, and more. The new normal is changing the face of libraries and the scope of what librarians do. Merrillene commented that things are not as they were; they're changing daily, and we need to address that and get the services we need for our patrons and the information they need by using these avenues and new types of technologies within the budgets we have.

Rod Wagner stated that the council has had good discussion of the changing environment and wanted to capture ideas expressed by the council for long range planning. Wagner recognized Steve Fosselman for introducing the topic two years ago and continuing it as a theme for consideration. The library surveys have provided useful information about the economic and service climate for Nebraska libraries.

Wagner asked council members to join in a discussion of questions prepared to contribute toward Nebraska's next five-year plan for the Library Services and Technology Act state program. The council organized into three groups to discuss the prepared questions. Wagner said that the questions were intended to start the conversation and that members shouldn't feel limited by them.

11:45 am – The council re-convened for reports from the discussion groups.

*Group #1* - Kate Borchman Hassebrook reported. The group discussed the rise of marketing. Kate noted the perception that library services are free, although they're really not and people know that, we're all tax payers. Group members reminded each other to keep in mind the value of the library and to keep ourselves viable. Libraries have become a place for filing for unemployment, job searching and that type of purpose. The group discussed libraries having computers for public use. With employers receiving and reviewing job applications online it is important for people to have computers for use. Kate noted that Google ads are a means to market on a low-cost basis.

The group discussed advertising on local radio stations, TV stations, newspapers, and through public service announcements. They also discussed getting brochures and flyers out and continuing to get information in front of the public. Joining the Chamber of Commerce was encouraged to take advantage of that opportunity. Michael asked if our library is on our local community map, a resource that comes up when people stay at motels and hotels. Free advertising on a marquee was mentioned. After an event happens, record it and advertise it and keep it out there so people will want to come back and do it again in the future. What are people asking for – the general public, students, faculty, staff, administrators and boards – taking into account Nebraska's demographic pattern? Multicultural needs, both materials and staff, who is multicultural and who has multi-language ability. The group discussed segments of the population to be served through outreach, talking books, etc.

Book clubs and book talks are other activities that bring people to libraries. Libraries provide resources and opportunities for kids. Kids making videos was mentioned as an example. Videos are taking the place of book reports and libraries are a place to help with those activities. Kate asked if library staff are comfortable helping patrons with things like e-readers. Does the library staff know how to use the equipment? The Commission's resources were discussed and how those can be utilized. It is time to start marketing now, start advertising services for people who

get e-readers for Christmas and don't know how to use them. The group discussed marketing for talking books for the home bound. And they discussed how libraries can best publicize stories that convey the many services provided by libraries. Publicizing human interest stories – get a cheap video camera to record people telling stories. Help people tell their stories and get them on video. Add them to YouTube which can be played in the library. Partnering with the Chamber of Commerce was discussed. Kate said that the message doesn't have to be big or have a big audience, we just have to remind people that we're there. Take advantage of things like teen read week at the Schuyler Public Schools where staff and teachers wrote about what book turned them into a reader; get things like that recorded.

*Group #2* – Deb Carlson commented that no matter what the new normal is we absolutely must be flexible and be in position to handle all that will be coming at us. We know and recognize it's a huge learning curve. Deb said that one thought that came up right away is that there is a bigger gap than ever because of what has happened with the new normal and some other contributors. Francine Canfield noted generational factors – the younger population has different styles and preferences, but we still need to serve other generational segments. The economic gap was also noted. Deb said we must remember that libraries need to serve those who may not have access in the same manner as others.

Carlson said that the group discussed what venues we are going to use to communicate. Some prefer information be sent by email, others by text message, others via Facebook, and still others by phone. Libraries must effectively reach all people within the community. Deb said that with all the technology we have available we can't sacrifice the personal touch, that it is absolutely critical. The group discussed polling people and asking how they heard about something that they attended. Invariably it seems to end up that it was by "word of mouth." No matter how good a job you do, if you can't somehow provide the personal experience it's all lost with some people. Deb commented on Jamie LaRue's presentation at the NLA-NEMA conference and an article he wrote (published in *American Libraries*) about finding people to go out and tell the story about the value of library services.

The group discussed being global and available 24/7. Even with our changing demographics we have to find ways to be accessible when the library is not open. Some of the smaller libraries simply don't have access, sometimes because they can't afford it or because their community isn't driven that way. Smaller libraries have different challenges to address.

Carlson said that "personal touch" kept coming up in their discussion. She related Scottsbluff's experience with their library building renovation and expansion project. She said they came up with "community living room" as a concept and that idea was embraced by the community. Others have used the concept of the library as the "front porch" in promoting the idea of personalizing the library. Deb said that even if people are not coming to the library as a result of outside access to e-books they are coming to the library for other purposes – other activities and events hosted by the library.

In regard to new trends – being attentive to what people are asking for – have we asked them? We've got to find ways to reach out and really find out what people want. Surveys and polling don't always work. We shouldn't assume that we know the demographics of our communities. The group discussed different ways to publicize. Multiple strategies are needed from bulletin

board posts, Twitter, news outlets, and through volunteers/advocates, word of mouth marketing (as previously mentioned), etc. We all have strengths and differences – use them.

*Group #3* – Steve Fosselman reported on behalf of the group. Steve said that there aren't any services anymore that are automatically carried on by tradition. In regard to the "big picture" library's parent institutions determine priorities and it's not unheard of in the public library or school that a beautiful 125 year old tradition be subsumed into another form or another way of serving. Steve said that governing bodies could easily solve our problems if they just, for instance, decided that cities and counties, two forms of government that get along or two counties that are contiguous or three or four that are contiguous, could have one or all sorts of things that could save many, many dollars. That could be done, but these governing bodies control the method of prioritization and their method is to tackle what they feel are the essentials and then tackle them again in regard to what they feel are the non-essentials.

Steve said that it is in the library's interest to position itself as an essential part of the big picture, whether it's around broadband (which is a great motivator for an institution) or in some libraries, be they school or public or university, whether they truly are the community center. Libraries might not be the community center, but they have to be at the table at all times when any discussion is happening about a community and they must be helping to solve a problem or be part of the solution. Community engagement – we talked about the "community front porch" and "the community living room" in all of our groups, but community engagement is a largely volunteer activity by folks in town. So whether it's programming that's done, or publicity or marketing, librarians can't just go to a workshop and come back to their institution and say "well that sure was nice, but I don't have time for this."

Steve said that libraries have to decide, like those larger institutions are deciding for us, what falls by the wayside. He remarked that it is so hard for us to do – to throw things to the wayside – and what that is in your community perhaps helps the five-year plan; just because we are in our old local institutions, we're no longer defined by traditions, but we are defined by priority. The LSTA program and the LSTA long range plan are no longer going to be something that we can point tradition at. We have to point to what will be done in the future and what will fall by the wayside.

Fosselman said that we can offer the most dynamic service in the world and position ourselves so that we can take care of the future, but in order to do that, there are things we have to do ourselves. Steve said that he and Pat Leach are working with the Pioneer Library Consortium. The first few years of their attempt at collaboration were painful. How do you do collaboration? Sometimes things go right, sometimes things go wrong, and still you have a vision for the next five or ten years that you're going to have things in position. Steve said you have to get through that. Part of the solution is talking about how we form ourselves for state-wide library development. Being in the future would involve more professionally guided collaboration rather than how do several hundred libraries do it alone. How do we get to the place that everybody loses or everybody agrees to lose a tiny little bit of autonomy? Steve said we don't have time to create that program ourselves. Professionally guided collaboration is the key for the future. Where there may be models of service that have absolutely nothing to do with the size of library that you are, maybe multiple site discounts, but that they produce circles of excellence. There is only going to be the one that costs the local libraries the least amount of money to do. Steve said that maybe we don't spend money writing grants to do it and having to come up with how to be

that model, professionally guided models are created for a similar purpose. We are not doing it the Barnes & Noble way; we are not doing it the old fashioned way. Every library is not so complete and unique that it has to do it completely different. It is a little bit in between and it allows that bit of collaboration to occur. It will happen that when we do programs, some people will come and some people won't, so we even have to come up with some ways for us to not just do traditional programming, but we have more guided collaboration. We need to figure out ways to find our niche and create learning centers within our libraries.

**Reports - Nebraska Educational Media Association – Glenda Willnerd** – Glenda highlighted NEMA activities. NEMA sponsored 12 sessions and Thursday's keynote speaker – Cassandra Barnett – at the October NLA-NEMA conference. The association presented several awards during its business meeting at the conference. Glenda said that Nebraska was well represented at the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) conference held in Minneapolis. NEMA provided bus transportation to the conference for 30 members. Glenda said that there were at least 40 Nebraskans at the conference. Glenda said that NEMA has appointed Betty Meyer, NEMA past-president, to serve a two-year term as the NEMA liaison to the State Advisory Council on Libraries.

All joined in applauding Glenda for her service on the State Advisory Council.

### **Unfinished Business**

*Council By-Laws* – Merrillene Wood referred to updates to the council by-laws that were discussed at the previous council meeting and requested a motion to approve the changes. It was moved by Francine Canfield and seconded by Robin Bernstein to approve the by-laws changes. Motion approved.

### **New Business**

*Recommendations and Resolutions* – There were no recommendations or resolutions presented.

*Special Recognition* – Merrillene Wood thanked Glenda Willnerd for serving on the council as the Nebraska Educational Media Association representative these past several years. Merrillene noted that Cindy Gitt was not able to attend the meeting to be personally recognized for her two terms of service on the council. Merrillene thanked Cindy for her contributions. Rod Wagner presented Glenda Willnerd with a Certificate of Appreciation and a Nebraska (Great Navy) Admiralship on behalf of the Nebraska Library Commission. These items will also be presented to Cindy Gitt at a later time.

Merrillene commented that Pat Leach, council vice-chair, will become chair beginning in 2012. The new vice-chair will be elected at the March council meeting. Rod Wagner thanked Merrillene for the great job she has done this year as council chair. Wagner also thanked Steve Fosselman and Merrillene Wood for a great presentation at the NLA-NEMA conference on the new normal study and for the library survey analysis. Steve expressed appreciation to Kathryn Brockmeier at the Library Commission for her help with the survey project.

*Next Meeting* – The next council meeting will be held on March 9 as a joint meeting with the Nebraska Library Commission members (pending confirmation by the Commission). The March meeting is typically held in Grand Island or Kearney, but the location is yet to be determined.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Mary Geibel  
Secretary

## **Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries**

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### Minutes – Attachment

#### **Council Round Table**

Vickie Retzlaff – The Grant County Library (Hyannis) is being remodeled as a result of the library’s involvement in the BTOP project. Additional space is needed to accommodate the new and additional computer equipment and furnishings. The library’s challenge has been the ground work and approvals necessary to move forward with remodeling. She said people are excited about the project.

Deb Carlson – The new library facility is a success. The Scottsbluff public library’s on-going challenges are the changes and accommodations required by budget cuts. A success is securing funding to re-open on Sundays. The Library’s expanded space has caused staff to be spread thin with the consequence that there is some loss of personal touch in customer service.

Steve Fosselman – the Grand Island Public Library is involved in a new community coalition initiative that will take place over the next two years – working toward a better community for the future. Library staff has made decisions resulting in dropping programs on some days and devotion of that time entirely to service. Steve said the library has started a new reference service called “Book-a-Librarian” for more complex information needs.

Ellen Weed – the Norfolk Regional Center administration values the library and that support is important to the library’s effectiveness. They’ve been able to make purchases that were not possible before. Ellen said that she collaborates with other departments (e.g., occupational therapy) and that, too, is helpful for programming. A challenge was an inventory that identified a number of missing items (CDs).

Francine Canfield – Francine said that Ralston’s challenge involves the shared integrated library system with the Omaha Public Library and Metropolitan Community College. The Ralston library will close for a few days for migration to the new ILS. Francine said that the library will close periodically for staff professional development – an idea that the library board supports and approved. The library had a 7.5% increase in circulation over last year and adds 80 to 100 new cardholders per month.

Janet Stoeger Wilke – The University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) held a ribbon cutting ceremony on November 4 for the Learning Commons with notable presence of administrators.

Janet said that now that the commons is in place effort can be devoted to collaboration. Janet said that gate count is up 24% over last year. Tutoring services are up 74%.

Kate Borchman Hassebrook – The Lyons public library received \$22,000 worth of computers, equipment, and furnishings plus an ADA workstation through the library broadband project. Kate mentioned a Festival of Trees project that the Lyons public library is involved in. She said the project is a real boost to the community.

Denise Harders – Denise said she's attended broadband project open houses including a recent one at the Red Cloud public library. Denise said there are lots of remodeling projects going on within the Republican Valley region (e.g., Arapahoe, Minden, and Elwood). She mentioned a successful weeding project at Arapahoe Public Schools that she assisted with. Denise said the project was a challenge with a positive and successful outcome.

Beth Falla – the Imperial public library's challenges involve questions to address and decisions to be made about library automation needs.

Ceri Daniels – End of year reports are a challenge. With technology there is an expectation that things will be done sooner. Their weeding activity involves destruction of old files. This is done every year and, thus, is manageable.

Glenda Willnerd – Glenda said that retirement is wonderful! She said that Lincoln Public Schools librarians gave a shower for people at the Lincoln Public Schools District Office that lost work and personal possessions as a result of the fire at the district office. Glenda said that many documents in the LPS archives were saved. Digitization is a success. Glenda said that decisions have involved deciding what to let go of and what to replace as a result of the fire. Some questions have been answered by decisions on the building location.

Pat Leach – A current challenge is the Lincoln City Libraries' main library concept study. The study involves consideration of purposes for the main library. The Pershing location is one option. Pat said that e-books are another challenge. She said it is exciting to see the interest in and use of e-books.

Jayne Hlavac – Jayne said that one of her challenges at Schuyler High School is not having student help. She said that there is a big demand for computers. A goal is providing a computer for each student.

Robin Bernstein – Bellevue University's enrollment has increased 19% in the past year. A new library staff position for an electronic services specialist has been funded. Robin said that a challenge is how to engage students, many of whom are online. It is a struggle to reach students.

Merrillene Wood said that Valetta Schneider, library director at Western Nebraska Community College for the past 16 years, has retired. Curtis Brundy is the new library director at WNCC. A challenge is developing a new strategic plan. Another is a drop in the number of students that has led to cutting a part-time clerk position.

Commission Staff Comments:

John Felton – The annual public library survey just started. John said that the statistics allow us to see trends. He said “you can’t manage what you can’t count.”

Mary Jo Ryan – The library broadband project has been successful in acquiring, delivering and installing computer equipment in many of the project libraries. The remaining libraries will receive their equipment and furnishings within the next few months. Attention and work is now shifting to the programming portion of the grant project.

Laura Johnson – The Commission’s Continuing Education and Training grants are different this year. A portion of the grant funds will pay for personal CE and a portion will pay for CE projects. Online courses are a possibility for funding.

Michael Sauers – The Commission will present an online program in late February titled “*Big Talk from Small Libraries.*” Michael said that the eight presenters are from rural libraries and they will cover a variety of topics.