

NEBRASKA LIBRARY COMMISSION

Lincoln, NE

November 19, 2021

MINUTES

The Nebraska Library Commission met on November 19, 2021. The meeting notice was posted on the Commission website and the Nebraska.gov public meeting calendar.

Commission members present: Vernon Davis, Beth Kabes, Arun Pondicherry, Lois Todd-Meyer and Julia Tye; via GoToMeeting: Kristin Wiebe. Staff present: Rod Wagner, Jennifer Wrampe; 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 Julia Tye and seconded by Lois Todd-Meyer to approve the agenda. Motion carried on roll call vote: Vernon Davis – aye; Beth Kabes – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer – aye; Julia Tye – aye; Kristin Wiebe – aye. Motion approved.

Approval of Minutes: (September 10, 2021) a motion was made by Kristin Wiebe and seconded by Vernon Davis to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried on roll call vote: Vernon Davis – aye; Beth Kabes – abstain; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer – aye; Julia Tye – aye; Kristin Wiebe – aye. Motion approved.

Chair's Report and Commissioner's Comments

Arun Pondicherry – attended the Library Innovation Studios Makerspace Conference at the Nebraska Innovation Campus Conference Center on November 2-3. Arun reported that a new facility will be built in Lincoln to include Arnold Elementary School, Williams Branch Library and Air Park Recreation Center. Lincoln City Libraries has a Master of Minutes Teen Reading challenge, inviting teens from middle and high school to participate.

Vernon Davis – No report.

Julia Tye – reported that the One Author Kearney event was held October 15 with author Anne Hillerman speaking. Kearney Public Library completed digitizing the Kearney Hub newspaper.

Lois Todd-Meyer – attended the Celebration of Nebraska Books event in October and shared a copy of the program listing the book award winners.

Beth Kabes – met with Tammi Thiem, Three Rivers Library System director, and reported on outreach Tammi has been doing with librarians in her area. Beth attended the virtual day of the NLA Conference and the Library Innovation Studios Makerspace Conference at the Nebraska Innovation Campus.

Kristin Wiebe – reported that Western Library System has been successful in helping libraries find resources. Library programs are getting back to what they used to be prior to the start of the pandemic. Scottsbluff Public Library is experiencing some staff turnover.

Director's Report

Personnel – Rod Wagner reported that Linda Babcock is retiring December 5. Recruitment is underway to re-fill her position. Alisha Baginski has been hired to fill the administrative technician position in government information services.

Nebraska Library Association Annual Conference – Wagner reported the conference was held October 12-14 with both virtual and in-person sessions. Tessa Terry arranged and hosted the NLC exhibit. Several Commission staff were among conference presenters. Holli Duggan, NLC continuing education coordinator, is the NLA president-elect and will serve as NLA president in 2023.

Nebraska Center for the Book – Wagner commented that Tessa Terry did a great job organizing the Celebration of Nebraska Books held in October at the Nebraska History Museum. The NCB annual meeting preceded the event. James Kimble, *Prairie Forge* author, was the keynote speaker. Matt Mason, Nebraska State Poet, was Master of Ceremonies. Most award winners were present to receive their awards. Tessa Terry arranged video recordings with authors unable to attend the event. Wagner reported the 2022 One Book One Nebraska selection is *Bones of Paradise* by Jonis Agee.

Library Innovation Studios Project – Wagner reported the LIS project officially ends December 31. The LIS Makerspace Conference was held at the Nebraska Innovations Campus on November 2-3 with 150 in attendance. There are three libraries currently hosting makerspace equipment. Arrangements will be made to pick up the equipment within the next month. JoAnn McManus distributed a survey asking libraries if they are interested in any of the equipment and materials that were used during the project. Survey responses will be used to determine distribution of project equipment and supplies among the 35 libraries that participated in the project. JoAnn is working on the final project report that is due following close of the grant.

Financial Report

October Budget and Financial Report – Wagner reported that state general fund appropriations are within budget. Travel expenses continue to be low. The Federal fiscal year was complete at the end of September with all funds expended.

LSTA FY 2022 Appropriation Status – Wagner reported that Congress adopted a continuing resolution extending funding for federal agencies and programs into early December. In December, Congress will need to either further extend funding or appropriate funds for the remainder of the federal fiscal year.

New Business

American Rescue Plan Act Allocations – Wagner reported that the largest portion of ARPA funds is budgeted for formula payments to public libraries for a total of \$1,425,000. Public libraries have until December 31 to submit applications. At this time, 63% of public libraries have submitted applications and \$1,054,483 has been distributed. The ARPA budget approved at the May Commission meeting left \$190,466 for designation after October 31. It is proposed that these remaining funds be allocated for Library Improvement Grants and Youth Grants for Excellence. Applications for these grants exceeded the amounts budgeted. Allocating the remaining ARPA funds will allow for more applications to be funded.

A motion was made by Beth Kabes and seconded by Arun Pondicherry to approve the allocation of funds to the Library Improvement Grants and Youth Grants for Excellence. Motion carried on roll call vote: Vernon Davis – aye; Beth Kabes – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer – aye; Julia Tye – aye; Kristin Wiebe – aye. Motion approved.

Next Meeting Dates –January 14; March 11.

Library Commission LSTA Five-Year State Program Evaluation – Sally Reed is conducting an evaluation and preparing a report on the Library Commission’s LSTA Five Year Plan (2018-2022). Reed met with commission members to receive input for the report.

Adjournment

Arun Pondicherry adjourned the meeting.

Jennifer Wrampe