

NEBRASKA LIBRARY COMMISSION

Lincoln, NE

September 9, 2022

MINUTES

The Nebraska Library Commission met on September 9, 2022. The meeting notice was posted on the Commission website and the Nebraska.gov public meeting calendar.

Commission members present: Beth Kabes and Lois Todd-Meyer; via GoToMeetin: Vernon J. and Arun Pondicherry. Staff present: Rod Wagner, Tessa Terry, 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 Vernon J. and seconded by Lois Todd-Meyer to approve the agenda. Motion carried on roll call vote: Vernon J. – aye; Beth Kabes – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer – aye. Motion approved.

Approval of Minutes: (July 8, 2022) a motion was made by Beth Kabes and seconded by Vernon J. to approve the minutes. Motion carried on roll call vote: Vernon J. – aye; Beth Kabes – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer – aye. Motion approved.

Chair's Report and Commissioner's Comments

Arun Pondicherry – no report

Vernon J. – no report

Beth Kabes – no report

Lois Todd-Meyer – no report

Director's Report

Personnel – Rod Wagner reported that there has not yet been any announcement from the governor's office about Commission appointments. He expects that appointments will be made and in place by the November meeting. Laura Mooney is the Commission's new administrative technician in government information services. Laura comes to the Commission from History Nebraska and will begin on September 19.

Broadband Improvements and Funding for Libraries – Christa Porter reported that we are in year three of the E-Rate state matching fund program for special fiber construction to public libraries and schools. This is the Nebraska Public Service Commission's program to incentivize new fiber construction by allocating one million dollars over four years to assist with fiber construction costs. The E-rate program will match the funding that the PSC provides to have fiber run to the

library or school buildings. This has helped many libraries to get fiber at no cost. There is an intro workshop being held on September 22. A more detailed workshop will be held at a later date.

Nebraska Center for the Book – Tessa Terry reported that she, Devra Dragos and Laurie Yocum attended the National Book Festival in Washing D.C. to represent the Nebraska Center for the Book. This is the first in-person event after being mostly online for the last two years. The Nebraska Book Awards submission deadline was June 30 with 62 books submitted. Judges have reviewed the books and winners will be announced soon. The awards presentation will be held October 22 at the Celebration of Nebraska Books event at the Nebraska History Museum. Letters about Literature is the annual reading and writing contest for students in grades 4-12. Students write a letter to an author explaining how that author’s work changed their way of thinking about the world or themselves. The submission period is October 1 through December 31. Sherry Houston and Richard Miller will be giving a presentation about LAL at the Nebraska School Librarians Association conference on October 15. NCB board members will give a presentation at the Nebraska Library Association conference on October 6.

Nebraska Access Redesign - Wagner recognized Devra Dragos, Susan Knisely, Alanna Novotny, Vern Buis and Janet Greser for their many hours of work on the NebraskAccess redesign – content and website organization. The new design became available on August 26. Devra Dragos will report on the redesign at the November meeting.

Nebraska Library Association Conference – Wagner reported the conference will be held October 5-6 in Kearney. The Library Commission will have an exhibit and Commission staff will be among conference presenters.

Nebraska School Librarians Day – Wagner reported the NSLA conference will be held October 15 with in-person or virtual options.

Brownstone Book Fund – Wagner reported that for the past 20 years Diane Brownstone has selected a state to work with for the state library to select 100 libraries to receive 100 children’s books. Books are selected from a list of titles provided by Diane Brownstone for the program. Additional titles can be recommended by the Library Commission, and especially those that may have a connection to the state. All costs are covered by the book fund. Nebraska was selected for this year’s book program. The state’s “neediest” libraries are intended for the program. Wagner asked regional library system directors to select libraries from their region based on the region’s proportion of the state’s total public libraries. Brodart is the company that assists the Brownstone Book Fund with ordering and processing books for delivery to libraries.

Financial Report

August Financial Report – Wagner said that some expenses are paid in full at the start of the state fiscal year – items such as dues/subscriptions, accounting/auditing fees, insurance assessments. That is the reason that some items will show as at or near 100% expended even though the fiscal year has only recently begun. Federal funds received through the LSTA Grants to States program must be expended within a two year period with the federal fiscal year ending September 30.

American Rescue Plan Act Budget and Expenditures – Wagner credited Christa Porter and Sam Shaw for their work administering the ARPA grant funds. A majority of funds have been made available to libraries as sub-grants. Sam Shaw manages the funds allocated to public and state institutional libraries on a formula basis and Christa is involved with administering the Library Improvement Grants. Sally Snyder is also involved in managing the Youth Services Grants. The original deadline from IMLS to have all purchasing and reporting completed was September 30. The Commission requested and received an extension to December 31 and an April date for reporting. Many other state library agencies have requested and received extensions. Sam Shaw has finalized 178 formula grants. There were 79 Library Improvement Grants awarded. The Youth Services Grants deadline is September 14. Stories have been posted on the Commission's website about ARPA funded projects.

LSTA Funding FY 2023 – Wagner reported that federal appropriations remain unknown at this time and that it is likely Congress will appropriate funds through a continuing resolution that will temporarily fund federal agencies and programs pending appropriations for the full federal fiscal year.

New Business

LSTA Five-Year Plan 2023-2027 – Wagner commented the five-year plan was included on the July Commission meeting agenda, but lacked a quorum for voting. The plan was submitted to IMLS by the June 30 deadline.

A motion was made by Lois Todd-Meyer and seconded by Arun Pondicherry to approve the Nebraska LSTA Five-Year Plan. Motion carried on roll call vote: Vernon J. – aye; Beth Kabes – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer – aye. Motion approved.

2023-2025 Biennium Budget Request – Wagner distributed a document summarizing the budget request. Discussion was held. The budget request is due by September 15.

A motion was made by Vernon J. and seconded by Arun Pondicherry to approve the 2023-2025 biennium budget request. Motion carried on roll call vote: Vernon J. – aye; Beth Kabes – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer – aye. Motion approved.

Next Meeting Dates –November 4, January 13, 2023.

Adjournment

Arun Pondicherry adjourned the meeting.

Jennifer Wrampe