

NEBRASKA LIBRARY COMMISSION

Lincoln, NE

September 10, 2021

MINUTES

The Nebraska Library Commission met on September 10, 2021. The meeting notice was posted on the Commission website and the Nebraska.gov public meeting calendar.

Commission members present: Beth Kabes, Arun Pondicherry, Lois Todd-Meyer; via GoToMeeting: Vernon Davis, Kristin Wiebe, and Julia Tye. Staff present: Rod Wagner, Kayla Henzel, Gabe Kramer; 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 Lois Todd-Meyer and seconded by Vernon Davis 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: (July 9, 2021) a motion was made by Kristin Wiebe and seconded by Arun Pondicherry 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 – No report

Lois Todd-Meyer – No report

Julia Tye – reported that the Central Plains Library System developed a downloadable poster exhibit for 20th anniversary of 9/11. Arapahoe Public Library completed its renovation and celebrated with a ribbon cutting. Kearney Public Library is preparing for the One Author Kearney event on October 15. Julia also reported that Kearney Public Library is moving back to in-person programming this month.

Beth Kabes – contacted the Three Rivers Library System director, Tammi Thiem, who provided her with a report of things she's been working on such as weekly virtual skills, supporting Banned Books Week, workshops, conferences, presentations, webinars, visiting libraries across the system, and next year's summer reading programming.

Kristin Wiebe – reported that libraries in the area are happy to be moving into more programming. Noted that the Western Library System newsletter featured technology available

through the Nebraska Library Commission and other libraries offering technology classes and clubs in the evenings.

Director's Report

Personnel – Rod Wagner reported that Chelsea Lemburg resigned her position with the Library Commission.

Library Innovation Studios Project Status – Wagner reported that Joann McManus is working on planning and arrangements for the November 2-3 Makerspace Conference at Nebraska Innovation Campus. McManus has arranged a Nebraska Library Association conference session to be held at the La Vista Public Library on October 13. Makerspace equipment will be demonstrated. The session will also include a panel presentation with presenters from LIS project host library staff. The project ends December 31.

American Rescue Plan Act Allocations – Christa Porter reported on the \$2.4 million awarded to the Nebraska Library Commission from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) appropriation. A portion of the money has been allocated for three grants: formula based, Library Improvement, and Youth Grants for Excellence. The Nebraska Library Commission has received 114 applications for formula based grants so far. Libraries have until December 31 to apply for formula based grants and many libraries are waiting for their fiscal year to end before applying.

Nebraska Center for the Book – Rod Wagner reported that the National Book Festival is a virtual event being held on September 17-26, 2021. Over 100 authors, poets, and illustrators will be presenting via the festival website. Author of the 2021 One Book One Nebraska, *Prairie Forge: The Extraordinary Story of the Nebraska Scrap Metal Drive of World War II*, James J. Kimble has traveled to several Nebraska communities for presentations. Kimble will be the keynote speaker at the Celebration of Nebraska Books event on October 23 at the Nebraska History Museum. The 2022 One Book One Nebraska announcement will be made on October 23 at Celebration of Nebraska Books event.

LSTA State Program Five-Year Evaluation (2018-2022) – Wagner reported that state library agencies are required to conduct a program evaluation every five years. It is required that the evaluation be done independently. Sally Reed, former Executive Director of United for Libraries, will conduct the evaluation.

Nebraska Department of Education Proposed Rule Changes re School Librarians – Wagner reported that the first draft of the proposal would substantially reduce requirements for school librarians. The Nebraska School Librarians Association has been informing and advocating responses to the draft proposal. The Nebraska Department of Education has paused the process and are not acting on the changes at this time.

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

Talking Book and Braille Service – Gabe Kramer reported changes over the past year, such as new Talking Book readers and certification for those with reading disabilities. Prior certification required a medical doctor’s signature. Nebraska will host the National Library Service conference on May 15-19, 2022. Goals for next year include a larger BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download) presence and reaching more patrons across the state.

Financial Report

August Budget and Financial Report – Wagner noted that expenses are paid annually and at the beginning of the state fiscal year on July 1. The remaining federal funds must be spent by September 30, the end of the federal fiscal year. A portion of the remaining funds for the Library Innovation Studios grant will go toward the makerspace conference expenses.

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

Build America’s Libraries Act Status – Wagner reported that BALA is not included in any infrastructure funding proposal at this time. September 15 is the date by which congressional committees have to report their appropriation recommendations. The BALA is funding that would be available and distributed through states for public libraries to use for construction, remodeling, and facility assessment. The estimate for Nebraska is \$34 million.

New Business

Next Meeting Dates – November 12 meeting moved to November 19; January 14; March (TBD)

Adjournment

Arun Pondicherry adjourned the meeting.

Kayla Henzel