

**Montana State Library Commission  
Minutes for October 8, 2003  
Miles City, MT**

**Attendees:**

**Commissioners:** Gail Staffanson, Al Randall, Donald Allen, Caroline Bitz, Bruce Morton, Cheri Bergeron

**Staff:** Karen Strege, Kris Schmitz, Jim Hill, Darlene Staffeldt, Barbara Duke, Suzanne Reymer, Christie Briggs

**Guests:** Renee Goss, Debbie Schlesinger, Mike Hamlett, Melissa Hartman, Fran O'Shea, Vera Abrams, Diane VanGorden

**Announcements and Introductions**

Randall expressed his appreciation to Mike Hamlett and staff for inviting the Commission to hold its meeting in Miles City.

Vera Abrams, Fallon County Library director, thanked the Commission for meeting in Eastern Montana. She said that she had never been to a Commission meeting before because it had always been so far to travel.

**Minutes Adoption**

Allen made a motion to accept the minutes from the August meeting. Bitz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**State Librarian's Report**

Strege stated that she has been busy with travel for the past few weeks. She attended the COSLA meeting in Tucson, held in conjunction with the Western Council meeting. That group received funding for a continuing education project that will lead to certification of non-degreed librarians across a 20 state region. As treasurer of Western Council, Strege participated in interviewing five candidates for the project leader position.

Strege also attended a meeting of the Information Futures Institute in Missoula. Strege and the state librarians from Washington and Idaho did a presentation about the future of state libraries. Strege gave the same presentation at PNLA in Boise.

Randall said that the State Library has restructured itself. We went back and looked at our mission statement to determine what it is we should be doing, and that is support public libraries across the state of Montana and support state government. The State Library used to be a pseudo-public library, but it isn't anymore. Randall believes that if we hadn't done that we wouldn't have ridden this budget storm as well as we did.

Bergeron said that Strege's staff is doing a lot of outreach to state employees. They're informing them about what resources are available at the State Library and offering training on how to use those resources. Many documents are available electronically so state employees can access them right at their desktops.

Schlesinger added that the State Library staff should not take things for granted because a lot of other state libraries got totaled. We need to be aware and ahead of the curve.

Last week, Strege was in Denver for the BCR board meeting.

Next week, a federation's future task force will meet via teleconference call. Randall represents the Commission on the task force; other members include the six federation coordinators, six federation members and three federation trustees. The task force will be looking at how federations need to change in times of decreased revenue. Federation members value networking, continuing education opportunities and joint projects, so the focus needs to be on those areas.

Randall said that the Commission firmly believes in federations, but it's time to do business differently. When budgets were cut during the last legislative session, funding had to be prioritized and federation funding was at the bottom of the list because the Commission felt that the best way to help all libraries and all federations was to save the statewide databases for the citizens of Montana.

Strege announced that Carolyn Meier, a circulation clerk in TBL, received employee of the year for the State Library. Meier has worked at the Library for 26 years. Strege and Staffeldt attended the reception where Meier received the governor's award for excellence in performance.

Strege has been sending information out about LSTA funding on Wired-MT. The Act has been reauthorized and the President has signed it, but the funding is in a separate appropriations bill. A conference committee has been established to decide the appropriations, but Montana has no representatives on that committee. Idaho, which is also a rural state with a small population base, has two representatives on the committee, so that may be to our advantage. Strege hopes to have the final LSTA budget by the December Commission meeting.

Strege announced that Andrine Haas and Honore Bray are new members of the Networking Task Force.

### **LDD**

Staffeldt showed the Commission a Lake County bookmobile poster. The bookmobile was touring Glacier County, so it stopped in Helena last week. The bookmobile is working with the Lake County Coalition for Kids, and they are operating three days a week, every other week, and have funding at least through December. They also have summer funding for the next couple of years. They are also working in conjunction with some small schools to provide library services so the schools can meet accreditation requirements. The petition to get the library district on the ballot is progressing and a big push for signatures is planned for November and December.

Staffeldt and Randall visited 19 libraries in Eastern Montana and also attended two federation meetings.

Tracy Cook was accepted for the Mountain Plains Library Association Leadership Institute.

Strege, Staffeldt and the LDD team met and spent some time on the long-range plan evaluation and Staffeldt will report more on that at the December meeting.

### **TBL**

TBL held its annual volunteer banquet for the over 100 Library volunteers and several volunteers received appreciation and special awards.

On October 28, the director of the National Library Service and his assistant will be visiting the Talking Book Library's new digital recording studio.

In an effort to respond to patrons in a timelier manner, TBL is now accepting fax certifications from new patrons.

TBL is currently taking part in the Lobe Library project to test OTIS digital playback machines. Abridged and unabridged books will be downloaded to the players from Audible.com and patrons in the Helena area will use the machines to determine their ease and friendliness for users. Illinois, Hawaii, Mississippi and New Jersey are also taking part in the OTIS project. Briggs will update the Commission on the project at the December meeting.

In-house tours will be offered as combined tours with the Capitol, Fish Wildlife and Parks and the Historical Society.

### **NRIS**

Hill reported on some new products and services available in NRIS and LISD. An electronic journal service has been licensed from EBSCO. It allows easier access to journals used mainly by state agencies that are not available through InfoTrac. It also allows for easier gathering of statistics on the use of the journals. This service will be online soon.

NRIS is focusing efforts on interactive access to maps on the Internet. Staff is spending more time configuring Internet access to better serve the users. The popular Montana maps have been improved with more legible titles and legends.

LISD staff members are continuing the federal documents weeding program. One-half to two-thirds of the hard copy federal documents are being weeded out of the collection.

NRIS is wrapping up an IMLS grant to make geographic information systems data available to the public. The website and some of the online applications are being revised and the results are being written up for IMLS. MSdL had applied for another \$500,000 IMLS grant, but that one was not awarded. The comments were that NRIS was over-reaching and biting off more than it could chew. Some parts of the project will be done anyway.

Core contracts are all in place; however, they are based on a funding mechanism that was designed four years ago. NRIS will probably have to reevaluate funding in the near future. The overall budget is very, very tight with both NRIS and LISD. There are 14 or so supplementary contracts in place. There is still a lot of work to be done to get the information technology infrastructure in place for the digital library. DNRC, FWP and the Nature Conservancy are helping some with funding.

NRIS signed the contract with the Nature Conservancy for the Heritage program. NRIS took a \$37,000 hit from the last legislature and split that evenly with Heritage. When NRIS was conceived in 1983, the Natural Heritage Program was intended to be a part of NRIS. The legislature gave the State Library the option of building a Heritage program of its own or contracting with the national Nature Conservancy, which is what the Library opted to do.

A different approach is being taken on how NRIS and Heritage report statistics and in trying to standardize them. It's tough to get a handle on some of the usage since so much is through the website rather than mediated services. Visitor sessions to websites and user sessions to the online databases are being counted, as are document/page views. Hits to the site are no longer being counted since they give inflated, unusable figures. Statistics about static page views, dynamic page views and GIS data downloads are also being reported.

Randall asked why GIS downloads dropped so much. Hill replied that it was hard to say, but that when a news release goes out announcing a new dataset, there will be a sudden surge in hits. Over time, that statistic should stay more stable.

Strege thanked Hill, Duane Anderson, Suzy Holt and Jon Nehring for their work in compiling the statistics.

### **LSTA Reports**

Staffeldt passed along Sue Jackson's thanks to the Lewistown Public Library staff and Board and Friends of the Library for the reception and buffet dinner they provided during the Fall Workshop.

A draft of the Montana Shared Catalog Business Plan will go to the Shared Catalog membership in November and will then be presented to the Commission when it is finalized, possibly at the December meeting.

Mike Hamlett said that the Miles City Public Library was just added to the Shared Catalog, and overall he has been very pleased. The problems that he's experienced have been fairly small and the feedback has been positive. He feels as many libraries as possible should be encouraged to join the catalog.

### **Long Range Plan Evaluation**

The Commission adopted a long-range plan for the State Library in 2002 and agreed to annually review the progress made by each department in meeting its goals and objectives. Strege met with TBL staff in August and LDD staff in October to talk about successes and what still needs to be done regarding the plan. The agreements from those meeting are being written up and will be given to the Commission at the December meeting.

NRIS and LISD were in the middle of reorganizing when Himmel and Wilson did their evaluation in 2001, so those departments weren't reviewed in-depth. The State Library contracted with Mary Bushing to review LISD. Bushing will not only evaluate LISD, but will make recommendations for the future. She will present her findings to the Commission at the February meeting. Managers are still trying to decide how to review NRIS. They hope to learn from Bushing's review of LISD and see which techniques might work for NRIS and decide upon a review process then.

## **MSL Trust**

Briggs presented a full proposal regarding the KLAS purchase to the Commission at the last meeting, but there have been some revisions to the cost of the upgrade. TBL is asking for about \$40,000, rather than the originally requested \$35,000, from the trust fund, which currently has about \$100,000.

Randall pointed out that in the middle of second paragraph, the sentence should be change to say "distributed and used properly," and leave out the phrase "and used by the recipient department." Strege said she would make that change.

Morton asked whether the Library receives donations that are designated for a specific purpose. Briggs replied that there are a few annual donations that are designated for a certain area, but most of the money has been donated without any conditions.

Allen asked whether we might be breaking a trust with the donors if they donate money with the assumption it will be used for the Talking Book Library and it isn't. Briggs said TBL doesn't have a form that donors can fill out to designate funds, but she assumes that people who donate to TBL expect that their money will be used there. Strege said that if the Commission would like, a brochure could be designed explaining to donors where their contributions could be designated, but she prefers donors to give money without strings attached.

Schmitz explained that when the trust was first set it, it was intended to be a TBL trust, but the legislature felt that was too limiting and suggested having one trust for the whole Library. The funds are to be used to expand the program, not for general operating costs. We don't want the legislature taking funds away from TBL because they expect the trust to support operations.

Morton asked whether separate accounts were maintained for the money that was designated for a specific purpose. Schmitz replied that there is just one trust and all the money is maintained there.

Randall suggested that the Commission deal with the matter of the funds for the KLAS system now, but table the trust policy until the next meeting and have Strege revise it further. Strege asked that the Commission members give her comments on the policy so she can rewrite it more to suit their needs.

Allen remarked that sometimes donations require overhead that can make accepting the funds costly and those donations may actually have to be turned down. That needs to be addressed in the policy. He thinks the sentence, or possibly the whole paragraph, referring to intent of the donor needs to be reworded. The policy needs to state that the Commission has the discretion in how funds will be spent.

Morton agreed with Randall that action not be taken on the policy at this point. He felt the policy needs to be discussed further and other models examined. Schmitz said she would supply the commissioners with the language from law that was used when the trust was first set up and the trust agreement with the Board of Investments.

Morton questioned whether a group like a Friends of the Library Group could set up a trust for the State Library. Schmitz said that was discussed a long time ago, but she doesn't remember

what the outcome of the discussions was. She thinks there should be some kind of documentation on it somewhere, however.

### **Financial Reports**

Schmitz said that the first quarter report is the biggest report of the year because there are a lot of changes happening in the original budget.

The first change to the budget is the LSTA grants. When the legislature approves those grants they are line itemed under grants. When projects are brought up each year, the grants have to be moved up into the operations budgets. The Commission already approved the LSTA projects and the balances are now being brought up. The grants ended September 30, so the final close out of FY02 will be on the next reports. No FY02 funds will be reverted.

The Gates Foundation Grant funded the Summer Institute in Billings. All but about \$1500 of this grant has been spent and Sue Jackson is working on finishing out the grant.

The operations budget is the Library's budget as a whole since there is only one program now as far as the Legislature is concerned. Projected expenditures are just estimates for the first quarter and will be refined throughout the fiscal year.

Division managers discussed how to combine the budgets of NRIS and LISD and it was decided that would be difficult to do, so they will remain separate for the time being. NRIS has many different contracts it brings up, so it is difficult to do projections on their budget. The goal is to figure out a logical way to combine the budgets in the future.

Schmitz added the trust account information to the TBL financial page and told the Commissioners to let her know if they want further details. The interest rate on the trust account is only about 1%.

Schmitz also added some detail pages that the Commission requested at the last meeting, including the commission budget, the NTF budget and consultant budgets.

MLN is running totally on FY03 grant awards. Their budget is showing a negative as they wait for FY04 funds. Officially the grant starts October 1, but there may be problem if we don't get the funds by January 1. We may need to take a general fund loan if we feel secure the funds will be coming in.

Randall thanked Schmitz for her presentation. He felt it made the information a lot easier to understand.

### **Commission Policies**

Strege presented the revised non-discriminatory policy, which each agency is required to adopt. Strege based the policy on the judicial branch's policy and got comments and suggestions from Constance Enzweiler of the State Personnel department. The complaint resolution procedure is the state policy.

At the last meeting, the Commission asked that some changes be made to the revised alternative work schedule policy. There was some question about to whom employees would

make their requests for alternative schedules since there are no longer two programs. It was decided that the program managers will now be division managers. The State Librarian has the final say about requests to change schedules.

The position classification policy describes how positions are classified according to grade. Strege didn't make any significant changes to this policy, other than adding language about using independent, qualified contractors to classify positions, which the Library already does. Appeals are according to state law and we have no discretion on these sections.

Strege suggested that the conference call policy title be changed to the telecommunication meeting policy to take into account the different types of technology available to hold virtual meetings. The language was also changed to incorporate the new technology. The State Library will pay the costs for staff, Commission members and any others specifically invited to participate in a meeting. The meetings will also be accessible to the public.

### **Federation Coordinator's Report**

Mike Hamlett reported that federations are in the process of revamping their structure. There is a lot of concern and a certain amount of apprehension about it, but everyone agrees that a change is needed. Randall added that he and Staffeldt attended the federation meeting in Baker and it was a great, stimulating meeting.

### **Commission Goals and Objectives**

Staffanson said that she went to her first federation meeting and she really enjoyed it. She's added that she's been a librarian for a number of years and had never been to a federation meeting. She feels school librarians need to be urged to attend the meetings because there is so much they can get from them. Staffanson also attended the Wibaux Library board meeting.

Allen reported that he is going to Minnesota next week and will visit a library there.

Bitz has been in contact with Bonnie Williamson, the coordinator of the Pathfinder Federation. She has visited some libraries, including the branch library in Big Sandy and the Round Up Public/High School Library. She also visited the Trinity College Library in Dublin this summer.

Bergeron said that Linda McCulloch will be doing a Yellow Bus Tour to Glendive, Sidney, Poplar and Glasgow on October 20-24. McCulloch and staff members will visit schools and libraries to talk to teachers and community members about their hopes and concerns for our public schools.

Morton said that at the end of the month MSU staff will be visiting Missoula and meeting with local librarians. He also reported that OMNI will meet next week.

Randall has been visiting libraries in the eastern part of the state.

Randall asked if there were any questions before the Commission moved on to action items.

Renee Goss asked how long LSTA money will be used for MLN and if it will ever go back to grants. She said her library cannot afford to join the shared catalog and most little libraries in eastern Montana won't be able to for quite some time. The State Library's long-range plan says

helping public libraries is one of its top priorities. She also asked whether there would be more LSTA money coming in this year.

Strege said that if we do get an influx of LSTA money, the Commission will decide where to spend it. Strege would like to see an advisory council representing all the stakeholders established to advise the Commission on how to spend the money if sufficient more funds are available.

Randall commented that the idea of the shared catalog came from the Networking Task Force. In his opinion, LaserCat had gone as far as it could go. He added that every library in the state can access the catalog even if they're not part of the shared catalog. They still get the advantage even if they can't sustain membership fees. The shared catalog was funded for three years and the Commission can decide whether to continue to fund it or not.

Goss asked about how CIPA affected the shared catalog. Staffeldt replied that if federal money is used in any kind of grant that results in a library getting an Internet connection, then yes, CIPA applies.

Goss asked about the long-range plan evaluation and how there still does not seem to be many educational opportunities for public librarians.

Strege explained that she does not believe there will be an MLS program in Montana because of the low population base and the relatively few number of people wanting to get an MLS. There are a lot of programs available online, however. The State Library did apply to IMLS for a scholarship grant to send people to library school and they expect to hear about that on October 28. The Library will also put links on its home page to courses that can be taken online. The library technician degree is in the long-range plan and that is something that is being worked on.

### **Action Items**

Morton made a motion to approve the expenditure of up to \$40,000 from the Library Trust Fund for the Klas upgrade. Bergeron seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Allen made a motion to accept the first quarter financial reports. Staffanson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Staffanson made a motion to accept the commission policies that a consensus was reached on this morning as written. Bitz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Holiday Plans**

Strege asked the Commission if they would like to continue the tradition of hosting a reception for Library staff after the December Commission meeting and all agreed to that. Managers will host a holiday dinner for the Commission and Staffeldt has graciously offered to have it at her house on December 9.

### **Library Literature Sampler**

Included in the literature sampler are articles about CIPA and an article about the Montana Shared Catalog. There are also several articles about the Patriot Act including one in which

Attorney General Ashcroft said that librarians' concern over the Patriot Act may be hysterical. Another article quotes a spokesperson from the Justice Department saying that the Act has not been used to check library records. Librarians are in the news again because of CIPA and the Patriot Act. Strege said that a bipartisan group of representatives has introduced a bill to get some parts of the Patriot Act overturned.

### **State Librarian Evaluation**

The Commission and Strege went into a closed session at Strege's request to discuss her evaluation.

Strege requested to take leave without pay if necessary in the coming year. Bitz made a motion to approve Strege's request for leave without pay, Bergeron seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm.