

Montana State Library Commission
Minutes for February 20, 2004
Helena, MT

Attendees:

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

Commissioner

Absent: Toni Broadbent

Staff: Karen Strege, Darlene Staffeldt, Barbara Duke, Jim Hill, Sue Jackson, Bruce Newell, Bob Cooper, Kris Schmitz, Sue Crispin, Bob Cooper, Clint Emerson, Jim Kammerer, Suzy Holt, Anastasia Burton

Guests: Debbie Schlesinger, Bernadine Abbott-Hoduski

Announcements and Introductions

Crispin introduced Clint Emerson, Heritage's new botanist. Emerson had been working for the forest service in Oregon, and he fills an important niche in the Heritage program. Crispin said she is pleased to have him on staff.

Minutes Adoption

Morton said that the word "not" should be inserted before "implications" at the bottom of page 6 in the December minutes, and right above the Library Literature Sampler, Montana needs an "a." On page 5 of the minutes, it was clarified that Fort Peck Community College opened a small branch college, not a library, in Wolf Point and the public library is serving as the library for the college.

Morton moved to accept the minutes as corrected. Bitz seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

State Librarian's Report

Strege reported that she went to the ALA Midwinter Meeting in San Diego in January. While there, she attended a COSLA meeting and met with Kurt Cylke in a group meeting with COSLA members. They were able to establish a timetable for the transition to the new digital book and while Cylke agreed that COSLA members can influence how the books are distributed, they cannot influence the format of the new digital book, which has already been decided will be flash memory cards. The transition to the new format is scheduled for 2008. Many COSLA members had hoped the transition would be sooner and they felt disposable CDs, like the ones Canada distributes, would be easier and more cost-effective because the CDs are only shipped one way, saving on postage costs. COSLA members don't feel that the National Library Service has the funds to do flash technology.

While at ALA, Strege also attended a meeting with the director of WebJunction, which is a web forum for public librarians funded by the Gates Foundation and OCLC to provide information on continuing education and technology issues; a CIPA update; and a workshop on affirmative action in scholarship programs, which was very pertinent to the PEEL scholarship. Strege discovered that the Library attorney's opinion was correct and the method we will be using to evaluate the applications is legal and right. Each member of the screening committee will look at every application individually.

Strege, Staffeldt and Reymer will be attending PLA in Seattle at the end of February. This is a great conference that is held only once every three years. Strege will also attend the Western Council meeting the Tuesday before PLA.

The next commission meeting will be held in conjunction with MLA in Bozeman on Sunday, April 25 from 3:00 - 6:00 pm. The commission reception will be Monday, April 26, before the membership dinner. The cost will be approximately \$40 per commissioner and Strege will collect that at the April meeting. The agenda and registration information for MLA will be distributed to Commission members. Strege and Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson will be presenting a workshop on marketing and Cook and Staffeldt will cover library laws and financing.

The state budget process has begun. Strege and Schmitz met with state budget director, Chuck Swysgood, and were told basically not to present any new proposals, because they would not be considered and to be happy with our budget where it is. Strege said she didn't want to annoy Swysgood, but she feels an obligation to let the Governor's office know what is needed to keep the State Library functioning. Any legislation that is brought forth must also go through the Governor's office and the deadline for that is April 16. Strege asked for approval to put in two placeholders for legislation at the next session. All that is required at this point is a paragraph of what the plans for legislation are. The two pieces of legislation being considered for the next session are the preservation of public records and federation changes. Strege and representatives from several other state agencies are concerned with preserving records and making those records available to the public in the face of ever-changing technology. Bernie Olson from Lakeside is sponsoring the legislation because he feels it is important for citizens to have permanent access to public records. It should be a fairly non-controversial topic. The federation changes will be discussed later in this meeting. Staffeldt added that a placeholder might be needed for the library district law, too.

Strege recognized Debbie Schlesinger who is retiring as director of the Lewis & Clark Public Library. Strege thanked her for all of the work that she has done and for her help and support. Randall added that he has enjoyed working with Schlesinger over the years and wished her the best in her retirement.

Strege mentioned that she included a memo about the PSAs in the Commission materials. Also included were affidavits from Montana broadcasters detailing when and during what programs the library spots were aired and what return we received on our investment. Strege expressed her appreciation to the Broadcasters Association. Morton asked if there were any plans to assess the effectiveness of the campaign. Strege said that is something that needs to be done.

Digital Library

Hill said that there was an interesting discussion at the commission retreat about the Library and Information Services Department. Mary Bushing has been working on an evaluation of the department for several months, and she presented her preliminary findings at the retreat. She concluded that the agency has limited resources and it can't continue to have one foot in the traditional library world and one foot in the digital. Some of the traditional services need to be reduced, including the print collection, the walk-in service, sharing reference services with other libraries and perhaps eliminating the federal documents collection. Bushing's recommendation is that LISD focus more on virtual library services by becoming more of an information broker, becoming more knowledgeable of resources that are available elsewhere and linking to those resources, improving web information delivery and access and improving web-based training. Hill expects to get the final report from Bushing in a couple of weeks.

Hill added that LISD is just finishing up a survey and he commended Holt on a job well done for her work on it. Half of the respondents to the survey were non-users who didn't know that LISD services were available, so more outreach and education is obviously needed to let people know what the State Library does. A lot of Burton's public relations work has been focused on NRIS to this point, but we need to think of ways to use her services to make our user base aware of library services. Only 50% of the survey respondents are using web-based services rather than direct services, and this is another outreach issue. The results from the survey will be synthesized with the report from Bushing and a digital library plan will be presented at the April meeting.

LISD is wrapping up the federal documents weeding and Hill thanked Kammerer and Gebhardt for their work on that project.

NRIS rolled out a new website providing access to map data to a broader range of individuals. The feedback from users has been good.

The Centers for Disease Control has provided grants to several states, including Montana, to investigate the link between environmental conditions and disease. NRIS signed a contract with DPHHS to work with them on the project. NRIS will link its environmental databases with 20-25 of DPHHS's clinical datasets. The contract will fund some of NRIS's existing staff and provide funding for a temporary GIS technician.

During the last legislative session, NRIS was asked to provide semi-annual reports to the Legislative Finance Committee. Hill submitted the report, which includes information on current projects NRIS and Heritage are involved in, all of the contracts they have entered into and what kind of data is being collected. Hill feels the reports are a good way to get information in front of legislators to keep them informed about the valuable work NRIS is doing and the data they are adding to the clearinghouse with contract funding.

Crispin said that Hill did a fine job pulling the report together in short order. She added that Heritage completed two reports in the last couple of months. One was "Conserving Globally Rare Plants on Lands Administered by the Dillon Office of the BLM," during research for which, three plant species new to the state were identified, and the other was a report on the vegetation and fire status on Square Butte, which was also done at the request of the BLM. Heritage also completed a report to IMLS on a project they've been working on for so long.

LDD and TBL

Staffeldt said that the recording teams in TBL are getting comfortable with the digital recording equipment. There are still a few glitches to work out, but it is going well. Moving the telephone pioneers to the Library has proved beneficial. TBL is continuing to weed and shift the collection to make room for new books. Staff will be taking a good look at statistics. A number of things are down and it needs to be clarified whether this is possibly a national trend or maybe caused by clients switching to web requests.

LDD met for two days to discuss the long-range plan. Staffeldt thanked the Commissioners on behalf of the staff for their efforts to get out to libraries, because those visits do make an impact. Staffeldt said that Cook did a great job with helping the Golden Plains librarians pull Offline together, but the OCLC training had to be cancelled due to weather. Next year Offline will be in Lewistown.

Cooper reported that the North Valley Public Library District is currently a multi-jurisdictional library district working under an interlocal agreement. The town of Stevensville and the Ravalli County Commission are hoping to put a library district ballot measure and levy on the June ballot because of difficulties encountered while working under the current interlocal agreement. There will be an open hearing in March. The current interlocal agreement encompasses two school districts, and that is not expected to change. Another district effort is underway in Lake County where a petition is being circulated to put the issue on the ballot in the fall. That district will encompass Lake County.

Jackson reported that the PEEL scholarship application was posted on the MSL website at the end of December. Jackson has been working hard to get the word out so people know about the scholarship, and there has been a lot of interest so far. But, it's becoming evident that the scholarship timeline is a problem for some people. Jackson has received two incomplete applications so far and the deadline for the applications is March 26. The applications will be mailed to the PEEL Advisory Committee members

who will screen them and then meet on April 7 to discuss their recommendations. The Cates Scholarship Committee has said they will give an additional \$500 to each PEEL scholarship recipient. Jackson and Anita Scheetz went to Washington DC in January to attend two days of mandatory outcomes-based evaluation training for the grants.

Burton distributed samples of the new librarian recruitment brochure, which is now ready to be printed. The text was written by Burton and Jackson and the design was done by Lodestone Advertising in Great Falls. Burton also demonstrated the PEEL website for the Commission, which is nearly complete and set to go live very soon. The website will be accessible via the MSL website, and will offer visitors information about a career in librarianship, PEEL scholarship information and application materials, as well as stories and photos shared by librarians across the state.

The Gates Staying Connected program is underway. These grants allow public libraries to upgrade public access computer equipment and connectivity. The application and all supplemental material is available on the Library's web page and the deadline is March 31. The process is a competitive one this year, unlike in the past. Four members of NTF will meet on April 14 to screen the applications and make recommendations to the Commission.

A project in which libraries share patrons within the shared catalog is being developed according to Newell. He expects 8-10 libraries to be involved initially. The idea is that patrons can find books in the participating libraries and place a hold on the book and have it sent to them or check out a book at a participating library with a card issued at another participating library. The migration planning to move the server from ITSD to stand-alone is going smoothly. Secret agent training will be on March 8 and 9. The training will enable small libraries to partner with full-cataloging libraries to make their often-unique materials available. The Ask a Librarian project, which will allow patrons at participating libraries to get reference assistance by phone, email or walk-in during normal business hours, will be live May 4. The Library is working with OCLC to move from the current statewide OCLC contract to a group catalog contract, and also to provide a new platform for the MLN Gateway. Newell hopes to have a firm figure for the new contract with OCLC by next week.

LSTA Budget

The Library received \$889,652 in LSTA funds for FY04, which is an increase of about \$142,000 from last year, but is less than anticipated. The group catalog from OCLC that is replacing the current contract will cost more than anticipated. Prices for copy cataloging libraries will have to be raised and OCLC has been approached about reducing its price. NTF discussed the issue and recommended to the Commission that \$30,000 of LSTA funds be used to fund the group catalog, but the gap is expected to be about \$107,000. Strege recommended that an advisory committee not be appointed because the increase is only enough to sustain current projects. Strege broke down the LSTA FY04 proposed budget and recommended that the Commission approve the projects presented and decide which ones to fund with the leftover money. The projects Strege asked the commission to approve are: the group catalog - and a definite figure from OCLC on the cost of that should be available in the next couple of weeks - Summer Institute for 2005, Fall Workshop and trustee training. There is also about \$30,000 in unallocated funds available for projects, but this is one-time-only money, mostly from Gale fees that were collected from libraries that joined after the bill had already been paid. There are two kinds of libraries for OCLC purposes - 21 larger "full-cataloging" libraries whose costs are figured on actual use and 200+ libraries that are copy-cataloging libraries and have a sliding fee scale ranging from \$200 to \$1200. NTF looked at how to raise the fees most equitably, probably by increasing the smallest libraries the least and the biggest the most.

Strege reported that Mark Sherouse from the Montana Committee for the Humanities has asked the Commission to consider giving \$10,000 to help with the Montana Book Festival. Strege isn't recommending the Commission do that because the resources just aren't available.

2nd Quarter Financial Report

We are halfway through the fiscal year and Schmitz reported that budgets are being watched very closely. The Library's HB2 appropriations are running according to schedule and no deficits are projected at this time. The PEEL Grant and the Gates Grant were added to the budget during second quarter. Private funds were brought in to help pay for the statewide periodical database. LSTA FY02 funds are being closed out, so they won't be on the next financial reports. There is a negative projection under personal services, but that's because MLN hadn't received its FY04 allocation from the federal budget yet.

LDD has some negatives in its operations budget due to expenditures for the Federations Future meeting and related legal fees that were not budgeted for. That will be cleared up by fiscal year end.

The money to pay for TBL's digital equipment has not yet been drawn out of the trust account because the bill is not due until all the glitches with the equipment are worked out.

The Library's legislative audit was recently finished, but the report is not available until after the hearing in front of the legislative audit committee. The audit was clean with no recommendations. There were a couple notes about cleaning up the language on the different state depository accounts.

Federation Report and Proposed Rule Changes

The Federations Future Task Force met several times by conference call. Staffeldt presented two proposals on federation changes for the Commission to consider. The first proposal would change the way funds are distributed and would require an administrative rules change. The proposal is for the State Library to distribute annual payments to each federation member, rather than to the federation headquarters for distribution to member libraries. The hope is that this method will give libraries more funds to work with since the Federation headquarters take administrative costs out of the disbursement, but the State Library won't. Debbie Schlesinger said she's not sure it's true that administrative costs would be saved, because a stipend is being considered for the federation coordinator.

The second proposal is to change Montana law and ARMs rules to allow federation headquarters to be moved around. Jim Scheier, the Library's attorney, reviewed the proposal and he has some concerns, mainly about the liability issues for the Commission. Staffeldt and Strege don't feel the liability is much more than the Commission already has, what with federation members traveling to meetings and workshops. Schlesinger suggested that the Library look into getting errors and omissions coverage to indemnify Commission members. Strege recommended that a placeholder be put in for these law changes. The benefits of this proposal are that leadership can be shared, which may encourage participation; tasks can be spread around; it will be a more democratic process with members voting for their coordinator rather than having the Commission appointing one; and smaller libraries with great leaders will have a chance to participate. The goal is to revitalize federations and make them more efficient. Randall said that these changes should come as no surprise to anyone because Library staff and NTF members have been all over the state discussing them and most people are in favor of the changes. Abbott-Hoduski said she wants MLA to feel comfortable that this is the best way to go before a lot of time and effort is spent on these law changes.

Commission Goals and Objectives

ALA Library Legislative Days will be held May 4 and 5 in DC. Strege is attending and there is \$1000 in the budget for two Commissioners to go also.

The Commission met in a retreat yesterday where Morton presented a session on strategic marketing. He will put together the notes from the session and distribute them to the other Commissioners. Morton added that MSU is hosting two days of census workshops next month and he encouraged people to attend. Morton volunteered to write an article for the next Big Sky Libraries newsletter.

Bitz wrote an article for the current issue of Big Sky Libraries and has been reading library articles.

Bergeron said that distance learning and technology administrative rules are up for a hearing at the end of the month and she urged people to read through them because there are implications for libraries in the changes.

Staffanson attended a RicoNet meeting and spoke with Doug Ferkin about a subscription to World Book online. She also met Rep. Don Hedges and talked to him about library issues.

Randall attended the NTF meeting and the Federation Futures Task Force conference calls. He thanked the other Commissioners who participated in those calls.

Action Items

Allen made a motion to accept the FY04 LSTA budget as presented. Bergeron seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Allen moved to accept the FY04 second quarter financial reports. Bitz Seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Morton moved to approve the proposal for the federation financial rule changes. Bergeron seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Strege was given approval to draft legislation for the rules and law changes to federation headquarters and coordinators for consideration by the Commission.

Allen said action needs to be taken soon on the recommendations in the Bushing evaluation of LISD and he asked that Library staff come up with some alternatives for worst case, mid case, and recommended case options. Morton said there are two issues - what to do and what the timeline is. He asked that staff help the Commission understand state budgeting cycles. Bergeron added that the marketing plan works hand-in-hand with Bushing's recommendations in identifying the Library's clients.

Library Literature Sampler

The State Library is getting good press about Gates funding and the scholarship program.

Dorothy Laird retired as director of the Flathead County Library.

Darby raised \$650,000 for its new library. They were able to get a grant from the Forest Service to build the library using round wood construction from smaller trees as demonstration-type architecture.

Madison Valley is joining the shared catalog.

[American Libraries](#) had a cover story about Bill Gates and his philanthropy to libraries.

"The Case for Consolidation" discusses library districts and why they're the answer to public library woes.

Eleanor Gray, a former commission member from Miles City, passed away in February. She was a great supporter of libraries.

The meeting adjourned at 1:35.