

State Librarian's Report
January 22, 2009 through April 3, 2009
Prepared for April 25, 2009 Commission Meeting
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As I reflect on these past two months, our plates were very full with numerous activities and services but I would like to focus this report on our activities with regards to the Montana State Legislative Session.

Our budget activities related to the Legislative Session began many months before the January opening day of the session with meetings and submission of documents to the Governor's budget office via their executive planning process. After working with the Governor's budget office we found ourselves in the third and final version of the Governor's budget in mid December with a budget that included:

Our base budget, with some appropriate inflation adjustments;

A switch of approximately \$250,000 from Resources Indemnity Trust (RIT) to \$250,000 from General Fund;

A one time only coal tax monies budget of \$200,000 per year for a pilot courier project; and

A request for 7% vacancy savings in our personnel services budget.

Armed with this proposed budget, we prepared a budget presentation to the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education. This Committee is composed of both Senators and Representatives and these seven Senators and Representatives are the only folks who get the "full" presentation of our budget. The Hearing in the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education allows us approximately 20 minutes for presentation, then additional time for testimony from citizens, librarians, trustees in support of our budget request, at this time we also take questions from the Committee members. The total time spent on the State Library's budget in January at this hearing was a little over an hour. After the main budget presentation, Kris and I returned to

the Capitol three more times to be available to respond to questions. We were in the audience and available for questions at the following times:

- 1) Executive action in Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education,
- 2) Hearing in Full Appropriations,
- 3) Hearing before Senate Finance and Claims.

We listened from our office as the budget received executive action in Full Appropriations, move through 2nd and 3rd reading on the full House, and as Senate Finance and Claims took executive action on the budget. An additional 2% across the board budget cut was added to all agency budgets when Senate Finance and Claims took executive action on the budget. If the 2% remains in the budget as it is finalized and as the Legislature closed down and goes home, we will be adding the additional cuts to our recommendations regarding the overall budget cuts that Commission will need to deal with at their June meeting. We still will be listening as it goes to the Full Senate and then on to Conference committee(s).

The State Library Commission also had one piece of legislation that was presented to this Legislature to change our information access statute (HB61). We prepared a presentation on this legislative change which was presented twice – once in House Local Government Committee and once in the Senate Local Government Committee. We also were available in both of these committees when they took executive action on this piece of legislation. We listened to floor discussions when the legislation was on the House and Senate full floor. HB61 was signed by the Governor on Monday, March 23, 2009. As a reminder the State Library and the Montana Library Community will now move ahead on the next steps for resource sharing with Montana libraries. The current draft for those next steps includes:

(1) Interlibrary loan reimbursement will be processed as it has been in the past in July 2009. Libraries will receive the forms in June and will need to file for reimbursement by mid to late July. Checks will be mailed in August or September, as soon as reasonably possible once a new fiscal year budget is open and available.

(2) The Network Advisory Council (NAC) in a mid-summer 2009 meeting will explore options and determine its preliminary recommendations for repurposing of the interlibrary loan program monies for FY2010.

(3) NAC, with assistance from the State Library, will make its preliminary recommendations available for public comment between August 1st and November 1st.

(4) NAC will revisit its preliminary recommendations with consideration of the public comments received by November 1, 2009, and present its final recommendations to the State Library Commission for action at the December 2, 2009 Commission meeting.

(5) Notification to members of the Montana Library Community will be sent out no later than December 11, 2009 regarding Commission action taken.

(6) If the State Library Commission's action in December is to accept the NAC recommendations and proceed with an Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) process, that process will be initiated by State Library staff so that we meet a filing date of December 24, 2009 or the first available date in 2010 which we assume will be around January 7, 2010.

(7) Formal ARM process will be followed, including at least one public hearing.

(8) Goal would be to complete the ARM process at or soon after the April 2010 Commission meeting.

(9) If ARM process is successful, new or revised programs to receive the repurposed monies will be contacted and appropriate contracts will be developed and administrated.

I attended the hearing for HB 265, Funding for the Montana Radio Reading Service and Newline Service for Talking Book Library patrons in House Human Resources Committee and answered a couple questions. This bill remained on the Committee's table when it failed to pass on to the floor due to a tied vote. The funding in this bill was picked out and placed in HB645 the stimulus bill by Representative

Teresa Henry. We attended the hearings for HB645 in order to be available to address any questions but no questions were asked. We are still waiting for executive action on HB645.

Before the session ends we anticipate being prepared to answer questions and/or work with MLA lobbyist to continue to make the Legislative membership aware of the Montana library community's needs as they continue to work with the budget bill, stimulus bill, and other bills as the bills move to the Senate floor and then on to free conference committees.

A legislative session is a busy time of preparing presentations, providing additional information, answering questions, trying to keep ahead of the rumors, trying to not worry about the rumors, watching, waiting for decisions.

My time working with the legislature incorporates activities related to all of the Montana State Library's long range goals: content, access, leadership, collaboration, and sustainable success.