**South Central Federation Spring 2024 Meeting
April 6, 2024**
Billings Public Library and online

**Present:**
Big Horn County Library – Ray Dale, director
Billings Public Library – Gavin Woltjer, director
Bridger Public Library – Krystal Zentner, director
Harlowton Public Library – Tina Peterson, director; Sanford Moore - trustee
Joliet Public Library – Morgan McQuillen, director; Flo McMasters, trustee
Laurel Public Library – Nancy Schmidt, director; Arthur Vogel, trustee; Clair Killebrew, Foundation Liaison
Lewistown Public Library – Mary C Baumstark, trustee
Red Lodge Carnegie Library – Jodie Moore, director; ? , trustee
Roundup School-Community Library – David Williams, director; Dale Alger, Proxy – retired director
Stillwater County Library – Jennifer Ball, director; Lynda Grande & Kathleen Ralph, trustees

Montana State Library – Jennie Stapp, State Librarian; Bobbi deMontigny, Lifelong Learning librarian

Others Present – Jenny Bevill, Humanities Montana

**Online:**
Bicentennial Library of Colstrip & Rosebud County Library – Mary Kay Bullard – director
Carnegie Public Library – Jacque Scott, director
Dorothy Asbjornsen Community Library – Brenda Baker, director
Denton Public Library – Laura Stainbrook, director
Judith Basin County Free Library – Jeanne Lillegard, director; Susan Davis, Vicky McCray, trustees
Moore Memorial Library – Lisa Cox, director
Petroleum County School-Community Library – Kathleen Johnson, trustee
Rebekah Kamp – Data Coordinator, Montana State Library

**Chair Lynda Grande called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.**Lynda stated she has learned a lot about the federation and libraries in general during her year as the Federation Chair. She went on remind us all that trustees are vital to the federation and how it is run. After making a few more insightful observations about her time as chair, she offered her resignation as the federation chair to be effective at the conclusion of today’s meeting.

**State Library report:** Jennie Stapp, MSL Director, gave the report for the State Library. Jenny introduced other state library personnel, Rebekah Kamp, MSL data coordinator, and Bobby deMontigny, MSL lifelong learning librarian. Jenny stated that the MLA will be planning a legislative ask for the 2025 Legislative session. We are being asked to share our stories with the Commission about the services that we are paying for out of our limited budgets and what we would use our funding for is those services were paid by the state library through further funding. If our current costs cover eResources such as MontanaLibrary2Go, Montana Shared Catalog, or OCLC group services contract how would we reallocate those funds locally? How would they be used to meet our community needs? Would we open more hours, hire more staff or move them to full-time, provide more local programming? It is suggested that we take this information back to our boards and ask them to start talking to their local legislators about increasing funding for the state library so local budgets can get a bit more relief concerning the statewide services. The state library has contracted with Kate McMahon to help with some planning work on behalf of the state library concerning some

Federal funds that have been allocated to states to help each state invest in broadband infrastructure. Kate could potentially help create digital opportunity plans for Montana libraries. She would help all libraries decide if there would be a need to upgrade digital access to your library or possible upgrade your public access computers. This is funding along the same level of the Gates grants from about 15 years ago. Jenny wanted to make sure that all libraries are aware of the effort that has happened on behalf of the libraries and also that more efforts are forthcoming.

Also of note was the salary survey that public library directors participated in recently. This information was shared with the Network Advisory Council. It shouldn’t come as any surprise that directors of Montana libraries are paid at about 40% of the occupational pay for other managerial positions and “the range of library pay, especially for directors in Montana, is just shocking”. We should be careful sharing this information so that we don’t do any harm. We don’t want to give anybody the impression that they can (or should) paya their employees less. This information should be put into context of fair wages for all library staff.

Bobbi deMontigny introduced herself as the lifelong learning librarian. She shared some information about upcoming virtual programming with Neil Meyer from the Hellgate Mineral Society. He’ll be doing a talk on rockhounding precious gems & minerals and things like that.

All libraries should have received their CSLP manuals for the summer reading program. It is digital only this year so if you don’t get the information for the manual, let Bobbi know so she can help you get access.

The MSL is starting a program in creative aging. They’re partnering with the Montana Arts Council to arrange it, teaching artists to come in to a small number of libraries. They will be teaching seniors some various forms of art. They're working with rural development to plan some financial literacy classes for women in rural areas. She will give you more information on that once they finish setting up all of their pilot locations.

Rebekah Kamp talked about adding an element about self-directed programming. She stated that she received emails from multiple different libraries this season about keeping track of those type of program efforts in the library. Tracking that information can be useful for the State Library as well as for all of the librarians. She encouraged all of us to reach out to her if we were interested in joining a task force to create this programming.

**Federation Survey Demo:** Rebekah Kamp walked us all through the process of reporting our federation and state aid funding on the LibPass counting opinions site. MSL is moving toward using LibPass for all required state library reports including the public library standards and library statistics. Rebekah walked through each step of the reporting process for the Federation Grant report. The amount for the $4,000 has already been filled in on the coordinator’s part of the database so each library doesn’t have to individually account for the use of the funding. She reminded all of us that the report will be open until August 15th to allow plenty of time to get your information reported. If there are any questions about what is allowed, contact Nancy Schmidt for help. You can view the video of this training online at [Public Library Standards Survey Demonstration (2024) (youtube.com)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSvu5aZVgYo&t=14s)

**The Democracy Project:** Jenny Bevill with Humanities Montana gave a presentation on The Democracy Project. As part of the State Humanities Council, they distribute National Endowment for the Humanities funding across the state through grants and program. Both the grants and programs support humanities, conversations in different geographic regions covering different topics. Usually whatever is important to Montanans in the moment. Jenny explained that there are 57 speakers available to come to libraries to talk on a variety of topics – free of charge. One of them is the Montana Poet Laureate Chris LaTray who has a book coming out on the Little Shell Tribe. There are mini-grants available (up to $2,000) on a rolling basis to help fund a program or item that you want to include in your library. You can find more information about the Democracy Project at [Humanities Montana | Humanities Montana is Montana’s state humanities council.](https://www.humanitiesmontana.org/)

**Federation Discussion:** Bobbi deMontigny led a discussion on how members can make federation meeting more valuable to everyone; identify the role of trustees and where they add value; to identify the role of the federation chair and the coordinator; and to decide what role the chair, the coordinator, and the trustees should play within the federation while keeping true to the law. There was a brief discussion of the Federation Task Force recommendations and how we can go about making everything better for everyone to start our talking points.

Topics discussed were improving the value of federations for library directors and trustees, the role of the federation chair, the role of the federation coordinator, the role of the trustees during the federation meeting, whether there should be a chair & co-chair since the coordinator usually has all the information to share, thoughts on what the federation can provide to the trustees to convince them to become the chair, sharing the parts of the meeting that are the most valuable to everyone, having an opportunity to interact with our state library personnel, possibility that there are some things that need to be addressed at the federation meeting that we currently aren’t doing, sharing more of our library happenings and ideas at the meeting, trainings relevant to trustees and directors, and sharing our knowledge with one another should count as CE time.

**Lunch**: working lunch so we didn’t interrupt the flow of the meeting…

**Trustee Training:** There is a trustee training being held here at the Billings Public Library on Tuesday, May 14th at 1:00 pm. This is paid for by the federation using some of the funds allotted by the Commissioners last October. There is no cost for anyone to attend. It is a one and done for trustee training. Please encourage your trustees to attend but remember that directors may also attend this training.

**Golden Valley Per Capita Funds:** The per capita funds for Golden Valley are totaling $880.90. The question today is what do we want to use these funds for? They must be used for something library related. Last year we split the funding 25/75 between Roundup and Harlowton. In the past it was donated to MontanaLibrary2Go. Tina suggested that we go back to using it for MontanaLibrary2Go. **Motion:** Sanford Moore (Harlowton), motioned, and Mary Baumstark (Lewistown) seconded, that the Golden Valley per capita funds be donated to MontanaLibrary2Go this year to benefit all libraries in the federation.

**Minutes**: The minutes from September 30, 2024 were presented for adoption. **Action:** Arthur Vogele (Laurel) moved to accept as presented, Mary Baumstark (Lewistown

n) seconded, motion passed.

**Vice-chair:** no one volunteered to take this position, Nancy Schmidt and Lynda Grande will work on recruiting

**Federation Report:** quick update from Coordinator on funds, expenses, reporting, book kits and postage, etc. - each library received $2125.04 initially; we spent $700.15 on 6 titles with 8 copies each for book kits and replacements for lost or damaged items if we weren’t able to get a donated copy, $250.21 on postage including L8L (we had a member library make a $40 donation to the federation for postage), $500 to MTLib2Go, $5,520 to 16 individual libraries for trustee training, $306.12 for lunch supplies at our last federation meeting, and $1,070 for trustee training by the MSU Local Government Center. There wasn’t any coordinator expenses paid out since the Coordinator/Commission meetings were held in Laurel and Columbus.

**Book Kits:** A committee was appointed to create a collection development policy for the federation book kits. The committee doesn’t have anything to report on the policy but will continue to work on this as time allows. There are currently 389 book kits in the Laurel library. Library staff maintain that 15-20 noncirculating kits need to be removed to make room for newer kits. We will continue to work on a federation specific collection development policy. **Action:** Krystal Zentner (Bridger) motioned that we follow the Laurel Public Library’s collection development policy to weed book kits that hadn’t circulated in 3 years or more. Motion was seconded; motion passed.

**Bylaws review:** the bylaws were sent out 9 days before the meeting. Lynda Grande asked that the discussion on the bylaws be postponed until the next meeting so a committee could be appointed to review the current bylaws and recommendations made for changes. The motion was made, and seconded, to table the bylaws revision until the next meeting. A committee was created to work on updating the bylaws. Jennifer Ball (Director - Stillwater County Library), Kathleen Ralph (Trustee – Stillwater County Library), Dale Alger (Retired Director – Roundup Community-School Library) and Mary Kay Bullard (Director – Bicentennial Library of Colstrip) will meet via Zoom to update the bylaws.

**Coordinator Election:** ? nominated that Nancy Schmidt continue as the federation coordinator. The nomination was seconded by ?. Motion passed. Nancy will continue as the coordinator until June 30, 2026.

**Chair/Vice-Chair Election:** After some discussion about the future of chair/co-chairs in the federation, it was voted that we suspend the section of bylaws that requires the members to have a chair/co-chair for 2 years. Mary Baumstark was nominated to be the Chair for the next meeting. Nomination passed. Mary Baumstark (Lewistown) motioned that Arthur Vogele (Laurel) fill the co-chair position for one meeting; Sanford Moore (Harlowton) seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**Plan of Service:** The elements for the Plan of Service were discussed in depth. The biggest discussion centered around the $4,000 the library commission allotted for trustee training. It was decided that $2,550 would be divided among all member libraries (Billings declined their extra amount) and $1,450 would be used for regional trustee trainings. Each library will receive $2,094.64 plus $150.00 per library with the exception of Billings. **Action:** ? motioned that the Plan of Service be adopted as discussed; Mary Baumstark (Lewistown) seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**Fall meeting:** Roundup Community-School Library, September 28, 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 2:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Nancy L Schmidt**

Nancy L Schmidt
Coordinator
South Central Federation