

**Commission Meeting  
Minutes for February 13, 2002  
Helena, Montana**

**Attendees:**

**Commissioners:** David Johnson, Ralph Atchley, Rosemary Garvey, Dorothy Laird, Linda McCulloch, Bruce Morton, Al Randall

**Staff:** Bob Cooper, Darlene Staffeldt, Kris Schmitz, Tracy Cook, Sue Jackson, Bruce Newell, Barbara Sawitzke, Sue Crispin, Suzy Holt, Christie Briggs

**Guests:** Debbie Schlesinger, Mike Hamlett, Betty Ammon, Mark Bruno, Bridget Johnson

The meeting was called to order at 9:05.

**Announcements and Introductions**

Rosemary Garvey started her term as chairperson with the February meeting. She welcomed back Al Randall. Kris Schmitz introduced Mark Bruno, from the Governor's Office of Budget and Program Planning. He has been assigned as the Library's government budget analyst and will be working with the Library on its budget.

**Minutes Adoption**

The meeting dates for the June and August commission meetings need to be corrected. The Missoula meeting is in August and Havre is in June. Strege confirmed those meeting places. Laird moved to approve the December minutes as corrected and Morton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**State Librarian's Report**

Strege reported that the annual ALA Library Legislative Day is the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of May this year. Renee Goss, the current president of the Montana Library Association, plans to attend, as does Strege. Garvey will check her schedule to see if she can attend. Strege asked Mary Doggett if she would like to go, but she has not yet heard back from her.

The Executive Planning Process (EPP) calendars and deadlines are available. Any new proposals or present law adjustments are due by April 15. The next commission meeting is April 10, so this will be an important agenda item. Strege foresees no proposals regarding changes or additions to library laws. There may be some changes to the NRIS Advisory Committee, which is meeting on March 13.

A cassette was returned to the library infested with cockroaches and their egg sacks. It was necessary to fumigate the Talking Book Library area of the library, but fortunately, the whole building did not need to be treated.

Strege will be on vacation in Prague from March 21 to April 5.

Congress will consider the reauthorization of the Library Services and Technology Act. The House is on February 14. Strege wrote to Representative Rehberg to ask for his support. The Act contains the First Lady's, Laura Bush's, proposal for a program to encourage the recruitment of librarians.

The library's joint grant with the Historical Society and the Law Library was submitted to IMLS. The grant, if approved, will be used to digitize photos of Helena from territorial times to the start of WWI. The State Library's role is to make sure that other communities are aware of the photos and serve as a guide to educate them in completing their own projects.

The Montana Poll, the quarterly poll by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of Montana, includes some questions about libraries. Strege worked with John Baldrich on the wording of the questions, which will be field-tested before actually being used in the poll. Phone interviews will be set up with 400 randomly selected adults over age 18 for the poll. Strege does not know when the results of the poll will be available. Results will be reported by zip code area, so that MSL can identify differences in responses from different parts of the state.

### **Program One Updates**

Darlene Staffeldt reported that the Library Development Department is excited that the online inputting of statistics for public libraries is working very well. So far, 65 of the 79 libraries have inputted their statistics and LDD will be working with the other 14 to get those completed.

Staff is preparing for spring federation meetings and the MLA's Offline meeting.

The Talking Book Library will host an open house on February 14 for patrons and volunteers. Coffee and cookies will be served.

The Library and Information Services Department workshops have been very popular with state employees. The workshops are given about once a month and topics taught include Google searching and accessing basic LISD services. Heritage and NRIS staff will also be presenting sessions later.

### **Program Seven Updates**

Jim Hill reported that the NRIS advisory committee met in January to decide its future. The committee has been struggling with its identity for some time. The goal of the legislation that created the committee was to create NRIS and the Natural Heritage Program and now that those programs are established, it is uncertain what the scope of the committee should be. Of late, the committee has acted as an emissary between NRIS and the various agencies that are served by NRIS.

The Committee decided to meet quarterly and adopt a more formal process in which issues are presented and resolved. At the March meeting, the committee will look at NRIS' funding structure. The committee will try a year or so of quarterly meetings dealing with issues and evaluate that arrangement to decide about continuing or disbanding.

NRIS is working with the federal forest service, DNRC, the fire center in Missoula, and the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group to provide geographic information to people in the fire

camps. This initiative introduces opportunities as well as problems for NRIS. The project requires seamless statewide map coverages, which greatly increases NRIS's data storage needs. In addition, the data needs to be available at all times. These requirements involve increase costs. Linda McCulloch remarked how fascinating she found the fire mapping and feels the NRIS is moving in the right direction.

NRIS has three staff positions vacant. Jim has rewritten the position descriptions of the water information specialist and the data technician and posted the vacancy announcements. The other position will be left empty for the time being.

Linda McCulloch noted that when the School Funding Advisory Council met they displayed various color-coded maps to present the state's school tax information. The maps were created at NRIS, which was the only state agency capable of producing such material.

Sue Crispin gave a report for Heritage program. The Great Falls paper featured an article about Heritage's rare plant guide, which included some of the images from Heritage's web site.

Heritage has completed two reports in the last couple of months. One was a biological survey of the Glaciated Plains Landscape in northeastern Montana in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management. The other report is a wetlands inventory project for ecologically significant wetlands in the Upper Yellowstone watershed.

### **Financial Reports**

Kris Schmitz stated that MSL is halfway through the fiscal year and on schedule with no problems. Program 1 had two increases in its budget. The first increase is the in the local funds collected to pay for the electronic database. The Library also received a Gates Training Grant for \$53,700.

Schmitz does not foresee any deficit in the operations budget. Program 1 is fully staffed with no vacancies at this time, so MSL may have to ask for funding from the vacancy savings contingency fund.

Schmitz said that the LSTA 2000 budget was expended for the network consultants in Great Falls and Billings and MLN.

Program 7 contracts and six administrative appropriation contracts have been activated. Core agency funding to support NRIS is current as of February 13. All agencies have paid their share.

Legislative auditors have been performing the biennial financial audit of the Library for the last couple of months. This year they focused on state grants to public libraries and checked some libraries requests for ILL program reimbursement. The audit will contain no recommendations.

### **LSTA Reports**

The Three Forks library is now adding its holdings to a shared catalog called BridgerNet. There is a concern about having faster, reliable telecommunications service for the shared catalog.

The Library received its FY02 LSTA grant award. There was a very small increase, \$181, this year.

Jackson, Staffeldt, and Crispen will attend an Outcome Based Evaluation (OBE) course offered by IMLS, in Washington, DC. OBE will be required for more and more projects, so the time is right for staff to get the training.

The annual report was submitted on time and IMLS will be reviewing the report. IMLS has proposed some changes in the report format. For the most part, the changes to the annual report will be an improvement and Jackson and Strege are making their comments to IMLS regarding these proposals.

### **Montana Library Network**

Bruce Newell and Maggie Farrell attended the member's council at OCLC meetings Dublin, Ohio. OCLC staff members presented a number of reports on OCLC's plan to globalize.

Newell still hopes to get the OCLC billing out in February, but is waiting for the numbers from on-line libraries to calculate their share. There will be a two-tier billing scheme for the OCLC pricing with small libraries and large libraries paying different rates. While the scheme is not perfect, it is more fair and affordable than the current system and will be improved upon next year.

The contract between the Missoula Public Library, the State Library, and SIRSI has been signed. A contract has also been signed with ITSD for the use of its mainframe. The User's Agreement is near final draft stage.

Newell met with the Sagebrush Federation in Miles City. The federation is in the process of a long-range planning process that will define what role, if any, the shared catalog will play in that federation.

Newell gave a presentation of new Montanaiana material on the MLN Gateway.

### **Lake County Projects**

Bob Cooper reported that the Lake County bookmobile is now operational. Response has been great and its popularity is growing day by day. The LIPP Board has invited the State Library Commissioners to ride along on a bookmobile route if they would like.

Dorothy Laird commented that the bookmobile is wonderful, but asked about the feasibility of a countywide system. Cooper replied that he hoped to present the system model that Lake County has designed at the next commission meeting. There are two ballot issues involved. The first is consolidating the city and unincorporated libraries into a county system and the second is getting a mill levy to fund the system. It is hoped that the visible projects like the bookmobile have generated interest and support for a county system in Lake County and that the voters will support both ballot issues in November. Al Randall commented that Madison County was able to get the consolidation issue passed, but the levy ballot was defeated and wondered if it would be on the ballot again in November. Cooper confirmed that it would. Randall mentioned that although it may seem like money is being wasted on these

consolidation projects when the voters will not fund them, if they are ultimately successful, the money is well spent even if success takes longer than planned.

### **FY02 LSTA Budget**

The LSTA award has finally been received. Congress had not yet approved the federal budget as of the December commission meeting, and the commission approved a preliminary, partial budget. That preliminary budget contained an unassigned amount of about \$100,000 and approval is now needed for three projects for those funds. One project is to hold workshops at three sites around the state this fall to train trustees. The primary expenses of this project are hiring the trainer and travel costs. The second project is based on the premise that seeing something helps you understand it better. It entails two trips, one from Missoula to view a successful multi-county library district in Northern Idaho and one from Billings to a county library or libraries in Northern Wyoming. The groups would visit the libraries, talk to trustees and library staff and discover the advantages and disadvantages of countywide systems. The cost of this project is estimated at \$12,000, which is primarily the cost of renting a bus. The other project addresses the marketing needs of the State Library and includes hiring a half-time education coordinator. The last part of the proposal is that the \$45,550 remaining be unallocated this year and the commission could allocate the funds at any time.

Johnson asked whether other agencies had tried a part-time person to handle marketing duties. Cooper replied that most agencies with marketing staff are larger than the Library, so they employ fulltime employees. Johnson asked how much of the job would be devoted to getting information to public libraries and how much would be promotional via the press and news releases. Strege thinks the person could use Wired-MT and other sources weekly to get out PR and maybe twice a year go out to public libraries to do training. Randall feels there is a great need for marketing. Training and marketing are the two issues identified most often by people in the planning sessions as the top priorities.

### **Talking Book Library Proposal**

Christie Briggs presented a proposal to prepare the Talking Book Library for transition from analog to digital recording. The National Library Service (NLS) is establishing a pilot project that MTBL can join. This transition would be the first step towards recording in digital, but the product will still be cassettes. Updating the recording technology will increase the quality of the sound as well as preparing MTBL for the next step when NLS decides on what the new format. If the commission approves the proposal, NLS will provide installation, testing, upgrades, and expertise. The money for the project would come from the MTBL Trust Fund. The bulk of the trust came from a bequest and donations are about \$3,000 a year.

Morton stated that this project seems to be a perfect overlay to the long-range plan. The advantage of starting the transition now rather than waiting is that the project is guaranteed to be compatible with NLS standards and can be upgraded to stay current with NLS.

### **Long Range Plan**

The Long Range Plan is in the public comment period and has been posted on the website. There has been very little public response to the plan at this point, which is disappointing. Strege sent a message to Wired-MT to remind people to look at the plan and give their

feedback. The long-range plan will be discussed at the April meeting and hopefully final approval will be given then. The plan is due at IMLS at the end of July.

### **Commission Goals and Objectives**

Randall attended the NTF meeting and commented on how amazed he is at the effort these volunteers put into the meetings.

Laird attended the last day of the shared catalog meeting in Missoula. She complimented State Library staff for their contributions and said she is grateful for the support the Library has given to this project. Laird was also invited to Cayuse Prairie Elementary School to take part in the America Reads program. Senator Max Baucus was also there. Laird mentioned library standards and that the State Library needs to be vigilant in promoting the standards and offer encouragement to libraries unable to meet standards. She also feels that the standards need to be constantly updated and made more stringent as libraries find it easier to meet the standards.

McCulloch attended Literacy Night at Elrod School. She also attended a retreat in Columbus sponsored by the School Librarian Division of MLA. Attendance was great with about 50-60 participants. She also kicked off Read Across America Day, which is March 2, by going to the cross-town high school basketball game and introducing the Cat in the Hat to the crowd.

### **Federation Coordinators Report**

Bridget Johnson reported that the Federations have been very busy getting their state statistical reports on-line. The on-line format has generated favorable comments. The South Central and Sagebrush federations participated in SIRS demonstrations. Sagebrush is working on their bylaws and long-term goals and strategies. They are also concerned about the shared catalog projects because Sagebrush has many very small libraries, some of which are not automated. Many Tamarack federation members are involved with the shared catalog.

Federation coordinators met and discussed the State Library's involvement in federation meetings. The Federations feel that the State Library's participation is very helpful and they encourage the Library to stay involved as a resource for training. The coordinators also discussed a new model for federations. Some changes are needed, but they are not sure yet just what they will be. Strege put together some suggestions and it was decided that Tamarack would be the pilot for the new model.

Cheri Bergeron took over for Linda McCulloch who had to leave.

### **MLA Commission Reception**

The commission typically hosts a reception at the Conference, which will be on April 26 this year. It was decided that each commissioner would contribute \$40 for the reception. The money will be given to Kathy Mora and she can make arrangements with the hotel to provide hors d'oeuvres.

### **Commissioner's Corner Volunteers**

Volunteers are needed to contribute Commissioner's Corner articles to the Big Sky Libraries newsletter, which comes out once every two months. The volunteer for March is Laird; for May is Randall, with input from Newell; and for July is Garvey.

### **ILL Study Committee Report**

The committee had its last meeting on February 4 and Strege is in the process of writing up its notes and recommendations to improve the ILL program. The Networking Task Force will see them March 15 and then they will be brought to the commission for study and approval. Strege praised the committee for accomplishing so much in only two meetings and said that Mary Bushing played a great role in facilitating the meetings. The results from the 132 librarians who responded to the survey about their ILL usage will be posted on the Library's website. ILL requests to the State Library for reimbursement have decreased but a number of libraries have said that their ILL traffic has stayed the same or increased. Those who say their loans have decreased believe it is because materials are more readily available through the Internet. Increases are due to patrons having different needs than they used to and to friendlier staff, easier procedures and more promotion of their services by some libraries. The overall tone of the survey was very positive for the ILL program.

### **Review of Bylaws**

The commission bylaws are reviewed at the February meeting each year. Morton said he would like to see the wording in item number one changed to preclude the commission members from the university system and OPI from serving as chairperson or vice chairperson; only governor appointees should serve in those positions to prevent a possible conflict of interest. Johnson felt that it was not necessary to change the bylaws because a commissioner could always recuse himself or herself if a conflict situation arose. A member can also refuse the chair or vice chair position if nominated. Excluding two members from these positions may also be at odds with statute.

### **Action Items**

Johnson motioned to accept the second quarter financial statements. Bergeron seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Randall motioned to accept the LSTA budget with the three projects and the unallocated funds as presented. Bergeron seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Morton motioned to accept the TBL proposal to spend \$44,000 from the trust to prepare TBL for transition from analog to digital recording. Randall seconded the motion. Garvey asked for clarification that TBL is asking for up to \$44,000 of the \$87,000 in the trust. Briggs verified that amount. The proposal has to go to the Department of Administration Procurement and Printing division for approval for a sole source purchase. ITSD also needs to approve the computer software and hardware. The motion passed unanimously.

Morton moved that item one of the Bylaws be changed to preclude nongubernatorial appointees from serving as chair or vice chair on the commission. Laird seconded the motion. The motion passed and the item will be placed on the April agenda for a vote.

### **Library Literature Sampler**

There is an article from the Seattle Times about the potential closing of the Washington State Library. The second item is a recent opinion by the Attorney General concerning library budgets under the new laws in the Big Bill. The AG said that library boards remain in control of their own budgets. There is a newspaper picture featuring Bridget Johnson giving some local officials

new library cards. Browning High School got some press coverage for MLN and Infotrac. NRIS received coverage for its seminar program and its aerial photos.

**Other Business and Announcements**

Johnson reported that the Billings city council appointed a committee to look into capital needs over the next few years. A number of projects totaling \$35 million were recommended, which includes \$12 million for a new downtown library. There is a possibility that the mill levy for the library will be on the ballot in November.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00.