

## Nebraska Library Commission

Lincoln, Nebraska  
January 13, 2012

### MINUTES

The Nebraska Library Commission met on January 13, 2012, at the Library Commission office, 1200 N Street, Lincoln. The meeting notice was posted on the Commission website and the Nebraska.gov public meeting calendar.

Commission members present: John Dale, Steve Batty, Sherry Crow and Patricia Gross. Staff present: Rod Wagner, Mary Geibel, Richard Miller, Laura Johnson and Devra Dragos.

Chair John Dale called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. The meeting is in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

**Approval of Agenda:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda. Motion carried on roll call vote: Steve Batty – aye; John Dale – aye; Patricia Gross – aye; and Sherry Crow – aye. Motion approved.

**Approval of the Minutes:** (November 4, 2011) Sherry Crow requested a correction on page five to read, “Sherry Crow commented that the single most frequent topic that comes up for her, as a commissioner, is the Commission’s database subscriptions.” A motion was made and seconded to approve the corrected November 4, 2011, meeting minutes. Motion carried on roll call vote: John Dale – aye; Patricia Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye; and Steve Batty – aye. Motion approved.

**Public Forum** – There was no public comment.

### Chair’s Report and Commissioners’ Comments

John Dale commented on the Wayne public library and John commended Lauran Lofgren, Wayne Public Library director. He said that she keeps the library in the public’s eye. There is always something about the library’s activities in the local paper, the *Wayne Herald*. The monthly bill from the municipal power plant includes a flyer from the city and there is always something about the library in it. John said he received some interesting information from Pat Leach, Lincoln City Libraries director. The library has been swamped with questions regarding e-book readers – how to download books and also staff helping patrons with their e-readers in general. There is phenomenal growth in circulation of OverDrive e-books. Libraries are nowhere near meeting the demand for them. John said that a second big thing going on in Lincoln is the Library Vision and Concept Study. Sinclair Hille Architects, a Lincoln based firm, is assisting in the study along with Susan Kent, library consultant. The study addresses Lincoln’s main library – what kinds of spaces it will need, how many square feet, estimate of cost and acceptable sites. John said that this is a re-plan study that was done in 2002-2003. Lincoln is also continuing its work with the Pioneer Library Consortium using Koha as the Open-Source Integrated Library

System. The US Conn Library at Wayne State College brought on an architectural firm to help develop a library building program. The library plans some major renovation of the library.

Steve Batty reported that the Republican Valley Library System (RVLS) will hold its annual meeting June 1 at Bentley Lodge, Wellfleet, Nebraska. Steve said that the McCook Public Library is having similar experiences with e-readers. People are asking for help in using the e-readers. Steve commented that Jody Crocker, McCook public library director, will be making presentations for summer reading programs. McCook public library's traffic count is up since Christmas time. Steve said that some of this is due to assisting with e-readers, but the library's nine new computers are getting a lot of use and people are waiting to use them. Steve said that the Nebraska Educational Technology Association (NETA) Conference will be held April 26 & 27 in LaVista. He said that speakers are generally topnotch. Steve stated that the McCook library was contacted by NebraskaLink representatives about fiber access to the library. He said that the library is reviewing costs, speeds, use, and what the library could offer to customers. Steve mentioned the OverDrive e-books service and the experience of having audiobooks placed on hold. Devra Dragos commented that the OverDrive libraries' group voted and decided to allow a choice of 7, 14 or 21 days for checkout periods for e-books with 14 days as the default loan period. People are discovering that if they want to check out something else, they can return eBooks early. Many people are taking advantage of the option to set their own personal default to seven days checkout for e-books. Audiobook users now have the choice of 7 or 14 day checkouts with 14 days as the default loan period. Audiobooks may not be returned early.

Sherry Crow stated that she received a message from Sharon Osenga, Meridian Library System director, about a survey that she took of the non-fiction buying habits of schools. Purchase of non-fiction books is down drastically and the reason is that many librarians have the impression that research needs are being met by the Internet. Sherry said that they had a discussion about the fact that non-fiction books are not just for research, they are also for reading and the importance of having those, especially for non-readers, for boys, in particular, in the younger ages. Sherry said that she talked about the fact that we might need to do more workshop sessions on non-fiction for kids. Sherry said that she finds this in her own classes, that when we talk about literature, often times librarians tend to lean toward fiction and they are generally the librarians at elementary schools. They are not thinking of non-fiction as a way to get kids to read. We work hard on that in our classes. We're missing a whole set of readers who go through elementary school thinking "I'm not a reader" when they are; they just like non-fiction. Sherry commented on a successful e-reader workshop held in December and a policies and procedures workshop at the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) library that went well. The Meridian system is promoting a "week of weeding" and twenty libraries have indicated they will be weeding at least a portion of their collection next week. Sherry said that the UNK's new Learning Commons has been a big hit on campus. Circulation statistics are up, students are in there, and it's great to see that kind of success. Kearney Public Library is continuing with its renovation project. Sherry said the project is especially challenging because staff must move books back and forth to accommodate the renovation work process.

Patricia Gross commented that she attended the Panhandle Library System board meeting held earlier in the week. She said that the system coordinator position will soon be advertised for recruitment. Pat said that Bev Russell, Scottsbluff public library director, announced her retirement. Pat said that Bev is being honored and recognized as Scottsbluff's "Citizen of the

Year.” The Scottsbluff Public Library has received recognition from *Library Journal* in its *Year in Architecture 2011* issue. Pat said that the system will hold a Job-A-Like meeting at the end of the month, hosted at Western Nebraska Community College with the new WNCC library director, Curtis Brundy. The Job-A-Like was started by people with similar library positions. They get together and network. The Job-A-Like meetings started about fifteen years ago. Pat said that Panhandle school and public librarians have a great relationship and work well together. Some of that is due to the geographic ties and regional culture. Pat said that a BTOP project open house will be held at the Oshkosh public library on January 25 and she plans to attend. Terry Christensen is retiring from the Alliance schools where he is a school library media specialist. Pat said that Dixie Riley is also retiring. Dixie is the Chappell public library director. The Panhandle system’s annual meeting will be held on July 20 at Chadron State College, Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center.

### **Director’s Report**

Rod Wagner asked Devra Dragos to report on an educational event scheduled for late February. Devra reported that Michael Sauers and Laura Johnson are working on plans and arrangements for a program titled “Big Talk from Small Libraries.” The program will be held on February 28. The program will be conducted online. Devra said that Michael and Laura have lined up five speakers thus far. The Commission’s website has a page with program information including a list of speakers and topics. The program will include presentations by librarians from small libraries to talk about and showcase different projects that they have been working on or are involved in. There is lots of great and interesting work going on in smaller libraries and this will be a chance to gain from these experiences. Devra said that the Association for Small and Rural Libraries is a co-sponsor and will contribute to advertising and marketing to publicize the program to the rest of the country. The program can accommodate up to 1,000 attendees at one time logged in. Program presentations will be recorded and can be downloaded at a later time.

*Personnel Update* – Wagner reported that the Panhandle Library System Coordinator position will be advertised for applications sometime next week. Funding has cleared up to the point where we can recruit. Rod said that Julie Pinnell is leaving the Commission staff. Julie will be the new library director at Doane College. Rod said that Julie has done a great job for the Library Commission and will be greatly missed. Julie was a member of the Commission’s Information Services team. Rod said that the Commission won’t refill Julie’s position, at least immediately. Lisa Kelly, Information Services Director, is working with Information Services staff to change staff assignments and work scheduling. This will help within the Commission’s budget constraints.

*Library Development Program Report* – Wagner asked Richard Miller and Laura Johnson to report on Library Development activities. Richard commented on Library Development unit responsibilities and activities. One of the current activities is revision of public library accreditation guidelines. This work is underway and involves a committee, co-chaired by Stan Schulz, York public library director, and Joan Birnie, Broken Bow public library director. Richard said that recommendations for guidelines revision will be made for accreditation in 2013.

Library Development staff attempt to attend regional library system board meetings to be informed of regional system activities and to report on Commission activities. Library Development staff are also involved in quarterly meetings held with regional library system directors and Commission staff. Staff receives and responds to questions and requests from library staff and library trustees. Library Development staff administer Youth Grants for Excellence, Continuing Education and Training, and Library Improvement grant projects. Richard said that Library Improvement Grants were not offered this year due to uncertainty over federal funding.

Sally Snyder serves as the Commission's Children and Youth Services Coordinator. She coordinates activities with regional library systems and agencies and organizations involved in children and youth programming. She is a frequent presenter on children and youth services topics, summer reading programs, and children's and young adult literature. Sally is involved with the Golden Sower Award, One Book for Kids/Teens, Read Aloud Nebraska, See to Read, Read to Them (about children's vision) and she was until two years ago the President of the National Cooperative Summer Library Program. She remains active in this national organization.

Miller said that Commission staff work with the American Library Association's Association for Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations division (ALTAFF) to make available ALTAFF's services and publications. Nebraska is the only state that pays for memberships for all its state's public libraries and regional library systems. Nebraska's ALTAFF membership resulted in access to the Trustee Academy courses first offered this past year. Others pay for these courses. Miller noted the Library Commission's statewide motion picture licensing agreement, which allows Nebraska public libraries to use and show films in the library. Without the state agreement libraries would need to pay a licensing fee if they wish to show movies in the library. Miller said that the Commission also licenses library education courses offered by the College of DuPage for availability to Nebraska librarians.

Richard noted a number of other Commission activities that Library Development staff members are involved in including the library broadband (BTOP) project; library science scholarship and internship project; public library accreditation administration; public librarian and library board certification; consulting on a variety of library related topics; e-rate information and consulting backup assistance, liaison to the Pioneer Library Consortium; etc.

Richard stated that he has worked with the Nebraska Community Foundation as an advisor/liaison for the Kreutz Bennett Donor-Advised Fund. The fund was established by the estate of Shirley Kreutz Bennett. The foundation has developed plans and requirements to provide \$70,000 annually in grant assistance to public libraries serving communities of fewer than 3000 population. Funds can be used for programs, facilities and to assist libraries in achieving public library accreditation. The grant program will run for ten years.

Laura Johnson reported on the public librarian and library board certification programs. Laura said that 178 of Nebraska's library boards are currently certified. She said that certification requires boards to have 20 continuing education credit hours within a three year period. Board certification is a requirement for public library accreditation. Laura stated that there are 812 certified librarians. To maintain certification, librarians must earn a minimum of 45 continuing

education credits within a 3 year period. Laura said that a significant change is the availability of online training, training more easily accessed and available at times more convenient to library workers. Laura said that online training is available from many places and often without a fee. Laura mentioned the ALTAFF Trustee Academy as an example. She said that Nebraska had 498 attendances at the trustee webinars and there are five courses in the Trustee Academy. Nebraska's statewide membership provided \$19,920 worth of training (based on ALTAFF's registration of \$40 per course). Laura said that it's not about earning the credits, it's about getting the kind of information and ideas needed to be effective.

Laura said that she puts together a monthly list of free Webinars that she comes across that are library related. The list is sent via e-mail and is also available on the Commission's website. Sherry Crow asked about librarian certification requirements. Laura said that librarians need 45 CE credits every 3 years to maintain certification. There are different levels of requirements for certification corresponding to a public library's service population. Basic Skills training is also available and is for anyone who hasn't had formal library science education. CE credits are earned by taking basic skills courses and they count toward the 45 credits requirement. Librarians that don't have a master's degree in library science must take the basic skills courses to retain certification.

Laura said that Basic Skills courses have undergone a significant change in the past year. Last year was the first year the Commission offered the courses exclusively online. The online course offerings allow for more frequent availability. The courses include 15 modules, with 6 being requisite modules. Choices can be made in selecting others. All of the classes are available through the Commission's website and online learning management system, N-Campus. Last year 413 people enrolled in the classes. Laura said that she designed the courses and determined how the classes would be structured, and what would be included in each class. The entire set of modules will be offered for two years and then will be assessed. Each class will be evaluated. Laura said that one class currently has 45 people. The N-Campus website page provides information about all the Basic Skills Courses, a calendar, discussion groups and posts from students. There are student profiles so students can get to know other students. Laura finds articles, links to professional journals, videos and other resources for students to use. She said that she tries to make classes applicable. As an example she said that one of the class assignments asked students to go to the Institute of Museum and Library Services' website and use the compare library tool and work with the statistics that all public libraries need to turn in for their Public Library Statistical Report. Laura said that a purpose of the classes is to help librarians understand certain things that they will use in their work. She said they react much better to things they really see a value in.

Laura said that she has new instructors coming in and she has taught most of the classes except Library Service to Children and Youth last year. Commission members thanked Laura for all her work in developing and offering the online Basic Skills classes.

Laura Johnson reported on the Continuing Education and Training grants. The grants have been changed to make funds available in three categories. Funds are available to reimburse for an online course (for example, one of the ALA courses which costs a couple hundred dollars or a course from Infopeople). Grant funds will reimburse for attending a professional conference at

90% of the cost. These grants will support some Nebraska librarians attending the Public Library Association Conference in March. There is also grant funding available for educational and training projects as previously offered.

*State Advisory Council on Libraries November 2011 Meeting* – Rod Wagner reported on the State Advisory Council on Libraries meeting held on November 18. The meeting was held in the Atrium building conference room (down the hall from the Commission’s second floor offices). The meeting included a presentation by Michael Sauers on technology “game changers.” The meeting also included a council discussion of trends and issues for consideration in the Commission’s next five-year plan. A council committee reviewed the discussion questions prior to the meeting. Wagner said that the discussion comments haven’t yet been compiled but would be for the March council meeting.

*Cultivating Rural Librarians Scholarships/Internship Program Update* – Wagner handed out documents related to the LSTA 21<sup>st</sup> Century Librarian program grant. The documents include a compilation of the scholarship stipends and internships, a tally showing the amounts spent, and the numbers of scholarships and internships awarded. Also included is a project Year 1 Review with project highlights. The full report is also available for additional project information. Wagner said that Kathryn Brockmeier prepared the report, with help from Mary Jo Ryan, Richard Miller, Laura Johnson, and John Felton. The IMLS federal program officer commented that the report was exemplarily. Wagner said that a more in depth progress report will be presented at a future Commission meeting.

*Broadband Technology Opportunity Program Update* - Rod handed out a one page update summary sheet of the library broadband project. Wagner said that JoAnn McManus and her team put together this status report. He said that the project is on schedule and accomplishing project goals and objectives. In some areas the project is exceeding its goals – broadband service upgrades for one. A high percentage of libraries now have their equipment orders placed, filled and installed. Furnishings have been delivered. Wagner said that staff is now giving more attention to the programming part the project. He said that a meeting is scheduled for next week with the State Department of Labor. Kathy Lang, Commissioner of Labor along with some of her staff will meet with Library Commission staff to discuss the Department of Labor’s involvement in the project. Wagner said that Lang is also serving as head of the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. This will open up the opportunity for collaboration with that agency as well. Wagner said that Commissioner Lang is enthusiastic about the project and recognizes that libraries are a place that can help provide information about jobs and provide resources in helping people apply for jobs.

*2012 State and Federal Legislature Outlook* – Wagner stated that he didn’t have much to comment on at this early point in the legislative session either at the federal or state levels. The Nebraska legislature has some carry-over legislation from last session including a bill that requires public library personnel policies to be approved by the respective village board, city council, or county board. Governor Heineman gave his State of the State presentation yesterday. The Governor did not include the Commission’s requested funding in his budget recommendations. Wagner said that we shouldn’t necessarily make too much of that since the governor didn’t recommend the state aid program funding reduction last session. The reduction

was a result of the legislature's budget actions. He also didn't recommend funding for a number of other agency requests. Of those that he did, they were commonly for cash funds (agency generated revenues). The Governor recommended tax relief as a priority. Wagner said that the Commission's agency budget hearing will be held on January 31. Only agencies with deficiency requests are involved in hearings. Thus, fewer hearings will be held and there will be a shorter time period for budget consideration. The 2012 legislative session is scheduled to adjourn on April 12.

Wagner said that on the federal side, the LSTA appropriation was finally made as part of federal appropriations approved by Congress in December. The Commission's expected LSTA state program allotment is \$1.377 million and down from last year's \$1.4 million in funding. This being a federal election year, funding for FY 2013 won't be known until after the November election and then perhaps not until the new Congress convenes in January 2013.

### **Financial Report**

*November-December Financial Report & Deficiency Appropriation Request Status* – Wagner referred to the December financial report sent prior to the Commission meeting. He said that the Commission doesn't have any new and significant budget issues at this point. Rod said that one change in regard to the operating budget is an update for the Talking Book and Braille Service digital book supplies. Dave Oertli, TBBS director, recently re-checked supply projections and found that there has been a drop in prices (they fluctuate) and it also appears that current supplies will be sufficient until September. The Commission will not need additional funds this fiscal year for purchase of these supply items. The deficiency appropriation is still needed for next fiscal year.

### **Unfinished Business**

*LSTA Program Evaluation and Five-Year Plan* – Wagner reported that a staff team is in place working on the LSTA five-year program evaluation. Kathryn Brockmeier, Research Analyst/Special Projects Associate, is the project leader and she is working with John Felton, Planning and Data Services Coordinator, with additional staff contributing as needed. The evaluation report is due for completion by March 30. The program evaluation will contribute to development of the next LSTA state five-year plan that is due June 30.

### **New Business**

*State Advisory Council on Libraries Appointments – Approval of State Advisory Council on Libraries Appointments* – Rod Wagner presented recommendations for re-appointments (second term) and appointment (first term) to the State Advisory Council on Libraries:

For re-appointment to a second three-year term (January 2012 through December 2014):

**Robin Bernstein** (Bellevue) director, Bellevue University Library

**Pat Leach** (Lincoln) director, Lincoln City Libraries

**Trine McBride** (Wayne) library user and former director of the Ord Public Library

**Ceri Daniels** (Lincoln) librarian, Cline, Williams . . . law firm

**Ellen Weed** (Norfolk) librarian, Norfolk Regional Center

For appointment to a three-year term (January 2012 through December 2014):

**Sherry Houston** (Papillion) retired school librarian and retired regional library system director (Republican Valley Library System)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the recommended re-appointments to the State Advisory Council and the appointment of Sherry Houston to the State Advisory Council on Libraries. Motion carried on roll call vote: Patricia Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye; Steve Batty – aye; and John Dale – aye. Motion approved.

Wagner reported on another item not covered earlier during discussion of the financial report or biennium budget. He said that had the Commission not been successful in obtaining a waiver from the Library Services and Technology Act state program maintenance of effort requirement, Nebraska's LSTA allotment for FY 2012 would have been reduced by about \$138,000. That would have been a substantial loss and especially along with state budget cuts already in place. Wagner said that staff has met with and responded to questions from Phil Hovis, Legislative Fiscal Analyst. Wagner said that Mr. Hovis has a good understanding of the Commission's budget and the state maintenance of effort issue. The appropriations committee will be briefed before budget hearings begin and will make preliminary budget decisions before agency hearings. Wagner said that the Commission's state expenditures are below the maintenance of effort requirement again this year and will be subject to a reduction if a waiver is not approved. The deficiency appropriation request, if funded, will not bring the Commission's state funding back up to an amount equal the maintenance of effort level, but the effort by the state to address the issue would likely be favorable toward obtaining a waiver.

*Next Meeting Date* - The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 9, 2012. John Dale stated that the March meeting is usually a joint meeting with the State Advisory Council. Wagner said that if the Commission and Council meet on March 9 the Commission could meet separately and follow with the Council meeting. Wagner said that he is checking with Janet Wilke, State Advisory Council member and Director of the UNK library, to see if the meetings could be held at the UNK library. The March meeting date might not work out for the meeting to be held there. If so, another location will be sought. It was agreed to schedule the meetings for March 9 with the location to be determined.

*Director's Annual Performance Review* – (Executive Session) - Steve Batty made a motion that they recess as a Commission meeting and reconvene in executive session for the Director's annual performance review. The motion was seconded and approved by unanimous vote.

**Adjournment** – John Dale adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

*Mary Geibel, Secretary*