

## NEBRASKA LIBRARY COMMISSION

Lincoln, NE

July 10, 2020

### MINUTES

The Nebraska Library Commission met July 10, 2020. The meeting notice was posted on the Commission website and the Nebraska.gov public meeting calendar.

Commission members present: Debby Bloom, Vernon Davis, Arun Pondicherry, Lois Todd-Meyer, Julia Tye; via GoToWebinar: Kristin Wiebe. Staff present: Rod Wagner, Sally Snyder, Jennifer Wrampe; via GoToWebinar: Christa Porter. Debby Bloom called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. This meeting complies with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act and Governor's Executive Order Limited Waiver for Public Meetings.

**Approval of Agenda:** A motion was made by Julia Tye and seconded by Arun Pondicherry to approve the agenda. Motion carried on roll call vote: Debby Bloom – aye; Vernon Davis – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer – aye; Julia Tye – aye. Motion approved.

**Approval of Minutes:** (May 8, 2020) a motion was made by Arun Pondicherry and seconded by Lois Todd-Meyer to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried on roll call vote: Debby Bloom – aye; Vernon Davis – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer – aye; Julia Tye – aye. Motion approved.

### Chair's Report and Commissioner's Comments

**Vernon Davis** – reported that Lincoln City Libraries had books bagged up for patrons. University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Love Library, is reopening for students from 8am to 8pm.

**Julie Tye** – reported that a donation was made to Kearney Public Library from a former patron who is now living in Turkey. Kearney Public Library reopened on June 15 to 25% capacity. All programs at the library will remain online for the rest of 2020. The Central Plains Library System Annual meeting will be held July 10 via Zoom.

**Lois Todd-Meyer** – commented that she has been communicating with colleagues on ways to reach out to students.

**Arun Pondicherry** – said that he picked up the plaque listing Commission members who have served on the Commission since 2000. Arun said that he had visited Lincoln City Libraries, which is now partially open to the public.

**Debby Bloom** – reported Omaha Public Library has been doing several virtual programs for children. Papillion Public Library had a Pokemon Panic Virtual Escape Room; the Teen board is meeting via Zoom. The library held a Read and Seek and Craft and Chat via Zoom. Blair Public

Library had a Knit and Crotchet group that met in person. Kenneth Charles Bagby will present in Blair on August 5.

**Kristin Wiebe** – reported that reopening has been slow at the Scottsbluff Public Library. Gering Public Library remained open with limited activity. Scottsbluff reopened June 22 by appointment only with 25 patrons being allowed in the building at a time. The library averaged 150 appointments the first two weeks. A limited Summer Reading Program was started at Scottsbluff with the goal to have 500 children participating.

### **Director's Report**

*Personnel* – Wagner reported over half of the Commission staff have been working from home. The Commission opened July 6 by appointment only. Wagner presented a document with OverDrive statistics noting there has been a jump in eBook and audiobook loans from the shared collection over the last few months. He also distributed a document from the American Library Association Public Library Association with examples of how libraries across the country are responding during COVID-19. Nebraska libraries' actions are comparable to those in other states.

*Library Accreditation and Librarian Certification Programs Update* – Christa Porter reported that a Google form was created for libraries to report closings and openings. She reported that accredited public libraries have been given an extra year of accreditation. Librarian and Board Certification were also extended for those wanting an extension. Some Basic Skills classes were postponed from March and April, some of the classes started back up in June.

*CARES Act Library Grants* – Porter reported the Nebraska Library Commission received about \$175,000 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services for services and resources related to the pandemic. A portion of the grant money will be used to purchase Reader Zone, an online summer reading program product that will be available for all libraries. The regional library systems initiated the Reader Zone purchase. Denise Harders, CPLS director, coordinated arrangements and publicized the project. The remaining funds will be available for library grant applications. Grant applications were due June 30. Commission staff members are reviewing the 73 applications received that totaled \$281,046. There is approximately \$165,000 available for grants.

*Nebraska Universal Services Fund Special Construction Program for Libraries and Schools* – Christa Porter reported that \$1,000,000 is available in e-Rate support for public libraries to apply for new fiber construction. These funds would supplement federal e-Rate funding. The funds will cover all construction costs related to installing fiber to the library. The Special Construction Program for Libraries and Schools is a four-year program created and administered by the Nebraska Public Service Commission.

Sally Snyder reported on the 1 Million Minutes of Reading recorded for the Summer Reading Program. Libraries use the Reader Zone app to digitally record how many minutes, titles or chapters are read. As of July 6, over 1 million minutes have been logged.

Sally commented that the annual Youth Services Retreat will be a three hour virtual retreat held on September 3.

*Nebraska Center for the Book* – Wagner reported One Book One Nebraska 2020 events have been disrupted to an extent. There have been many requests for this year's book, Donald Stratton's *All the Gallant Men*, for book clubs. June 15 was the deadline for nominations for OBON 2021. Nominated books are now being reviewed for publicizing a short list for Nebraska Center for the Book board voting. The 2021 book will be announced at the Celebration of Nebraska Books scheduled for October 17. The Nebraska Book Award entry deadline was June 30. The number of submissions is lower this year than in years past.

The Nebraska Library Association will not hold its annual conference onsite in Kearney this year. The NLA board will decide how programming will be provided. The National Book Festival will be held online September 25 – 27. The Association for Rural and Small Libraries annual conference will be held online September 28 – October 2.

*Library Innovation Studios Project Status* – Wagner reported training and new installations for the next cycle of libraries had to be postponed due to health safety policies and restrictions. Libraries that currently have the equipment have continued to use it and some were involved in making face coverings and face shields. Training is now set to begin next week at Superior Public Library. JoAnn McManus is working with the other libraries to set up training over the next couple of months. The project was planned to include up to 40 libraries. However, with the disruption in scheduling, that number has changed to 35 in order to complete the project by the end of June 2021.

## **Financial Report**

*June Budget and Financial Report* – Wagner reported that with the state fiscal year ending on June 30, the Commission's operating budget finished under budget. This is the first year of the biennium. Unspent state funds carry over to the second year. Federal funds are within budget as the final quarter of the federal fiscal year has just begun. The Library Innovation Studios grant project partnership agreement with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has been signed.

*Attestation Report*- Wagner reported that a team of state auditors has been working with the Commission since mid-April. An exit conference is scheduled for July 14.

## **New Business**

*2021-23 Biennium Budget Request* – Wagner reported the biennium budget process has started. Calculation for personnel is based on current staffing and purchases for the next biennium. The governor and legislature determine state employee pay and benefit amounts. The Commission's other major expense is office space lease. There are several major budget items in the state aid to libraries program budget. Of those, database licensing fees will increase by approximately 3% in the next fiscal year. A proposal to increase funding for the regional library systems will also be included. The funding request will account for salaries and benefits for regional system staff. The federal funds amount will be based on the current year appropriation. The LSTA appropriation

won't be known for the upcoming federal fiscal year before the budget request is submitted in mid-September.

*Next Meeting Dates* – The next Commission meetings will be held August 28 and November 13.

**Adjournment**

Debby Bloom adjourned the meeting.

Jennifer Wrampe