

NEBRASKA LIBRARY COMMISSION

Kearney, Nebraska

March 11, 2011

The Nebraska Library Commission met on March 11, 2011, at the Kearney Public Library, 2020 First Avenue, Kearney, Nebraska. The meeting notice was posted on the State Public Meeting Calendar and the Commission Web site.

Members present: Steve Batty, Sherry Crow, John Dale, Charles Gordon and Pat Gross. Staff present: Rod Wagner, Richard Miller Guests: Pat Leach, Deb Carlson, Nancy Escamilla, Merrillene Woods, Christine Walsh, Francine Canfield, Denise Harders, Ceri Daniels.

Chair John Dale called the meeting to order at ??? a.m. This 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; Charles Gordon, Pat Gross and Sherry Crow - aye. Motion approved.

Approval of the Minutes (January 14, 2011): One correction was noted on the January 14, 2011 minutes in regards to the report on the South Sioux City Public Library receipt of computers, the number should be 12 not 22. Also a correction was noted that the amount of money by made by the South Sioux City Optimist Club in the sale of Christmas wreaths at the library was \$3,000 instead of \$33,000.

A motion was made to approve the January 14, 2011, meeting minutes. Motion carried on roll call vote: Steve Batty – aye; John Dale – aye; Charles Gordon, Pat Gross and Sherry Crow - aye. Motion approved.

PUBLIC FORUM

CHAIR'S REPORT AND COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Chair John Dale reported that he attended the Legislative Hearing on February 25th, 2011 at which Rod presented the case for the Library Commission and more discussion will be held at the Joint Meeting. John also visited the South Sioux City Public Library recently. He also received a report from Brenda Ealey with various information regarding budget concerns. A suggestion made by Sherry Black from the Auburn Public Library was that they move her position to a part-time position and put another person in the Director's position and that suggestion saved them from losing any additional staff beyond a part-time position which is a considerable sacrifice and shows the creativity of dedicated librarians. She is now the Children's Librarian.

He noted that he completed Rod's performance review and that has been submitted to the State. John also reported that he has volunteered to help with the Summer Reading Program at the Wayne Public Library.

Charles Gordon presented annual reports completed by the Fremont Public Library. The library does not have a full-time director after one year. Laura England-Biggs is entering her second year and has been doing a wonderful job. The search effort was been postponed until this fall. He also noted that a new City Attorney from Grand Island was hired and has been named the interim City Administrator and seems to be very knowledgeable about city operations. In Fremont, there is a new Mayor, a new council member and the immigration ordinance is now dead in the Legislature for another year. The City is trying to vote to a non-partisan election for Mayor and City Council as Fremont is the only Class One in the State that elects by parties. Another item is that a gentleman by the name of Warren Graham is going to be doing an inservice for the staff at the Library.

Sherry Crow reported that there are many library renovations happening in the Meridian Library System and the Learning Commons is coming together very well at the Calvin T Ryan Library renovation. Sharon Osenga asked Sherry to report on the Cowgirl Peg Sunberg visit program that has been made possible by a youth grant from the Library Commission. Total number of kids visited were over 900 in the Meridian, Panhandle and Republican Valley systems. It was a very successful program.

Steve Batty commented on the Cowgirl Peg visited the McCook schools and library and that it had been well attended and everyone had a good time. The Republican Valley Library system held their meeting this past month using conference call as a cost cutting measure, along with the newsletter being accessible by PDF on the web page. In McCook the budget is good but the elevator is on hold as a new location was chosen and the cost increased about \$50,000, but the Library Foundation is not discouraged. A Library Improvement grant approved by the Library Commission will assist in building a digital video green screen studio in the basement and it will all be portable so that area schools would be able to utilize it also. Steve received a notification about a mini online course on grant writing that is available and could be useful for the smaller libraries.

Pat Gross reported that the Panhandle Library System has selected an Administrator and more information will be presented at the State Advisory Council on Libraries meeting later in the day. Scottsbluff Public Library continues to work on the remodeling project and also are getting ready for a summer reading workshop. In the panhandle area smaller libraries are doing an automation project through a consortium for future events. A Job Alike program is coming up and this program allows for networking with the public and school librarians in the panhandle system to hold brainstorming sessions and the next meeting will be at the Scottsbluff Middle School which is brand new in a remodeled older building. Arrangements are currently being made for an author visit by Diane de Groat.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Personnel

Rod Wagner reported that Jeannette Powell is retiring the end of this month. Jeannette has been with the Library Commission for several years and prior to that she worked for the Nebraska Legislature and Lincoln City Library. She has been a great asset to the Commission and has had lots of contact with libraries arranging licensing and trainings, so she is well known by many.

One of the new library broadband employees resigned from the Commission. Audrey York, the Grant Compliance Officer, was offered her dream job that she had applied for before accepting the position at the Commission. Her background and specific career is in Historical Preservation so she has taken a job with the State Historical Society at the end of February. In the four months that she was at the Commission, she did some incredible work getting our reporting and data collection systems in place. We are currently recruiting to fill this position and have had some good interviews and hope to be able to offer this position to a candidate next week.

New NLC Website Status

The Library Commission website team has made really good progress and out of 6,705 pages to convert they are down to a couple thousand pages which are mostly routine. There are about 500 that will require lot of coding and they are still looking at spring availability for the new site.

Biennium Budget and State Legislature Update

Rod Wagner reported that the Commission Budget Hearing was on February 22nd and thought the hearing was receptive with a few questions that came back. The committee will soon finish the agency hearings and will take a few days off and will begin the reviewing of agency budgets. We are at a very critical time in the new few weeks and have hopes that there are some appropriation committee members that are supportive. The Commission has received a written statement from Senator Conrad from Lincoln that she will make her best effort to the Commission and Senator Mellow from Omaha has also given indication that he wants to help also. Of the nine members on the committee, we would need 5 votes to change their preliminary recommendation. More discussion to be held during the State Advisory Council on Libraries meeting. The Commission is facing the 10% cut in the Operations Budget and also a 10% cut in the Library Program Development Budget. Rod feels there is a much better chance of getting the aid funds restored since the Governor had not recommended a reduction in aid funds.

Library Improvement Grants

Richard Miller reported that there were requests totaling over \$101,000 and around \$80,000 in available funds. A total of \$81,023 was granted and a large number of these requests were for membership in the Pioneer Consortium. Discussion was held on the process of grant evaluations and providing comments to the recipients on their applications.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Rod Wagner introduced the financial reports for January and February and wanted to remind everyone that it is based on the 9.5% reduction and that the Commission is on tract overall in good shape in terms of the operating budget. Charles Gordon had received a request for information regarding a 10% budget reduction that the systems have received. Rod stated that at this time the regional systems have not been required to take the budget cut but are included in the modification of the appropriation committee's preliminary budget recommendation. Wagner

included that on the federal portion of the budget, the Congress appropriation for the full year have not yet been made. Many of the federally funded programs are based on a Congressional continuing resolution and that expires on May 4th but was extended for a few weeks. A congressional amendment that had been introduced would have eliminated all the funding for the Institution, Museum and Library Services including a large portion of funding that is allocated to state libraries and there was very swift response to this request. A report was issued indicating that the congressman had withdrawn the proposal. The LSTA funding is not subject to reduction and it is likely that the LSTA appropriation for this year will be at the same level as last year. However the President's budget for the next federal fiscal year reduces the LSTA funding and the projection made for Nebraska would result in about a \$70,000 reduction in federal funds.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

Rod Wagner requested approval for out-of-state travel to the Western Council of Libraries meeting that is in April and the expenses for this meeting are paid by Western Council. He also requested approval to attend the annual National Library Legislative Day May 9th & 10th in Washington, DC and also the Chief Officers of State Libraries meeting on May 11th.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the out-of-state travel requests for Rod Wagner. Motion carried on roll call vote: Steve Batty – aye; John Dale – aye; Charles Gordon; Pat Gross – aye; Sherry Crow – aye. Motion approved.

John Dale mentioned that it is customary for Commission members to also attend the National Library Legislative Day and funds are available for the travel costs. John Dale and Sherry Crow will also be attending with Rod.

Next Meeting

The next meeting date set for May 13th would interfere with the return travel from National Legislative Day. The next meeting will be held May 27th, 9:00 a.m. at the Nebraska Library Commission.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Chair John Dale at ????? a.m.

Sue Biloft, Secretary