

Vermont Library Association Board Meeting
January 18, 2012
Multipurpose Room, Kreitzberg Library, Norwich University
10am – 1pm

Present: Andy Burkhardt, Heidi Steiner, Gail Weymouth, Joe Farara, Kip Roberson, Helen Linda, Cindy Weber, Marti Fiske, Laurel Stanley, Grace Greene, Jane Napier, Lucinda Walker

Meetings minutes by: Heidi Steiner

Meeting called to order at 10:05am

Agenda Review

Joe called for additional agenda items. The Board needs to consider the SOPA letter to Senator Leahy circulated via email and written by folks at Middlebury—do we want to be included? Joe’s call for a new Government Relations Chair fell on deaf ears, so it warrants discussion. Grace added the organizational handbook and Marti added the calendars.

Committee and Section Updates

Nancy (not present-reported by Joe, ALA Councilor) – Nancy leaves for ALA Midwinter on Friday and will be posting updates on the website. She encourages everyone to sign the School Libraries petition on the White House’s “We the People” site. Nancy’s term is up this year and she does not intend to run again.

Lucinda (Public Libraries Section) – Lucinda is actively looking for someone to take over her role as President of the Public Libraries Section and has five possible names. She is waiting for continuing education announcements to come out from DOL and will likely have a program in the spring.

Gail (Intellectual Freedom) – The John Swan Lecture was held. A new Chair for the IFC really should be found, as Gail has already resigned from the ALA IFC and needs to focus on her library.

Andy (College & Special Libraries) – Andy organized a Library Learning Lunch at UVM’s Davis Center just before the Thanksgiving holiday to get together, meet new people, and generally chat. Approximately 21 people showed up!

Kat (not present, Youth) – Kat could not make it, but her section’s program “Fresh, Easy, and Cheap!” is taking place in Barre next Friday, January 27th.

Laurel (VLTA Representative) – The committee that organizes the TOEC will be meeting in February to organize their program for April.

Helen (Editorial) – Helen cleaned up the Sub Pool and it should now be current as of a year. She also put a system in place to keep the Pool clean by setting up an alert to check monthly for people who have “expired.” Grace asked how much the Sub Pool is used. Jane noted her library used it successfully and Helen stated people have said positive things, but it is all anecdotal. The Newsletter deadline for the February issue is also coming up (separate agenda item).

Kip (NELA Representative) – NELA is in the process of looking to hire a new Administrator. Mary Ann Rupert will continue to be conference coordinator. Conference planning is in full swing and the

committee meets on Friday. Kip noted he may or may not continue on as NELA Representative at the end of his term.

Grace (Awards) – The Awards Committee encourages everyone to consider nominating someone for the Sarah Hager Award and the Trustees Award: would hate to not have a Sarah Hager winner again this year.

Marti (Past-President) – Marti provided an update on the Vermont libraries calendar project. Initial calendar sales went really well. Marti expected to sell about 1200, but the graphic designer pushed for 2000 and there are now boxes of leftover calendars. Marti gave one to each Board member in attendance. The calendars remain available for purchase online and sales are still trickling in. Sales were boosted when the calendar was mentioned on I Love Libraries and in *Seven Days*, with orders coming in from a number of other states. Marti noted it will probably be a breakeven project and would not push for doing it again. Feedback on the calendars has been positive, but sales reports from libraries do not seem that great. Marti attributes this to lack of marketing on the part of individual libraries.

Cindy (Membership) – Cindy sent out 420 renewal cards in December and has already received 133 back.

Conference Update (Jane)

Jane circulated the draft conference schedule and noted Michelle Gorman, the Teen Services Coordinator at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Libraries in North Carolina will be the keynote. The workshops are looking good and morning workshops are staggered to help with traffic flow at lunch (the most common complaint on surveys last year). Jane stated when you have a one-day conference, it has to go until 5pm, but people still want a social/reception. St. Michael's has sectioned off a portion of the cafeteria for an on-site reception and drill cart competition starting at 5pm. She is waiting on workshop descriptions from a few people and hopes to have the website/program up in early-February.

The key point of discussion was financial difficulties: the budget is in really good shape, but the management is challenging. There is no credit card for making bookings and with registration being through the mail, forms and checks travel from Burlington to Jane in Montpelier to Heather in Killington and can thus take 6-8 weeks to process. Jane also brought up that there had recently been discussion of the VLC budget being added back in to the VLA budget. Helen questions if the Board had seriously looked at facilitating online payment for membership and conference registration. After some discussion, the Board voted unanimously to add the VLC budget back into the VLA budget. The Board also concurred on getting a VLA credit card and setting up PayPal or another online payment system once the card is attained. Joe will coordinate with Wynne to set this all up when she returns from vacation and Helen will work with VLC Conference Committee folks on a fillable registration form, etc. Jane is willing to hold off launching the conference website until March 1st if necessary to give time for setting up online registration and payment. All agreed these changes will be welcome streamlining for many!

Jane's final note was that planning for next year is already under consideration and she is seeking ideas for keynotes and workshops.

Budget Report (Joe)

Wynne sent 2011 budget reports and a proposed 2012 budget with comparison years out to the Board prior to the meeting. The primary piece of discussion was whether or not there should be dedicated

funds each year for marketing. It was decided that there should be, possibly starting with \$500 (2012's projected surplus). Approving the 2012 budget was tabled until the next meeting when Wynne will be present and it can be gone through in more detail.

VLA/NHLA Leadership Workshop (Joe)

Maureen Sullivan, ALA President-Elect, will be facilitating this workshop and Kip volunteered previously to be registrar for the Vermont group. Joe inquired if \$20 for members and \$35 for non-members was reasonable and all agreed it was...some would willingly pay more! Caps will be 40 people from each state. Laurel commented that the flyer does not really give that much information about what exactly the workshop is. Joe will work with Mary White from NHLA to develop some bullets and send out a new draft to the Board. A date for it to go public will then have to be determined.

PLA Conference (Joe)

Christine Friese wants to know if anyone is interested in going to the PLA Conference in Philadelphia and ride-sharing/getting a bus. The general word seemed to be that some people were already planning to go but not interested in carpooling.

Librarian Relief Fund (Joe)

A little over \$4000 has been raised for the Relief Fund coming from roughly 75 donations. Wynne wants to send electronic acknowledgements/thank you notes to those who donated and consensus among the Board was that this was fine. Joe shared a draft of the application for funds form via email prior to the meeting and sought feedback, as he wants to get it out ASAP. Marti asked if there is any indication of how many applications we may receive and there is not. It was decided the application would not require documentation of damage. Joe will add an assertion that you do not need to be a VLA member to apply, but must work in a Vermont library. The goal is to have a deadline and turn it around quick. Joe will make a few edits and get to Helen to make a fillable PDF for the web. It will be shared on all applicable listservs possible.

Strategic Plan (Joe)

The current strategic plan runs out in May. Joe began making proposed changes and sent it to the Board prior to the meeting. Dates need to be changed and VSLA removed from the conference planning goal. The Board discussed needing something to reflect marketing, branding, and communications: this led to discussion of the major necessity for a website redesign. The strategic plan will be revisited at the next meeting and Joe welcomes any ideas in the interim. He will prepare a draft for March.

Newsletter (Helen)

Newsletter pieces can be announcements for upcoming events, summaries of events since the last newsletter, or write-ups of anything that might be of interest to the VLA membership. Helen wants as much stuff as possible, ideally by Friday, January 27th so she can edit it together and distribute it February 1st.

Other Business

VLA-DOL Card Day/Room (Joe) – Not happening this year: too late.

Organization Handbook (Grace) - Hoped to be further along at this point, but the handbook is in process. The policies may be especially time consuming and Grace will likely need help with any that are floating around.

SOPA Letter to Senator Leahy (Joe) – The letter was written by people at Middlebury. Joe inquired if we want to sign on to be included with Chief Technology Officers and others. The Board confirmed, but Marti did note that having our own signatures, and as many as possible, would have more impact. Many noted the number of grammatical errors in the letter and Joe stated he was planning to contribute edits. Gail expressed it would be best if VLA also sent its own letter to Senator Leahy since there is an established relationship. All agreed an independent letter, as well as the group letter was the best route. Heidi noted the letter to Leahy or something of the sort should be posted on the VLA website for awareness. Many Board members referenced the ALA Washington Office’s chart as a good option.

Conference Co-Sponsorship (Joe) – Marty Reid wants to know if VLA is interested in co-sponsoring an ebook conference with DOL in late-September/early-October. It appears this would be a purely goodwill sponsorship. Consensus was positive.

Personnel Committee (Laurel) – The Personnel Committee has met both in person and virtually and will be meeting again soon.

Government Relations Committee (Joe) – Joe’s call for volunteers to Chair the Government Relations Committee went unanswered. It is important this vacancy be filled sooner than later, as Marty wants said person to serve on an Advocacy Committee being formed at DOL. Joe asked the Board for approval that he fill in for now and was given their blessing.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15pm.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 7th – Department of Libraries, Berlin