

VLA Board Meeting
October 13, 2005
Mid-State Regional Library, Berlin

FINAL

Present: Daisy Benson, presiding; David Clark; Maggie Drown; Teresa Faust, recording; Amy Grasmick; Deborah Kahn; Marianne Kotch; Trina Magi; Hannah Peacock; Lisa von Kann; Linda Wells.

Meeting called to order at 9:40 a.m.

Minutes of May 12 Meeting

Approved with corrections.

Consent agenda

Approved with additions. [Appended.]

Budget report

Daisy distributed the current budget statement for Donna Edwards [Attachment A], along with a budget projection worksheet [Attachment B]. These worksheets are to be completed by section presidents and committee chairs and returned to Donna by Oct. 28. Discussion and approval of budget projections and plans by sections and committees will occur at the next Board meeting on Nov. 17.

ALA Councilor

Trina Magi distributed the resolution on health care passed recently by ALA [Attachment C]. She proposed that VLA pass a similar resolution and deliver it to state legislators, as they will be dealing with this issue this year. Prior to the meeting, Trina had shared the resolution and her proposal with the Government Relations and Personnel Committees. Government Relations approved, but Personnel raised the issue that something more could be done, specifically, that VLA itself could offer health insurance. There was some discussion among the Board regarding whether this was in fact possible. Amy Grasmick, chair of the Personnel Committee, says her research indicates it is possible. The resolution could be worked on independently of the offer of insurance. The Board approved a motion empowering Trina to draft a resolution in which VLA supports affordable health care, with the intention that it be delivered to state legislators.

Intellectual Freedom Committee

Trina Magi pointed out that the Vermont statute libraries are referencing in regard to the privacy of patron records is part of a statute dealing with access to public records. The wording is such that it is not clear if it actually prohibits the sharing of records without a court order; it merely states that they can be exempt from disclosure. The statutes in some other states emphasize the confidentiality of library records. Trina asked that the Board support the Intellectual Freedom Committee working on strengthening the Vermont statute to ensure confidentiality. Discussion included the possibility that parental rights over children's records might become an issue, that some Vermont libraries are still using manual checkout systems which may present a privacy threat, that many libraries rely on volunteers who may not be aware of privacy concerns or do not see the harm in disclosing what book a patron has read, and that State Librarian Sybil McShane has already had some contact with the Governor and Secretary of Administration regarding the bolstering of the statute. The Board approved the Intellectual Freedom Committee working on strengthening the statute to ensure confidentiality.

In related business, Trina sought Board support for developing a plan to survey Vermont librarians on confidentiality issues. This would be a research opportunity for Trina but would be conducted on behalf of VLA. The Board voted to authorize Trina to develop a plan for such a survey.

Planning Retreat

Daisy asked the Board to review the summary of the Planning Retreat held in July and to share impressions of things left out or needing emphasis. She pointed out that the Board's self-assessment results were not a part of the summary document previously distributed, but that those results should not be overlooked in future planning. Discussion included the following items:

- Trustees were not mentioned enough. They need to view VLA as an aid to their work. Support staff and non-directors also need to feel VLA has a place for them. In all these cases, it is a combination of both better promoting what we already do and doing more for these groups.
- VLA is currently organized by types of libraries; it is not set up to address the issue clusters we identified.
- VLA should cooperate more with VEMA, again a case of issues over settings. Perhaps our boards could hold a joint meeting.
- Truly we support life-long library users, from birth to the grave, through public, school, and academic libraries.
- How will we get this plan infused into the organization? Will it be work on top of the work we already do for the organization, or will we decide one issue will be the focus of all our programming efforts for the coming year?
- Committees seem to operate independently, with little guidance from the Board. We don't use an executive board as other organizations do. Questions could be directed to such a group between meetings of the entire Board.
- Working conditions of librarians was not addressed.
- It was pointed out that although sustainable funding was identified as one of the priority issues, it was not discussed in a breakout group.
- Education for librarians was not addressed.

The Board informally agreed that making decisions between Board meetings via email was acceptable, providing a record is kept of these decisions. Daisy will set up a Yahoo group consisting of all Board members to make it easier to share email among the Board.

Daisy said that the bulk of the Nov. 17 Board meeting would be devoted to discussing the strategic plan. In preparation, Board members are to reread the VLA mission statement, look at the priorities identified at the retreat, perhaps attempt to better articulate these issues, think about what preparation would be needed, and think about how this information could be shared with the membership. The timeframe for the strategic plan would be two to three years.

Daisy is looking for others to help her in synthesizing issues from the Board self-assessment.

VLA News

Daisy distributed a schedule of deadlines and publication dates for the *VLA News*, which included a listing of items that needed to appear in particular issues [Attachment D].

Coming up in the next issue is a call for nominations for the positions of vice-president/president-elect (this year from an academic or special library), ALA Councilor (this year from a school library, a three-year appointment), and Treasurer (a two-year appointment). Lisa von Kann and David Clark will serve on the Nominating Committee and nominations should be directed to either of them.

Ideas for articles for the newsletter were discussed and assigned caretakers. These were:

- December/January issue: a tribute to retiring librarians—Daisy; this would be a nice regular feature, to include introductions to new librarians

- February/March issue: the strategic plan process—Daisy
- April/May issue: new circulation systems—David and Maggie Drown
- June/July issue: fundraising—Marianne Kotch

Other ideas for articles:

- Online degree programs.
- Committee meeting calendar.
- Odd and interesting facts about Vermont libraries, tidbits useful as filler.

The question of posting the newsletter on the VLA web site was raised and will be on the agenda for the Nov. 17 meeting.

Announcements

David distributed a copy of a sample library museum pass [Attachment E]. A one-year trial will begin in November in which 10 libraries will offer passes to two or three museums.

The new Montreal library is great and very busy.

The Green Mountain Book Award kickoff at Barnes & Noble is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 19.

Meeting adjourned shortly after noon.