

Vermont Library Association Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 11, 2015 | 10AM

Ilisley Public Library in Middlebury, VT and Online

Meeting called to order 9:10AM

Present at Ilisley: Jessica Summer, Toni Josey, Amber Billey, Helen Linda, Kevin Unrath, Cindy Weber, Kelly McElligott, Amy Grasmick, Charlotte Gerstein, Amy Wisehart, Tom McMurdo

Attending online: Ray Brior, Jimmy Allen, Sarah Costa, Marty Reid, Virgil Fuller, April Shaw, Howard Burrows

Update from Marty Reid on VTLib:

The Vermont Department of Libraries has been asked to make a 17% cut in its budget this year. Thus far they've been able to weather cuts by not filling vacancies as they arise, but this next year they're looking at almost 500,000 in cuts. Marty has talked to the Senate and House Appropriations committees about the cuts' impact. The first item/service to be cut will be the law library, in large part because its elimination will not jeopardize any of the IMLS matching money that supports almost every other VTLib endeavor (the loss of which would then make the cuts in operational budget effectively double in size). Marty will be meeting with law community stakeholders to see what impact the elimination of the law library and related reference services will have. They are also eliminating one position in the Special Services Unit that had previously just been unfilled. The remainder of the cuts are yet to be determined.

By statute VTLib has to provide a law library, so the legislature is aware that making this change in VTLib funding will require a change in statute. VTLib is also bringing in consultant Bill Wilson to look at the impact of the cuts, to help restructure the department, and to determine priorities. VTLib is not currently asking VLA or libraries to help with advocacy. There's been very little discussion in the legislature about the funding cuts. Marty may ask for advocacy help once they know more specifics about the cuts and their impact.

VTLib is still looking at a resource sharing system upgrade because their highest priority continues to be information access for VT citizens. They're still moving forward to replace VALS and will be putting out a RFP for vendors later this year to see if they can do so without increasing the budget.

Review of agenda and approval of minutes:

Amber made a motion to approve the past minutes and Helen seconded; motion passed unanimously.

Update from President:

Congratulations to Laura Crain, College and Special Libraries Section Vice President, who was featured in a KidsVT article on her work helping incarcerated moms record themselves reading bedtime stories for their children.

Toni sent a letter to Senator Sanders supporting inclusion of language on school librarians in the ESEA reauthorization.

Toni met with Trina Magi to learn about her work updating the ALA Intellectual Freedom manual. The book is set to be published in April, and Trina and Toni want to make sure all VT libraries can have a copy of it.

Toni is in contact with the lawyers who will be presenting at VLC.

Update from Vice President:

Charlotte Gerstein suggested that we look into hiring an Executive Director for VLA. Many past presidents thought it was a good idea in order to offer some continuity during frequent changes in leadership. Virgil contacted Karson and Charlotte to see what other state associations do, especially ones with similar budgets to ours. We will be discussing the prospect further at the retreat.

Update on Nominations and Elections Committee: Could we create the slate by having the membership vote on candidates via electronic ballot, then present the results of that ballot as the slate at the business meeting? We should discuss at the retreat further how we recruit more participation in the leadership. Amber also suggested that we abandon the public-academic cycle and just look for people interested in leadership no matter where they come from. It would also be good to get trustees into the association to stay in tune with the profession.

Passport to VT Libraries: opening it up to public and academic libraries. Program will run this summer. Three prize categories: adult, child, and young adult. **Amber motioned to approve \$300 for prize money, Sarah seconded; motion passed unanimously.**

Update from Secretary:

Sarah hopes to clean up our physical archives before her term ends. We should also discuss at the retreat how records are passed from departing to incoming officers and how things get filed with the archivist.

Update from Treasurer:

Confusion on the credit card account: there are currently two accounts.

The career facilitator will need more than budgeted for.

Jimmy filed VLA's taxes successfully.

Amazon Smile has yet to send us any money - they won't send anything less than \$5.

Update from Immediate Past President:

Amber is featured in Seven Days this week as a woman to watch in Vermont.

Congratulations!

College and Special Libraries Section: no update.

Public Libraries Section: spring workshop planning underway. They're bringing in a keynote speaker on reference innovation, with readers advisory in the afternoon. Congrats to Amy Wisheart for being named an Emerging Leader for PLA!

Technical Services Section:

There's interest in a conference or preconference session on book repair. Don't have a leader for it right now and would need an appropriation from VLA for materials.

NACO training (on how to add names to the Library of Congress authority file). Amber felt the training was largely unsuccessful but she is now the NACO funnel coordinator, so she proposes to bring an experienced trainer from Ohio to do a one-day workshop for anyone who wants to be a NACO contributor. That would cost 800-1200. There are currently six people in VT who did most of the training already offered. They'd need to find out what institutions are willing and able to contribute to the cost. Jessica suggested tying the training into the conference - do a Monday preconference workshop? What level of funding would VLA be willing to contribute and what level would institutions offer? Could VLA float initial funding and be paid back by institutions? Waiting to see a concrete proposal.

Trustees Section:

Trustees meeting is coming up on the 19th. Trying to pull trustees section together for a conference presentation. Would love to get more trustees and friends to become members of VLA. Brooks Memorial Library just got a 1,200,000 addition to their endowment. Interested in doing regional activities.

Conference Committee:

By the end of the week, we should know who the keynote speaker is. There will be preconference from 2-5 Monday on safe patron interactions, teaching librarians who to call in tough situations so that none of us are liable. Tammy from Howard Center will be running it at Fletcher Free and it will cost \$15 for the half day. Dorms are available for \$60 a person on Monday night and \$40 Tuesday. Our theme is "Reveal your inner super power". Registration will just be by email, not postcards. Registration will be up by April 1. Conference will be May 19, the Tuesday before Memorial Day weekend. We have a hole in tech services for the first session - suggestions include doing book repair then and having a leadership symposium later in the year.

Membership and Outreach Committee:

We're closer to offering online membership registrations. We will also have a Square for credit card payments at conference. We're still doing Paypal for membership payments for now.

We're at 220 members, pretty good for this time of year. A lot of people are renewing for the first time in many years. Toni and Helen are working on some sort of new member event at the conference.

Amber and Janet are going to be the new co-editors of VLA news.

Helen changed the membership form.

Helen is working with VT ComicCon to see what our contribution will be this year. We'll settle on a price and they'll hear from us in June after VLC. Hopefully it can be a wrap up to summer reading.

We probably need to review membership level pricing - something else to discuss at the retreat?

Awards Committee: We received two nominations for the Sarah C. Hagar Award and one for Trustee of the Year.

Personnel Committee:

We're still trying to get a mentorship program figured out. May partner with someone in NELA to get a bigger, stronger mentoring program going. Stacy Knight finished looking at new survey - ready to distribute, hopefully before the end of the week.

Scholarship Committee:

The first graduate student award went to Ellen Kay from Putney. We should add a profile of her to the website.

Government Relations Committee:

Legislative breakfasts might be more informational and less advocacy-focused this year. Are they still useful? We're considering doing them in the fall.

Intellectual Freedom Committee:

They have been trying to gage libraries' preparations if they experience intellectual freedom challenges and make sure policies are in place around the state for when challenges arise. They're working on getting a bulk discount on the ALA IF Manual for VT libraries.

NELA:

The NELA Executive Board met January 16, 2015. Past President Deb Hoadley was appointed Vice President, filling Lucas Franklin's term, who had to resign for personal reasons.

The meeting was largely devoted to discussion and passing of the budget.

Information about the NELA mentorship program has been posted on NELA website:

<http://nelib.org/advance-your-career/mentors/> The page includes guidelines about mentorship and a form to request to be a mentor or mentee.

Shara McCaffrey and Karson spoke February 3 and Karson connected Shara with Alison Zaya, of NELA's Membership Committee. Don't know if they've been able to speak to each other. At that time one person from Vermont was looking for a mentor; Allison's co-chair Mike Zeller had his information.

New Hampshire is testing a joint membership with NELA; Massachusetts will be next.

Members pay a state organization fee and then can add on NELAmembership. With six state and one regional organization the feeling is that there is competition for the same members.

Reminder that NELLIS applications are due by March 20 – participants and mentors. When Karson last checked with Krista Vermont numbers were low but she said everyone waits until the deadline. Karson forwarded one potential mentor to Amy Howlett, Krista McLeod and Mary Etter.

ALA:

Midwinter is in Boston this year, so it would be great to send some leaders to those meetings. Every chapter is facing issues of leadership and membership.

“Race for Relevance” - possible assigned reading before retreat on how to make an organization leaner and more effective.

Ohio library council made a ROI tool all libraries can use. Also presented an idea for a system to tie voter registration to library card registration.

ALA is looking to collect stories on the value of the association.

VTLib:

Meeting tomorrow on new resource sharing system. VTLib knows it needs to tell its story to legislators better to show the impact it has on local libraries. It also needs to refocus on what it does now and what it will be doing in the future. These cuts are an opportunity to streamline. It's also an opportunity for VLA to step in and fill potential gaps like mentorship. Urging VLA to hold off on contacting legislators for now, though we may be called on to do so soon.

Other business:

Toni asked that we appoint Amanda Perry from the Winooski Public Library chair of the Inclusion Committee. Motion moved and seconded; **motion passed unanimously to appoint Amanda Perry chair of the Inclusion Committee.**

Toni proposed moving retreat to beginning of June. We will discuss scheduling over email.

Update from Cindy on ALA Career Facilitator program: she's still doing a lot of training. Main focus will be on having reference questions to ask people looking for help and having resource lists to point them to.

Meeting adjourned at 12:19.