



Library Development & Legislation (LD&L) Committee

Friday, April 17, 2020

1:00 PM

Virtual via Go-To-Meeting

MINUTES

Members present: (*all attending remotely*) Connie Meyer, Kathy Klager, Kris Adams Wendt, Mark Arend, Bruce Gay, Paula Kiely, Vicki Teal Lovely, Sherry Machones, Larry Oathout, Kathy Pletcher, Jim Ramsey, Plumer Lovelace (WLA Executive Director), Steve Conway (Conway Consulting)

Members absent: Jennifer Chamberlain, Nick Dimassis, Heather Johnson, Pete Loeffel, Steve Ohs, Nyama Reed

Guests: Martha Berninger (DPI)

Co-chair Meyer called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM. The roll was called and a quorum declared present. The agenda order was approved by consensus.

Approval of minutes from the March 20, 2020 meeting. The minutes of the March 20, 2020 meeting were approved unanimously on a **motion from Arend seconded by Pletcher.**

2021-2023 State Biennial Budget Request. Meyer presented two versions of a possible request for an increase in state aid; one version requests the higher increase in the first year of the biennium and a lower additional increase in the second year, the other reverses that order. Discussion centered around the current covid-economic crisis and the important role of libraries in community recovery, particularly regarding access to reliable broadband connectivity, educational support, workforce development and assistance for the unemployed as well as local businesses. It was announced on April 16 that libraries would be allowed to provide curbside service under certain conditions. While colleagues are excited about being able to serve the public once more, managing the details necessary to providing safe access to local collections has underlined concerns about being prepared for eventual reopening. Local libraries anticipate unprecedented stressors on staffing capacity and equipment when full services are resumed. The next state biennial budget request does not help with financial pressures in 2020 -2021, but consensus was that economic impacts will still be felt by 2022. Asking for a larger boost in the first year of the biennium would recognize the need for systems to receive robust funding in order to support significant regional and local library needs. Further discussion involved the recognition of, and expression of comfort with, the fact that while the committee's current preference is to request the larger increase in the first year, conditions are changing rapidly and in the coming months DPI may decide that the better approach is to reverse the order of the requested increases.

Gay has accepted the role of liaison to SRLAAW. He reported that the April 16 meeting discussed the Wisconsin Public Library System Technology Collaboration funding proposal as requested by LD&L to receive input regarding biennial budget strategy. SRLAAW's conclusion was this is not an optimal time for a separate technology request which might negatively compete with system aids. More time is

needed to work out infrastructure details. The project could, however, be taken up by a coalition of partnering systems using their system aids dollars if they so choose. Some systems may decide to invest in other technology projects. The important work invested by Lovely and others in this project can be folded into messaging and talking points going forward. After further discussion, LD&L concurred with SRLAAW that it was best to focus on public library system aids at this time.

Oathout/Pletcher motion to reaffirm the 2021-2023 biennial budget request for an increase in public library system aid should be the same as in 2019-2021, i.e. an extra \$2.5 million over base in the first year and \$4 million (the \$2.5M from the first year plus another \$1.5M over base) in the second year.

LD&L needs the numbers for statewide resource contracts, BadgerLink and Newline for the Blind in order to complete the presentation messaging for WLA supported budget requests. Conway will work with Dee Pettack from the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to arrange conversations between the WLA LD&L budget team and DPI, and the Department of Administration (DOA). Conversations with members of Joint Finance Committee will follow. DPI budget target date for WLA documents is May 1.

Pletcher/Machones motion to proceed with developing a 2021-2023 biennium public library system aids request for a first year \$2.5 million increase and second year \$4 million increase to base funding, and a fifth contract request to support Recollection Wisconsin for \$150,000 first year and \$300,000 second year funding, as well as yet to be determined cost to continue requests for the four statewide resource contracts, BadgerLink and Newline for the Blind, with a target deadline of May 1.

Remaining meeting dates for 2020. May 15, July 24, September 25, November 13

Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 1:56 PM on a **motion by Klager, seconded by Wendt.**

Respectfully submitted,
Kris Adams Wendt, Recorder