

WLA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Friday, February 12, 2016, 8:00 am – 10: 00 am
Laramie County Public Library, Coneflower Room
2200 Pioneer Avenue
Cheyenne, WY

1. The meeting was called or order by Lori Phillips at 8:05 am.
Members present: Kate Mutch, Caitlin White, Maggie Unterseher, Janice Grover-Roosa, Isabel Zumel.
Ex officio member present: Rebecca Schuh, Katrina Brown, Sid Stanfill, Brian Greene, Jamie Markus, Marian Orr.
Guest: Valerie McGinnis, Teton County Public Library.
2. Approval of minutes –minutes from the September 24 meeting were approved with the correction that Brian Greene attended as an ex officio member of the committee
3. Changes or additions to the agenda- WLA lobbyist Marian Orr stopped by the meeting on to touch base with the committee. She described the current legislative session as very intense and confrontational.
4. Reports:

a. Public libraries

Sid Stanfill and Kate Mutch reported expected decreases to their budgets. Isabel reported a continuation of the early childhood literacy text messaging program in Teton County.

b. School libraries

Maggie Unterseher commented on the recent passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act, which replaces the No Child Left Behind Act.

c. UW

Lori Phillips reported that Laurie Nichols, current Provost at South Dakota State University, has been named the new President of UW and will begin her position May 1. The process to identify a new Dean of Libraries at UW is ongoing. All colleges on campus are expecting budget cuts for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016, including the Libraries.

d. National Issues

Brian Greene reported that he supported four resolutions passed in the 2016 ALA Midwinter Council meetings:

- 1) Against Islamophobia
- 2) Concerning accessibility of ALA conferences and meetings for People with disabilities
- 3) Replacing the LC subject heading "Illegal Aliens" with "Undocumented Immigrants"

4) Support for the 2015 ALA Advocacy Implementation Plan

He next reported that two states, Michigan and our neighbor Nebraska have legislation passed or in committee that negatively affect libraries in their respective states. In late December, during the final minutes of the **Michigan** 2015 legislative session, language was added to **SB 571** that would make it illegal for libraries, school districts and others to educate their communities about ballot issues. It creates criminal and civil penalties for libraries, boards and local governments which spend public funds on TV ads, mailers, or phone messages about local ballot proposals 60 days before an election. Essentially, it blocks access to unbiased, objective communication and dissemination of information which is the very definition of a library's purpose.

In January, Michigan governor Snyder signed the bill into law. Currently there are legislative effort to revisit this particular language and there is a federal court lawsuit. On February 5, 2016, a motion was granted for a preliminary injunction which means these changes to the Michigan Campaign Finance Act are not immediately enforceable. For updates by the MiLA please follow this [link](http://www.milibraries.org/advocacy/key-issues/) <<http://www.milibraries.org/advocacy/key-issues/>>

In **Nebraska**, bill **LB 969**, if passed, would compel cities and towns to change their library boards from independent governing bodies to advisory boards. The concern is that this would undermine the autonomy of libraries there and potentially affect funding levels, equal access, leadership, long-range planning and other services provided by libraries there. ALA President Sari Feldman, working with the NLA, issued a letter opposing the bill. In it, she argues that public libraries, lead by a strong and independent library board, are a critical democratic resource, dedicated to serving their respective communities. For a recent update from NLA please follow this [link](http://www.nebraskalibraries.org/blogpost/1235446/238594/LB969-Update) <<http://www.nebraskalibraries.org/blogpost/1235446/238594/LB969-Update>>.

e. State Issues

Jamie Markus reported that budget cuts are looming for the Wyoming State Library, as they are for all state agencies. His strategy for dealing with the cuts will be to protect people and positions. There are some cuts planned to the state-wide database offerings. Jamie reported WSL has hired Paige Bredenkamp as a School Library consultant.

f. WLA Issues: Sid Stanfill

Side provided a report about planning for the upcoming conference, to be held in Jackson in September 2016.

5. Old Business:

a. Committee Retreat

The committee will hold a planning retreat on the afternoon of June 8 in Casper. Lobbyist Marian Orr will lead the group in planning to establish a multi-year legislative strategy for the association.

b. National Library Legislative Day (May 4-5, 2015)
Janice Grover-Roosa will attend this event as the representative of the Legislative Committee.

6. New Business:

a. Member support for Wyoming Family Literacy Program
Blast emails have gone out the MemberClicks from Lori on behalf of the committee urging members to contact legislators about restoration of funding this program to the budget.

b. Question from WLA member about open carry laws

The issue raised was whether the committee would lobby to a modification to the state statute (Wy. Stat. Ann. § 6-8-104.) which enumerates the locations that prohibit firearms to include libraries. The committee prefers to participate in the conversation without taking a lead on the issue at the present time. Lori will work with the questioner to develop ideas about how to move this issue forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 am.

Minutes submitted by Lori Phillips