

NEBRASKA LIBRARY COMMISSION

Lincoln, NE

January 11, 2019

MINUTES

The Nebraska Library Commission met January 11, 2019, at the Atrium building, 1200 N Street, Lincoln. The meeting notice was posted on the Commission website and the Nebraska.gov public meeting calendar.

Commission members present: Michael LaCroix, Charles Peek, Debby Bloom, Arun Pondicherry, Sandy White, and Lois Todd-Meyer. Staff present: Rod Wagner, Jennifer Wrampe. Michael LaCroix called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. This meeting complies with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

Approval of Agenda: A motion was made by Charles Peek and seconded by Sandy White to approve the agenda. Motion carried on roll call vote: Debby Bloom – aye; Michael LaCroix – aye; Charles Peek – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Sandy White – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer - aye. Motion approved.

Approval of the Minutes: (November 9, 2018) a motion was made by Sandy White and seconded by Lois Todd-Meyer to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried on roll call vote: Debby Bloom – aye; Michael LaCroix – aye; Charles Peek – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Sandy White – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer - aye. Motion approved.

Chair's Report and Commissioners' Comments

Sandy White – attended the Sparks Grant project open house in Bayard. The Western Library System had a Reading Snowman Tree on display for the Plains' Trees Along the Trails decorating contest. The tree ornaments were made from various Library Innovation Studios equipment at the Scottsbluff Public Library.

Debby Bloom – reported that Lauritzen Gardens in Omaha is offering free passes to library patrons. The Small Business Association offered free workshops on starting up businesses.

Charles Peek – the Central Plains Library System newsletter included an article about Ted Genoways' book, *This Blessed Earth* (2019 One Book One Nebraska selection). The system newsletter also included an article promoting the Nebraska Library Commission's collection of statistical data and asking libraries to take part. Atkinson, Hastings and Cozad will have upcoming programs called "Full STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) Ahead." Wood River, Holdrege and other libraries in the region are holding food drives. Summer reading programs will be held in McCook on January 25 and Ravenna on March 29. Kearney Public Library, Kearney Senior College, the Prairie Arts Brothers Programs in Poetry Readings and the Merriment Performing Arts Center are joining together to bring *My Antonia* to the Merriment Performing Arts Center. Charles will lead a class "The 60s at 60" and "My Antonia at 100" prior to the program at the Merriment Arts Center. McCook and Hastings public libraries are back to regular business hours after being closed for renovations.

Lois Todd-Meyer – reported the Nebraska Center for Book Awards Ceremony was held on December 1 and had a very good turnout.

Arun Pondicherry – reported he has been hearing good things about the Nebraska OverDrive eBook and audiobook service. Arun mentioned a program in schools where students choose a book and read it over a one week period then give a summarization of the book and are graded on it.

Michael LaCroix – Omaha Public Library is collaborating with the Small Business Association to offer a series of free workshops on marketing, budgeting, etc. The workshops are scheduled to be held in January and February to help small business owners or people looking to start a business. The workshops will be held at different branch libraries around Omaha. OPL offered winter break programs for kids and teens during the Christmas break. Eric Jones, Three Rivers Library System director, is working with new library directors in the TRLS region and encouraging libraries unaccredited public libraries to work toward accreditation. Eric was very complimentary of Christa Burns, Library Development Director, and her help working with system directors. Michael noted that libraries are gearing up for summer reading programs.

Director's Report

Personnel – Rod Wagner reported that Sue Biltoft has returned to the Library Commission staff following her appointment to the accountant position. Sue previously worked in the accountant and business manager positions before leaving the Commission to work in a family business. Kayla Henzel has been hired as a staff assistant; Kayla will assist with communications and administrative support.

Library Innovation Studios Project – Wagner reported that training was held at the Nebraska Innovation Campus (Innovation Studio) on January 9 and 10 for librarians and volunteers from Geneva, Central City, Wayne, and Kimball. Those four libraries are in the next cycle for the makerspace equipment. Regarding other Innovation Studio project libraries, Wagner said that Crete Public Library received \$50,000 from Windstream to purchase makerspace equipment for Crete's new library facility. Norfolk Public Library has funds remaining from the library's building project and will use those funds toward purchase of makerspace equipment.

Sparks Grant Project – Wagner reported Verdigre and Bayard public libraries held open house events. Governor Ricketts attended and spoke at both events. The Imperial public library will hold its open house on January 18. Wagner and Holly Woldt attended a Rural Broadband Task Force meeting on December 10 to provide information about Nebraska public library broadband needs and to request that these needs be addressed in the Task Force's report and recommendations. A response from the Institute of Museum and Library Services is expected in mid-January indicating whether the Commission will be invited to submit an application for a larger grant to expand the Sparks project. The project would include an additional 24 libraries in the project. The project would be larger in scope and also involve installing teleconferencing technologies in these libraries.

Big Talk From Small Libraries – Wagner said that Christa Porter is arranging for presenters and presentations for the annual Big Talk From Small Libraries conference to be held February 22. The program is presented in collaboration with the Association for Rural and Small Libraries.

Nebraska State Poet Nomination Process – Wagner reported that the Nebraska Arts Council, Humanities Nebraska, and the Library Commission are the state organizations working together on the selection process. Three poet finalists were chosen as a result of the nomination process. After meeting with the finalists, a recommendation was sent to Governor Ricketts. Governor Ricketts has responded to the recommendation to appoint Matt Mason as the next Nebraska State Poet. The Governor’s Office will issue a press release to publicize Matt Mason’s appointment. The appointment is for a five-year term.

Nebraska Center for the Book – Wagner reported the Celebration of Nebraska Books event was held December 1 at the Nebraska History Museum. Greg Kosmicki and Mary K. Stillwell, co-editors of *Nebraska Presence*, the 2018 One Book One Nebraska selection, gave a presentation and included some of the poets that contributed to the book. Rex Walton presented slides of photos from several of the readings held this past year. Weather and road conditions were not good that day but many of the book award winners were present to receive their awards and comment on their books. The Mildred Bennett and Jane Geske awards were also presented. The Center for the Book annual membership meeting was held prior to the celebration. Lois Todd-Meyer and Nancy Johnson have completed their terms on the board and were recognized for their contributions.

Rod Wagner reported that Governor Ricketts chose not to issue a proclamation for the 2019 One Book One Nebraska selection. The 2019 selection, *This Blessed Earth* by Ted Genoways, was selected by a joint committee of Nebraska and Iowa state centers for the book representatives. The two states worked together in recognition of the Nebraska and Iowa joint library associations’ conference in October 2019. *This Blessed Earth* was selected following a process that considered many books recommended that had common connections with both states. The family farm subject of the book and Ted Genoways Nebraska and Iowa connections were factors in the selection. The book has received local, state, and national recognition.

Financial Report

December Financial Report – Wagner reported operation expenses are slightly above budget on the state side, but those are offset as LSTA supported operating expenses are under budget as of the end of December.

Youth Grants for Excellence and Library Internship Grants– Wagner reported the Youth Grants for Excellence totaling \$23,000 are in the process of being issued. In addition to the youth library services grants, there are 38 Library Internship Grants to be issued with a total amount of \$38,000 to be awarded.

LSTA Appropriation and Legislative Status – Wagner reported the Library Commission received the FY 2019 LSTA Grants to States allotment in the amount of \$1,422,489, an increase of \$13,709 over last year’s grant amount.

Wagner reported that National Library Legislative Day will not be held in May as is usual, and will be moved to June to coincide with the American Library Association Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.

New Business

State Advisory Council on Libraries Appointments - Rod Wagner presented recommendations for appointments (first term) and re-appointments (second term) to the State Advisory Council on Libraries for three-year terms beginning in January 2019 and continuing until December 31, 2021.

New appointment recommendations:

- David Graber (Library Director, Wayne State College, Conn Library)
- Tom Pfeifer (Library Coordinator, Nebraska State Penitentiary)
- Allison Reisig (Technical Services Librarian, Western Nebraska Community College)

Re-appointment recommendations:

- Laura Marlane (Executive Director, Omaha Public Library)
- Charlene Rasmussen (Wayne)

A motion was made by Charles Peek and seconded by Lois Todd-Meyer to approve recommended appointments to the State Advisory Council on Libraries. Motion carried on roll call vote: Debby Bloom – aye; Michael LaCroix – aye; Charles Peek – aye; Arun Pondicherry – aye; Sandy White – aye; Lois Todd-Meyer - aye. Motion approved.

Next Meeting Dates – The next Commission meeting will be held March 12.

Adjournment

Michael LaCroix adjourned the meeting.

Jennifer Wrampe