

URBAN LIBRARY ADMINISTRATORS CONSORTIUM (ULAC)

MEETING MINUTES

Friday, December 16, 2022

10:00 – Virtual on Zoom (Due to Inclement Weather)

Attendees: Sheryl Bass (Durham), Sylvia Brikiatis (Windham- Nesmith), Yvette Courser (Merrimack), Todd Fabian (Concord), Lori Fisher (NHSL), Sean Fleming (Lebanon), Christine Friese (Portsmouth), Denise LaFrance (Dover), Marie Lejeune (Rochester), Erin Matlin (Leach - Londonderry), Linda Pilla (Rodgers - Hudson), Heather Ranier (Hooksett), Betsy Solon (Wadleigh- Milford), Eric Stern (Derry), Denise Van Zanten (Manchester), Michael York (NHSL).

1. CALL TO ORDER – 10:10AM

2. Treasurer's Report – Balance on September statement: \$6,414.24; Current balance: \$6,217.59.

3. Association reports

a) NHSL –

Michael York:

- Lori Fisher is leaving the NHSL to become the new Maine State Librarian, expects to get faster response times with Lori at the helm. He reports that Main, NH and Vermont work together on joint issues as part of the Council of State Libraries of the Northeast (COSLINE), so the relationship will continue, but is sad to see her go, as is everyone else.
- Michael presented the budget to the Governor and Department of Administrative Services. Governor is asking 43 agencies to keep their budgets to no more than a 3% increase. Interesting Note: Commissioner Arlinghouse, always asks Michael why the State Archives isn't a part of the State Library. He reminded him that the Archives and State Library are in two separate branches of government.
- NHSL is working on a renovations plan for 20 Park St. While, they have done many improvements they have previously been catchup and sprucing up projects. Need to take a whole new look at a building renovation. The building is unique and needs much more attention. The new approach takes into consideration that all of the things in the building don't need to be kept, but the unique treasures should be retained.
- Doesn't know the status of the Governor's tenure in terms of any future political aspirations/goals.
- All will be getting information on robots from Bobbi Slossar. The robot program comes from ARPA money. One of the last purchases made with the funds.

Lori Fisher:

- Working on three things to wrap up:
 - State library website redesign. Started in Summer it is a big change from the way the website looks now. Streamlined and more public-focused. Should be sending all the stuff in to the "people doing the things" by next week. New site will be up by end of January/beginning of February. LibGuides will be more accessible, but in a different location. Info to come.
 - ARPA LSTA final report needs to be submitted by 12/30.

- Also, spending down ARPA money.
- NHSL will be distributing a print LIS collection to every library that submitted data to the PLDS for FY21. This is 211 libraries. There are 21 books in the collection, including the updated Intellectual Freedom Manual from ALA, the Right to Know publication from NHMA (being updated now) and the Basic Law of Budgeting from NHMA. A full list of titles will be put out on the NHAIS blog. This collection will be put in a banker's box and delivered to each library via the Van system in January/February.
- Lori will miss everyone and sincerely appreciates everyone's professionalism and friendship throughout the years.

b) NHAIS –

- Michael York reported that Mary Russell has been working with David Harris and Will Shipman on an RFP for a vendor that provides a service for the State website by which "crawlers" scan the website and pull info that the public might find relevant. The current vendor, PTSF, do a great job. Going out for bid is due diligence not based on performance. Mary did a presentation at the Carroll County Coop. She is willing to do that for any coop. Please reach out.

c) NHLA –

- Denise Van Zanten reports that a slate of new officers has been elected and introduced; Incoming NHLA President Mindy Atwood spoke about her goals for upcoming year. Amy Lappin was appointed ALA Councilor to replace Lori Fisher.
- Christine – Lobbyist Teresa Rhodes Rosenberger came to talk to everyone about legislative issues and what she does on behalf of Libraries. Website will be updated with information about what was discussed and suggestions and instructions for advocates. Christine would like to talk about training sessions for advocacy at upcoming NHLA Conference. Discussed the current balance of the NH State House. It could be a tricky situation because there is such a tight margin between Dems and Repubs. Have to pay really close attention to LSAs.
- Lori suggested a recent article in the NH bulletin:
<https://newhampshirebulletin.com/2022/12/16/as-budget-season-approaches-rift-between-sununu-and-house-republicans-grows/>
- Heather thinks training would be a good idea. Christine agrees. Thinks Wild Apricot could be used more effectively.

d) NELA – Denise Van Zanten reported on NELLs. The idea with the three- tiered program allowing for a tailored experience for attendees. The 3 NELLs grow in complexity in terms of curriculum offered. NHLA has agreed to fund Tier 2.

e) ALA; PLA- Lori says that she is glad Amy Lappin is replacing her as councilor. She has experience in advocacy. New ALA governance structure is changing and will be unveiled at LIBX.

4. Old Business

- Thoughts re: ULAC speaker for NHLA Spring Conference, May 4 & 5 in Meredith, at Mill Falls – Linda Pilla recommended HR speaker; Lori recommended Carol Kilmister from Primex. Denise Van Zanten reports that application forms for NHLA presentations is up on website.
- Continued follow-up re book/programming challenges at our libraries
 - Denise LaFrance reported that at the School Board meeting that a group showed up three people spoke in favor of banning books and about 20 people showed up in opposition. It was very emotional. The group bringing the challenge asked for a special dispensation to NOT fill out the reconsideration form because they were challenging fifty books. Lori asked what the Trustees are doing through all of this. Denise responded said

that they her Trustees aren't really advocates and she keeps reiterating to them that the challengers MUST fill out the form and follow the policy and procedure.

- Lori Fisher gave kudos to Denise and reiterated to the group that they shouldn't depart from enforcing the process through the policy and procedure.
- Sylvie mentioned that Directors should make sure that they talk to their Town Managers and Administrators about the policies and procedures that should be followed.
- Lori said that there is a good information from United for Libraries about public advocacy.
- Sylvie remarked that supportive community members have approached her in public to ask about book challenges and are supportive.
- Heather asked for clarification re: public hearing vs. a public meeting. One should structure public comment so that comments about a challenge being discussed should be put before the discussion about challenges on the agenda. There is no statute that mandates a public hearing about book and other library challenges. Lori said that we should not be including privacy clause that ensures the challenger's privacy in policies, because depending on the state in the challenge that information is required to be public.
- Michael pushback on non-resident in collection policy.
- Heather asked if Denise had any more info about the northern school that was facing a challenge. Colebrook superintendent went to Librarian to rearrange the collection by age group and make parents sign a permission slip.
- Sylvie -Windham School board challenge. The board upheld the decision to keep the books. Challenge brought by Board member. Lori commented that this represents a trend of these people infiltrating boards and councils to push their own agenda.
- Michael York – Wonders if all the challenges are really part of a culture war in the form of a wedge issue that gathers people on the right.
- Lori – Be aware of the FB groups Moms for Liberty stealth group out of Rockingham County; very active in Hillsborough county.
- Sean – had a drag queen story hour in November. 15 attendees; Normal protesters showed up.
- Todd warned the group about the book Flagging. Isn't in any libraries in print but is available in Hoopla. They pulled it from Hoopla in Concord. He feels he would have a hard time defending it.
- Sylvie - because inquiries have increased about books stack is asking more selection questions about "should I buy this." Sylvie's response is buy the books you would have if there had never been this uprising of book challenges.
- Yvette – Hoopla is not sustainable for Yvette because they are sustaining 100 heavy users. Too expensive for Merrimack and can't control holdings and the selection policy. Linda asked about alternatives. Cloud, Kanopy, Comics Plus.

5. New Business

- Call from Mary Russell to ask a Rep from ULAC to serve on the committee for the Center of the Book. Todd reports that he was appointed to be the rep. He never heard from the committee. Eric said he thinks it was an oversight during the transition. Todd will represent ULAC. Denise reports that the new rep is Chandra.
- Finalize location for December ULAC meeting – To clarify the ULAC meeting is typically the 4th Friday of the month. January 27th, February 24th, March 24th, April 21st (shifted one week earlier), May 26th, June 23rd, July 28th, August 25th, Sept. 22nd, Oct. 27th, skip November, decide on December meeting as we get closer to December. Historically, November/December meetings are

combined.

- We aim to return to the State Library on February 24th at 10:00AM (weather depending). The next meeting in January will be virtual.
- Other:
 - Linda Pilla NHLA membership invoices are out. Don't hesitate to contact Linda Pilla with any questions about invoices and payment.
 - Todd shared that branch Pennacook Library City council approved plan to combine Pennacook Library with the Boys and Girls Club and Parks and Rec will create a community center at the end of the building. Will share time for programs. Will be doing mobile Library model. If the branch grows, they will add shelving for more permanence. Will break ground in Spring and should be moving into new building in the Fall of 2024. Will be more accessible.
 - Christine- Will be conducting a Strategic Plan Process and asked for recommendation for community meeting facilitators.
 - MadLibs fun ensued... Eric performed ULAC's version of "The Christmas Song" and "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem."

6. ADJOURNMENT- 11:55AM

Next Meeting January 27th via Zoom