

Director's Report

Budget. Included in the agenda for this Board meeting is your consideration of the ODL Budget request. This request has two parts and may be confusing but are mutually exclusive. In one section we ask for new money and explain how it would be used. In the next, we are identifying how we would take a 5% reduction. Both of these sections are required in our budget request forms from the Office of State Finance. We certainly hope that we will be able to concentrate our energy on how we would benefit libraries with new resources. At this point, the revenue picture for next year is promising and we hope it will remain so. You will also find a copy of the Strategic Plan goals for your review. The key administrative staff met to review the Strategic Plan and reaffirmed these goals as being our focus for activities in the next five years.

A significant amount is being requested for an increase in state aid to public libraries. The increase is designed to encourage the expansion of library services offered by municipal libraries. The new monies would strengthen these libraries and enable them to offer enhanced services--not only to the customers in their immediate service area, but also to individuals who live in the county, but outside the city limits. The legislature has approved an interim study on the subject of state aid.

The Public Library Directors Council has considered the State Aid issue for several months. At a meeting on Friday, September 10th, the group voted to recommend the additional state funding of municipal libraries, to help with the expense of offering services to all citizens of their county. The new monies ODL is requesting for state aid would go primarily to municipal libraries. System libraries would receive a slight increase reflecting the restoration of the earlier reductions to state aid due to revenue shortfalls in FY03. In order to provide you with more background on this issue, I have included materials that I prepared for the Public Library Directors Council: a History of State Aid, a chart showing funding levels for state aid, and information on how other states have developed state aid grants. In addition, I have provided the Proposed State Aid Formula for Oklahoma Unaffiliated Libraries which the Public Library Directors Council voted to adopt in principle at their meeting on September 10th.

Summer Reading Program. One of the most successful programs in which ODL is involved is the Summer Reading Program. In August, ODL holds a Summer Share Fare where children's librarians and library directors get together to share success stories and celebrate the end of the Summer Reading Program. This year, unfortunately, we had some sad news as well. The ODL youth services consultant, Donna Norvell, has a serious health condition that has necessitated her absence from work. With an extended absence by Donna, ODL has decided to take a new approach to doing the Summer Reading Program for the next two years. A number of state libraries have developed a consolidated summer reading program. The state libraries pick a theme and an artist. Manuals are developed by a committee of librarians from the state libraries. Art work and related materials are available for purchase from a vendor. With Donna's absence

and the other vacancies in our Library Development Office, ODL has decided to become the 28th state in the consolidated summer reading program. We will purchase manuals and some materials from the vendor for libraries in the state and libraries will have the option to purchase additional materials if they wish. The cost to ODL for the materials will be about the same but the demand on staff time will be significantly less. Ginny Dietrich of the ODL staff is coordinating the Summer Reading Program activities with the consolidated summer reading program until we have a youth services librarian back on duty. At the Summer Share Fare, after we discussed the program for this year, we informed those present of how we planned to handle the program for next year. The artist, Steven Kellogg, and the time line on delivery of materials were both very well received. The group was very supportive of ODL's decision to try this approach.

Models of Archival Administration. On July 8th, the first of five workshops for the Models of Archival Administration was held at the Oklahoma City Zoo. As you know, we were only able to fund 15 of the 33 applications we received for this effort. The ODL staff decided to open the workshops to all applicants because of the need for information and training indicated in the applications. A slate of excellent presenters was well received. The evaluations were very positive. A workshop will be held at the Philbrook Art Museum in Tulsa on conservation and preservation in early October. The presenter is a national expert in the field and we decided to pay the very reasonable workshop fees and travel for our grant recipients rather than mounting another workshop on the same topic. It saves our staff resources and provides national level training. The Oklahoma Museum Association and the Oklahoma Historical Society continue to be our partners in this effort.

Library Visits. On July 27th I attended the Eastern Oklahoma District Library System (EODLS) Board meeting in Muskogee. I was present for two reasons. The first was to take part in recognizing EODLS as the first Oklahoma recipient of the National Commission on Library and Information Science Blue Ribbon Consumer Health Information Recognition Award for Libraries. The Eastern Oklahoma District Library System was recognized for its efforts in improving the ability of library staff to utilize consumer health information on the Internet. These efforts not only enable the library system to provide excellent consumer health information services for its patrons, it also positions the staff of the Eastern Oklahoma District Library System to serve as a resource in sharing its expertise, epitomizing the concept of knowledge development and knowledge sharing, one of the basic tenets of professional librarianship. Representative Barbara Staggs and a representative of Congressman Brad Carson presented the awards to EODLS staff and Board members. EODLS was nominated by staff at the University of Oklahoma Bird Health Sciences Library. It was a wonderful ceremony and well deserved recognition of the role public libraries play in helping their patrons improve their lives. In addition, I also made a presentation to the EODLS Board about the Models of Library Service and how EODLS benchmarked against the standards. The Board had questions and comments to make which made for a lively discussion.

The other major library event of the summer was the opening of the new Ronald J. Norrick Downtown Library of the Metropolitan Library System. Bill Young, Carol Fox, Vicki Mohr, and I participated in the ceremonial book passing from the old location to the new building on August 13th. The weather was absolutely perfect. There were approximately 3,000 people present for the event and we all had a great time. There were two lines of people to pass the books which took approximately an hour. Nancy Anthony, director of the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, had a sign saying “No Book Left Behind” which epitomized the fun and enjoyment those present had. On the following Tuesday was the formal opening with speeches by First Lady Kim Henry, past and present mayors of Oklahoma City, Ron Norrick, Kirk Humphreys, and Mick Cornett. As the final MAPS project, the City celebrated not only the new library but the effort which has done so much to affect the development of the City in the last decade.