

Director's Report

Funding requests. At this month's Board meeting we will consider proposals for funding from two different sources. The Oklahoma Department of Libraries (ODL) utilizes both federal and state monies to achieve its mission. Federal funds are primarily from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). ODL receives federal funds each year and has up to two years to spend those funds. The list of proposals for 2007 federal funds will finish out all available funds for that year. In addition we are also requesting 2008 federal funds to pay salaries for ODL staff for the period beginning October 1, 2008.

The Board is also being asked to approve ODL's 2010 state fiscal year budget request. Each year state agencies submit to the governor and legislature a request for new funding in the coming fiscal year. Those items for which we seek state funding are all continuing expenses rather than one time expenses.

Although the funding will come from different sources, each reinforces and strengthens the other. Federal funds are targeted to the purposes of the Library Services and Technology Act and can only be spent on projects that support those purposes. The mission of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries based on the Oklahoma statutes is broader than the federal funding allows. In order to achieve our statutory mandates, ODL requests state appropriated funds to meet those mandates. We need both sources of revenue but must be mindful of which source is most suited to fund which project. It is confusing even to those of us who deal with it every day. I encourage you to ask questions about anything that is not clear to you at the Board meeting.

Summer Reading program. I hope your community has enjoyed a successful summer reading program. Each year ODL funds the purchase of materials to help local communities keep their children and increasingly teen populations engaged in activities at the library over the summer. These activities keep young people reading and involved in positive experiences while out of school. Studies have shown that these types of programs keep reading skills from declining over the summer making the transition back to school easier and help more children be ready to succeed in school.

Special projects. Since our last Board meeting, we have held two workshops of special interest to those working in a tribal setting. The first program was "Caring for American Indian Objects" and was held in July. The other program focused on digitizing and preservation of historic photographs. The Archives and Records division report has more detail on these workshops and I encourage you to read more about it. There will be one more workshop in October which will focus on tribal libraries. All workshops are being held at the Cherokee Casino in Catoosa.