

ODL Board Meeting Minutes

March 1, 2002 10:00 a.m.

Director's Conference Room
Oklahoma Department of Libraries
Oklahoma City

Chairman Clyde Petete called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. and asked for roll call.

Board Members present: Benny Briggs, James Carter, Jesse Harris, Judi Knapp, Clyde Petete, Sherry Roberts, and Susan McVey, ex officio. Absent: Doyle Kinney.

Guests present: Duchess Bartmess, Kevin Motes, Steve Beleu, Dan Connally, Karen Currie, Susan Gilley, Mary Hardin, Jeanette Sykes, Gary Harrington, Susan Feller, Imogene Petete, Donna Skvarla, Vicki Sullivan, and Bill Young.

Petete asked for approval of November 30, 2001 minutes. Judi Knapp made the motion to approve the November minutes, Jesse Harris seconded. Votes were as follows: Benny Briggs, yes; James Carter, yes; Jesse Harris, yes; Doyle Kinney, absent; Judi Knapp, yes; Clyde Petete, yes; Sherry Roberts, yes. The motion was approved.

Susan McVey asked for introductions. Steve Beleu introduced Kevin Motes, originally from Hartshorne, who has studied at Harvard and received his MLIS from OU. Kevin is the new Librarian in the U.S. Documents division. Susan Gilley introduced Jeanette Sykes, new reference librarian, who will be working in Legislative Reference at the Law Library.

Susan asked Mary Hardin to talk about the e-books and e-readers ODL has purchased. Hardin said through an LSTA grant, 523 e-books will be available through ODL's online catalog. You will be able to read them from your home computer or download to an e-reader. ODL has purchased two e-readers that will be at the public service desk and later loaned to the public library consultants to take around the state to show libraries what's available to them. The e-readers cost between \$200-\$300 each. Hardin will have a list of e-books available and give passwords to board members at the April board meeting.

Bill Young invited everyone to the Center for the Book's Book Award Ceremony on Saturday, March 9th, 2002 at the Petroleum Club in Oklahoma City. There were 32 finalists in five categories, and approximately 20 authors will be present to sign books. 176 are registered, with maximum seating of 250 allowed. World Literature Today will be honored. Authors will be available for book signing and free canvas book bags will be given to everyone to encourage book sales.

Donna Skvarla presented Summer Reading Program materials to the board. This summer's theme is —Books Ahoy! Sail Through The Summer With Stories.— Posters, bookmarks and the pirate's treasure-chest reading log were handed out. Book bags are being produced at this time. The programming manual was mailed in January to allow librarians time to develop their summer reading programs. Eight workshops are being held around the state and libraries may pick up their materials at the workshop(s). The program will also help promote the new state aquarium being built in Jenks.

Skvarla spoke next on the LSTA Evaluation. Federal law requires states to arrange an objective evaluation on the use of federal library funds. The last evaluation was for 1997-2002. June Lester, University of Oklahoma, School of Library and Information Studies, performed the evaluation. Lester looked at projects using LSTA funding for the last five years. The Institute of Museum and Library Services requires each recipient to identify and report on two major programs. Oklahoma reported on the statewide information databases and the public librarian certification program. The draft was completed in early January and the final version is being presented to the board today. The report is the result of a yearlong project and is due in April to the federal government.

McVey said the report would also be available on the ODL website and the development of a new five year plan is underway. Skvarla said the next five-year plan for the years 2002 to 2007 is due June 30th. Last November, staff attended extensive training and received guidelines in Washington D.C. Gary Phillips, the new LSTA Coordinator, will be working on the LSTA projects and has been working on a draft Long Range Plan that will be ready by the April Board meeting. ODL will seek outside input for the new five-year plan through five public hearings held across the state in May. The five-year plan will address grants and in-house projects.

Briggs asked if the report addressed any strengths or weaknesses. Skvarla said Lester would prepare a list of about 20 recommendations to ODL based on the evaluation. Most of the suggestions were procedural, such as how we could be more efficient with in-house administration of the LSTA program. Also, for example, Lester recommended that we should consider making conference grants part of a matching grant program.

McVey said the Library Services and Technology Act is reauthorized every five years. The bill has been introduced in the U.S. Congress as H.R. 3784, and is projected to be a non-controversial bill. One of the major changes is the funded base allotment, which will be raised from \$300,000 to \$500,000. This base grant guarantees a minimum grant amount to states with small populations. The amount has not been changed in over 20 years.

McVey said ODL received money from the Gates Technology Center which will be used for a —Kids and the Net— project – a workshop for librarians to educate parents and children in using the web. Knapp asked who the workshop participants would be. McVey said it would be for public librarians. Interested ODL Board members are welcome to attend.

McVey reported there has been a second budget reduction request from the Office of State Finance for this fiscal year, which added another \$112,444 for a total cut of \$189,000 for the year. So far, the reduction has been limited to 5%.

Harris asked if there had been any restriction of public access regarding materials due to 9/11 and how far the restrictions are going. McVey said there is a fine line between concerns about protecting without hampering the use of information that citizens have paid for. It continues to be a balancing act.

Petete asked about the budget cuts and the impact on salaries and hiring. McVey said Vicki Sullivan has been working, as acting deputy director, on monitoring budget issues very closely.

There is the possibility of freezing some vacant positions. Currently, four interviews are set up for the Director of Library Technology position. The department hopes to fill the position by April. Carter asked if the salary was a limiting factor, and McVey responded that the salary had been raised through the Office of Personnel Management.

McVey introduced Susan Feller, the new Development Officer for the Department of Libraries. Feller is originally from Swink, Oklahoma. She has pursued a career in fundraising in California involving the arts, a symphony, and an Allied Arts Program. Feller said she applauded the board for being visionary in supporting creation of an endowment. Feller presented a PowerPoint overview of the goals of the Oklahoma Endowment for Literacy and Reading. Feller has been working the last six weeks investigating what other foundations do and found most of them to be generic. Feller presented three recommendations to the Board.

- Recommendation 1: Conduct a statewide public awareness campaign.
- Recommendation 2: A corporate name change to the Oklahoma Foundation for Public Libraries to cover a broader base for funds.
- Recommendation 3: Establish a series of endowment funds including but not limited to reading and literacy fund, building fund, collection fund, technology fund, children's library fund, and program fund.

The name change would be much easier at this time than when further into the foundation's development and would appeal to a wider range of donors and provide flexibility to meet changing needs.

Literacy, while an extremely popular issue at this time, may not always be so, and could be limiting. The foundation would be developed with the goal of \$15 million in capital, along with an active media campaign to raise the level of awareness. The Oklahoma Endowment for Literacy and Reading has its own governing board, separate from the ODL Board.

The board had several questions. Briggs asked if there were federal grants available that ODL has not pursued yet. Feller responded yes, she is currently working on one to fund an author database for the Center for the Book. Briggs asked if, in some cases, such as building funds, we might be competing with the local communities for the same dollars. Feller responded that we are here to help, not hinder libraries, and that we would make sure we did not conflict with local fundraising efforts. McVey stated that we would be approaching people interested in contributing for statewide benefit. Feller would be available to assist libraries with information, but not fundraise for any one library.

Carter asked if the building fund would be similar to the allocation for state aid. Feller said Foundation money would be given through competitive grants and suggested using existing ODL staffs' guidance, a peer review panel, with final decisions resting with the foundation board. Feller said there is money available for historic preservation.

Dan Connally, ODL's liaison from the State Attorney General's Office, said he has had a lot of concerns about the Foundation, but most have been alleviated. His main concern is protecting the ODL Board. Connally said that his reservations are about the use of public funds for private purposes. Connally said the ODL Board will have no authority over the foundation, the OELR has its own board. McVey added that the OELR board has not met yet. Connally said the legislature created a position of development officer for ODL, but saw problems with Feller being a paid ODL staff member working for the OELR Board, which could be considered as —gifting.— Feller cannot work for the Foundation while a state employee, although she could on her own personal time. The problem is not insurmountable although, as the foundation could contract with ODL. At this time, Feller can promote ODL but not the OELR Foundation.

Bartmess said the situation is sticky. Feller's position is a part of ODL. The Foundation would need to pay for her services by contracting, that is, she could be an employee of the state and contract with the OELR Board. She would need to be careful about state time/private time, such as equipment use, i.e., phone calls during business day, photocopying, computer use, etc. Bartmess said good intentions cannot circumvent requirements of constitutional law.

Bartmess said there are legal constraints for agencies and it takes a few more steps and time to accomplish worthwhile projects, but it must be done legally to protect the agency.

Feller said when the OELR Board was recruited, they were not told they would need to fundraise to get the foundation started.

Harris asked what the development office will do. McVey responded that Bob Clark asked the legislature for an unclassified position. No job description or plan exists, but the idea was to work on grants that would advance programs in the Department of Libraries.

Briggs asked if there were any joint board members between the two boards. He suggested there should be an ODL Board member on the OELR Board.

Bartmess said the OELR Board needs to meet to discuss how the foundation can work in partnership with ODL. ODL's involvement is not required, but issues will have to be worked out if ODL is involved. Carter suggested developing a list of steps we need to initiate to make everything legal. Knapp asked who would take care of identifying the steps. Petete asked if McVey, Feller, Connally and any interested ODL Board member(s) could meet and develop a strategy. McVey said the good news is that all of these issues are coming up at the very beginning of the process before money has been raised or spent. Now is the time to clarify all the issues.

The next agenda item, an increase of ODL fees, was discussed. Gary Harrington said fee changes may only be made while the legislature is in session. A public hearing was held February 22nd, 10:30 a.m. at ODL. Six fee changes were considered and no objections were raised. If the board approves, ODL has 10 days to file a report, the governor has 45 days to sign, and the legislature has 30 days to sign. Hardin said some of the fees had not been changed in 20 years. Hardin talked about how she came up with the dollar amount for book replacement. Harris made the motion to accept the fee increases as proposed and Roberts seconded the motion. Votes were as follows: Benny Briggs, yes; James Carter, yes; Jesse Harris, yes; Doyle Kinney, absent; Judi Knapp, yes; Clyde Petete, yes; Sherry Roberts, yes. The motion passed.

The next agenda item was consideration and hiring of a Deputy Director. Roberts made the motion to go into Executive Session and Harris seconded the motion. Votes were as follows: Benny Briggs, yes; James Carter, yes; Jesse Harris, yes; Doyle Kinney, absent; Judi Knapp, yes; Clyde Petete, yes; Sherry Roberts, yes. The board went into executive session at 12:10 p.m.

The board returned and Harris made the motion to reconvene, Knapp seconded. A vote was taken: Benny Briggs, yes; James Carter, yes; Jesse Harris, yes; Doyle Kinney, absent; Judi Knapp, yes; Clyde Petete, yes; Sherry Roberts, yes. The board reconvened at 12:33 p.m.

Briggs made a motion to offer Acting Deputy Director, Vicki Sullivan, the unclassified Deputy Director position at existing salary. Harris seconded the motion. Votes were as follows: Benny Briggs, yes; James Carter, yes; Jesse Harris, yes; Doyle Kinney, absent; Judi Knapp, yes; Clyde Petete, yes; Sherry Roberts, yes. The motion was approved. Sullivan thanked the board for the opportunity and Susan for giving her some real challenges.

She said she is looking forward to working with Susan and the department. Sullivan said it has been very interesting and rewarding. She thanked Susan and the board for showing confidence in her.

Petete asked for any further comments. Harris stated that he had read the book on Kate Barnard, co-authored by Glenda Carlile, and that it is a great book, and that Barnard was a fascinating individual.

Briggs asked what further steps would be taken regarding the OELR Board and Feller. McVey said she would hold follow-up meetings.

Knapp reported she had attended the Pioneer Library System/Public Schools Legislative Luncheon and they are approaching the Legislature to increase library budgets to cover the addition of one book per child.

Bartmess stated there had been no progress on her ODL Board Confirmation. McVey said she would check with the Attorney General's Office. McVey said Knapp, who had filled an unexpired term, could be reappointed to the ODL Board.

Petete announced the next ODL Board Meeting will be in Tulsa, Adams Mark Hotel, April 19th, during the Oklahoma Library Association (OLA) Conference. After OLA, the next ODL board meeting is scheduled for June 28th.

Carter said in light of all the budget cuts and in retrospect, he might have voted differently on the ODL Board Minutes microfilming project at the last meeting. McVey pointed out that the project was to be completed —as funds allow— and could be delayed.

Petete asked for a motion to adjourn. Briggs made the motion to adjourn and Roberts seconded. Votes were as follows: Benny Briggs, yes; James Carter, yes; Jesse Harris, yes; Doyle Kinney, absent; Judi Knapp, yes; Clyde Petete, yes; Sherry Roberts, yes. The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Susan McVey, Secretary