

**Minutes**  
**ODL Board of Directors**  
**August 30, 2002**  
**10:00 a.m.**  
**Oklahoma Department of Libraries**  
**South Conference Room**

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

Board members present: Duchess Bartmess, Benny Briggs, James Carter, Doyle Kinney, Clyde Petete, and Susan McVey, ex officio. Absent: Sherry Roberts and Judi Knapp.

Guests and staff present were: Karen Currie, Carol Fox, Susan Gilley, Gary Harrington, Gary Phillips, Donna Skvarla, Vicki Sullivan, and Bill Young.

Briggs asked for consideration of the minutes from the June 21, 2002 meeting. Bartmess moved that the minutes be approved. Carter seconded. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Briggs, yes; Carter, yes; Kinney, yes; Petete, yes; Knapp, absent; Roberts, absent. The minutes were approved.

Board members Knapp and Roberts arrived.

McVey asked Donna Skvarla to report on the Summer Reading Program. Fifty-seven librarians from throughout the state attended the ODL ShareFare to tell how their libraries had used this year's "Books Ahoy!" theme. A dinosaur theme, "Dig It! @ Your Library" has been chosen for next year and artwork, books and crafts were on display throughout the room. Coral McCallister, artist for the O.U. Zoology Department, will create next year's SRP artwork.

Sullivan reported on the budget. The agency's appropriation for FY2003 is already 5% less than previous years, but the agency has been advised to prepare for further cuts if current revenue trends continue. An Office of State Finance memo announced a shortfall of revenue receipts for July. It will be mid-September before OSF and agencies will know what collections are and if further reductions will be needed.

ODL is currently investigating where to cut an additional five percent if necessary. Five percent would be equivalent to \$344,570. Four vacant positions will be frozen immediately (equaling approximately \$173,000, including benefits). The positions are public library consultant, technology trainer, library technician, and materials management specialist. Out-of-state travel money was reduced in the first cut, and would be totally eliminated under further reductions. The agency is looking at reducing the book budget, state aid, and public library construction grants.

Two vacant positions were frozen with the first cut. With an additional reduction, four more positions will be frozen for a total of six. Sullivan reported \$30,000 was budgeted for in-state travel. The money covers public library consultants' travel to libraries statewide. McVey said in light of other states' budgets, we are faring better than many other state libraries. Briggs asked if a list of agency priorities had been developed. McVey said a list was developed last year. OSF's main concern is that services to citizens not be cut. Petete asked if ODL could use private dollars, such as money raised through the Oklahoma Endowment for Literacy and

Reading, to supplement travel and other areas short on service. McVey reported it was a possibility depending upon the grant.

Next on the agenda was consideration and possible vote on Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grant Proposals. McVey asked Gary Phillips, LSTA Coordinator, to report on the proposals. Phillips said developing federal proposals has been an act of faith this year because the current LSTA Act expires September 30<sup>th</sup> and has not been renewed by Congress. However, no opposition to the reauthorization has arisen, and funding is anticipated for at least the same amount as last year. Phillips encouraged anyone in contact with our congressional delegation to emphasize that the LSTA Act is an important part of ODL's budget, approximately \$1.9 million dollars. ODL receives and disburses federal money to others in the state. In the past few years, LSTA appropriations were not passed until the end of December, and continuing resolutions were used to provide funding in the interim. The ODL Five-Year LSTA Plan, due September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2002, has not been approved in Washington at this time, although there is no indication of any problems.

Phillips discussed the recommended proposals for the annual program under the LSTA. Listed is a one-time contingent grant of \$100,000 to Grady County. Currently, an effort is underway by the citizens of Grady County in cooperation with Pioneer Library System to add Grady County to the Norman system. This is the first intensive effort in a number of years to increase the service coverage of a library district. In the event of a successful election, the grant would assist in the expansion of services in the county and transition costs. Tuttle is the largest city in the state without library service. Tuttle residents currently must pay for library service. The four-mill proposition for the county will be included in the November general election. A group of local citizens is making a good effort to get the proposition passed.

Also included in proposals is continuation of the annual Summer Reading program; a one-time grant to the Library for the Blind to improve a studio for recording Oklahoma materials; and small grants to support public library and institutional development and literacy programs around the state. Grant announcements and awards will be contingent upon receipt of federal funds. McVey said the arrival of funds in January instead of October, puts the grant cycle on a 9-month year, a very short timeframe. Phillips said some ODL salaries are paid with federal funds.

Petete asked about funding for Native Americans libraries, and for Hispanic and Asian populations. Phillips said Native American libraries are funded separately through a small grant direct from Washington. Currently, 20 to 30 tribal libraries exist in Oklahoma. Petete asked if this was a duplication of effort. Phillips said although Native Americans use the public libraries, tribal libraries often provide heritage collections, including written and oral histories and visual materials. Phillips said one future grant has been targeted at the Hispanic population, and other grants have been given in the past for purchase of library materials targeting Hispanic and Asian populations.

Bartmess asked how the list of grant proposals was determined. McVey said ODL staff submits proposals based on needs, requests, and ideas from public libraries around the state. Bartmess asked about the Citizen Survey project included in the grant proposals. McVey said the OLA Legislative Committee wanted to include questions in a poll being conducted next spring by the Political Science Department of the University of Oklahoma. The money would fund inclusion of up to five questions in the survey. Questions would be designed to demonstrate to legislators and local officials that citizens support libraries. Kinney thought it would be beneficial to be included in the poll.

Kinney moved and Knapp seconded the motion to accept the LSTA grant proposals. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Briggs, yes; Carter, yes; Kinney, yes; Knapp, yes; Petete, yes; Roberts, yes. The motion was approved.

Next on the agenda was a revision to the ODL Strategic Plan. McVey said the Office of State Finance suggested including a sentence addressing customer service in the values and behaviors section. Sullivan reported ODL received the highest score on strategic plans submitted by agencies. McVey asked for any comments or suggestions. Knapp made the motion to adopt the revised ODL Strategic Plan. Roberts seconded. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Briggs, yes; Carter, yes; Kinney, yes; Knapp, yes; Petete, yes; Roberts, yes. The motion was approved.

McVey presented the FY04 ODL Budget Request. At a meeting with Senate and House fiscal staff, McVey asked if it would be inappropriate to request new operating money for ODL in this time of budget reductions. The Senate fiscal representative advised this was ODL's opportunity to let the Legislature and Governor's Office know the needs of our customers and the needs of the agency. The new funds requested is a more modest amount than has been submitted previously. The request will go to the Legislature October 1, 2002. New funds requested are for replacing computers in public libraries through a Bill and Melinda Gates matching grant program, reimbursing targeted libraries for fulfilling interlibrary loan requests, and providing salary adjustments for ODL staff.

The matching grant program from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation would provide computer upgrades or replacement for libraries in areas with persistent poverty. The matching amount, plus an additional \$7,200, would be requested from the Legislature. The \$7,200 would fund three libraries that missed the first round of Gates grants, and would be split equally between the three libraries in Carnegie, Meeker, and Apache.

McVey discussed the Net Lending Reimbursements. Reimbursement would be \$1.75 per loan given to reimburse libraries that loan more books than they borrow. The reimbursement would cover loans for the last four years, when the last reimbursement was given. McVey said small libraries, in particular, have been hit hard by costs. Bartmess thought the state could only encumber funds on a year-to-year basis under the state constitution, and asked if the agency could incur a debt or pay for something that occurred four years ago. McVey said she would consult with our new Attorney General liaison, Debra Schwartz.

Briggs asked for clarification on the Amigo's Courier Service. McVey explained that some Oklahoma libraries, including ODL, participate with member libraries in a five-state region, including Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and Kansas. For a flat rate, materials are sent by courier rather than mail, saving money and preserving the condition of materials. Many Oklahoma libraries cannot afford the courier, and still must depend on the U.S. Post Office for interlibrary loan services

Petete asked if ODL serves the visually impaired. McVey said it was not a charge of the agency. Federal funds targeting those who have difficulty using a library are given to the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, which provides outreach for these patrons. In the past, ODL has offered grant opportunities to buy computers with assistive devices, and most libraries applied for those grants. Staff have recently attended training to learn how to make the ODL website accessible for those with screen readers.

Next, McVey spoke about a request for money for salary adjustments for ODL staff. ODL wants to promote deserving staff members and retain proven producers. The librarian field is experiencing a dramatic shortfall in personnel. 40,000 librarians are nearing retirement with an average of only 3,000 new library graduates per year. With higher salaries in the private sector, it will become increasingly difficult to replace qualified staff. The Office of Personnel Management sets state salaries with pay ranges consisting of minimum, midpoint and maximum salaries. Many universities focus on school and academic librarianship, rather than public librarianship, further reducing the applicant pool.

Briggs asked for a motion to approve the ODL Budget Request for FY04. Kinney made the motion to approve all proposals with the exception of the Net Lending Reimbursement proposal until further word is received from the State Attorney General's Office. Knapp seconded. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Briggs, yes; Carter, yes; Kinney, yes; Knapp, yes; Petete, yes; Roberts, yes. The motion was approved.

Consideration and possible vote to change the next meeting date of the ODL Board was discussed. ODL would like to finalize the list of public libraries eligible to receive State Aid payments at an earlier date. November 1, 2002 was chosen for the next board meeting. Carter made the motion to reschedule the next ODL Board meeting from November 22nd, 2002 to November 1, 2002. Roberts seconded the motion. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Briggs, yes; Carter, yes; Kinney, yes; Knapp, yes; Petete, yes; Roberts, yes. The motion was approved.

The board discussed meeting in other library locations around the state. At the next meeting, sites will be chosen for the 2003 board meeting schedule.

There being no further business, Briggs asked for a motion to adjourn. Knapp made a motion to adjourn and Petete seconded. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Briggs, yes; Carter, yes; Kinney, yes; Knapp, yes; Petete, yes; Roberts, yes. The motion was approved and the board adjourned at 11 a.m. The next ODL Board meeting is scheduled for November 1, 2002.

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Susan C. McVey  
Secretary