

Minutes
ODL Board of Directors
February 6, 2004
10:00 a.m.
Oklahoma Department of Libraries
South Conference Room
Oklahoma City

Vice Chair Judi Knapp called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and asked for roll call. Board members present: Duchess Bartmess, Betty Bass, Glenda Kilmer, Doyle Kinney, Judi Knapp, Sherry Roberts, and Susan McVey, ex officio. Absent: Benny Briggs.

Guests and staff present: Karen Currie, Jan Davis, Carol Fox, Daniel Gamino, Leslie Gelders, Susan Gilley, Mary Hardin, Gary Harrington, Charlotte Howard, Troy Miller, Vicki Mohr, Debra Schwartz, Donna Skvarla, Vicki Sullivan, and Bill Young.

Knapp asked for consideration of the minutes of the December 5, 2003 meeting. Roberts moved the minutes be approved. Kilmer seconded. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Bass, abstain; Kilmer, yes; Kinney, abstain; Knapp, yes; Roberts, abstain; Briggs, absent. Three board members abstained on the minutes vote due to their absence at the previous meeting. The motion did not pass.

Marilyn Barragree, ODL's Grievance Manager, was introduced. Barragree explained the internal grievance process, established by Title 74, Section 840-6.2 of the Oklahoma Statutes, the Oklahoma Personnel Act and the Office of Personnel Management's Merit Rules. There are approximately eighty grievance managers throughout the state. The confidential process allows agencies and employees to resolve issues and conflicts at the lowest possible level within an agency. Before a grievance is filed, an employee must bring the dispute to the attention of his/her supervisor and they must attempt to resolve the dispute informally. An employee may file a grievance if he/she feels his/her employment is being directly affected by unfair treatment, unsafe working conditions, or the erroneous interpretation or application of agency policy. Grievances may include, but are not limited to, any direct or indirect forms of discipline, reduction in force, work assignments, withholding of work, classification, reclassification, promotion, leave, performance appraisals or any alleged violation of the Oklahoma Personnel Act or Merit Rules. Allegations of discrimination or retaliation are referred to a trained investigator for investigation. Grievances must be filed within twenty days of the incident and resolved within forty-five days of filing, or with an extension, within ninety days. If agreement is not reached, an appeal may be made to the Merit Protection Commission. Issues that may be appealed directly to the Merit Protection Commission are suspension with pay, involuntary demotion, discharge, and disciplinary actions relating to alleged violations of freedom of expression. Barragree reported, since 1999, a total of eight grievances by three individuals have been filed at ODL.

Knapp asked if there was any public comment. Daniel Gamino, an attorney representing a current grievant, thanked the board for the opportunity to speak. Gamino commented that the

Record Center Division staff had filed a high number of grievances with some appeals to the Merit Protection Commission. Gamino felt there is a hostile and unfriendly work environment in the division. He has represented three ODL employees. Gamino was concerned about the number of grievances filed during a short period of time and costs involved for the agency and employees. Gamino asked why so many grievances are coming from the Record Center and requested the ODL Board appoint a person or committee to look into the issue and report findings back to the Board. Gamino was asked if the grievances were all related to the same subject or different grounds, and whether any lawsuits were pending. Gamino responded there were different issues and there were no pending lawsuits.

Barragree said there were some discrepancies in Gamino's report on the number of grievances that had been filed. One grievance listed was never officially filed and two others listed were actually one grievance but with separate case numbers. Currently, there are three grievances pending.

Knapp asked for the wishes of the board. Comments ranged from appointing an individual board member or committee to look into the grievance issue, to recognizing that grievances were an internal personnel matter for ODL and not the Board's responsibility. ODL has used the proper channels and established grievance procedures. Bartmess made a motion to hold an executive session at the next meeting. Debra Schwartz, liaison from the Attorney General's Office, said under the Open Meeting Act, the duties of the Board in regards to personnel, are in relationship to the Director's position only. Bartmess deferred the motion. Schwartz said the agency is not required to pay for legal representation provided by the Attorney General's Office. Kilmer agreed grievances were not an appropriate issue for the Board to be involved in and would circumvent policies in place. Barragree stated that after all investigations had been completed, there were no findings of retaliation or discrimination by the agency. Gamino reported three settlements had been reached. Knapp asked if that meant the process was working. Gamino said the system works but the concern is the number of grievances coming from one division with five employees. Knapp asked for a motion. Kinney made a motion to establish a board committee to determine whether looking into grievance issues is a responsibility of the board. Bartmess seconded the motion. Roberts felt the Board was not responsible for personnel issues relating to staff, and stepping in would disrupt the process. Roberts felt ODL is an organized agency and in very good order. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Bass, yes; Kilmer, no; Kinney, yes; Knapp, no; Roberts, no. Absent: Briggs. The motion failed.

McVey gave the Director's report. Pat Williams, Public Library Consultant, was involved in a serious car accident in Duncan. She sustained multiple injuries and is expected to be out for several months. Despite her injuries, Pat remains in very good spirits and is anxious to return to work. Public libraries in her region have been divided among the remaining consultants until she is able to return to work.

The Governor's executive budget did not include additional funding to restore monies lost in previous reductions. Cuts to State Aid to Libraries and construction grants will not be restored to prior levels. Tight budget times remain, with the final word coming in May. House Bill 2222, a filtering bill by Representative Thad Balkman, would require installation of computer filters in public, school, academic and special libraries. There are a number of bills affecting ad valorem,

which is the basis of funding for public libraries in a number of counties. One is a seniors' low income tax break, with across the board caps. Property tax assessment caps are now at five percent, with a one to three percent limit being proposed.

Bill Young presented the Summer Reading Program theme *Summer of Champions*. Replacing the regular bookmark will be twelve to twenty-four trading cards with Oklahoma sports stars, such as Jim Thorpe, Mickey Mantle, Nadia Comaneche, Bart Connor, Mat Hoffman, Shannon Miller, Rocky Calmus and others. One poster will be in the form of a giant trading card, with a cut out to allow children to be photographed as a sports star. One gold medal will be given to each library. A large poster with Oklahoma kids in sports uniforms will also be produced, with each area of the state represented. Smaller posters featuring children daydreaming of being basketball, football, baseball, and tennis stars will also be available. Sonic is expected to sponsor the book bag again this year.

Leslie Gelders talked about the changes happening in statewide tutor training. With grant money, fourteen pilot sites will bring trainers together to talk about how to update the training. The adult literacy field has changed a lot over the last twenty years. A twelve hour course will be designed on how to use teaching "strategy specific" rather than "curriculum specific" training. The training will be field tested and will include learning disability information and literacy training for adult learners. The national literacy organization and the state of New Mexico are interested in the pilot program. ODL is setting the stage to be a national model.

On March 2, 2004, eight-hundred preschool children will gather at the Capitol Hill High School gymnasium to celebrate *Read Across America Day*, held annually on Dr. Seuss's birthday. This year, on Dr. Seuss's 100th birthday celebration, there will be performances by Christopher Cerf and Peter Linz from the PBS show *Between the Lions*. Donors are McDonalds, Barnes & Noble, Krispy Kreme, El Chico and Metro Transit. Metropolitan Library System will assist with planning. Future Community Leaders of America (FCLA, formerly FHA) will assist with stuffing goodie bags and playing the role of *Cat in the Hat*. The program will be televised on OETA and the Krueger Charitable Foundation will provide hardback *Dr. Seuss* books for the children attending. ODL will sponsor the event.

ProLiteracy America will bring its national conference to Oklahoma City, October 6th-9th, 2004, at the Cox Convention Center. The conference hotel is the Renaissance Hotel, with overflow at the Westin. The keynote speaker, the Assistant of the U.S. Department of Education, will speak on *The Many Faces of Literacy*.

McVey introduced Vicki Mohr, Lead Officer for the project, *Presenting Your Library*, a federal Library Services and Technology Grant. Mohr said the *Presenting Your Library* PowerPoint template was a marketing tool for libraries to present themselves to Friends groups, schools, communities, and business and government audiences. Two sets of equipment were bought with the grant to assist with libraries' presentations to their local communities, and to be used throughout the state. Eight pilot libraries were chosen, with two additional sites added. The program promotes and publicizes information and services available at the library, such as internet access, recipes, mysteries, meeting rooms, puppets, research, and stock information. The program publicizes hours open, mission statements, who the library serves, goals,

technology and upgrades, online catalogs, and high speed connectivity. It also promotes the library's value to the community, such as the cost savings to the public for hardback books and magazine subscriptions, free internet usage, and free children, teenage and adult programs, among many other things. Databases such as SIRS, FirstSearch, Ebsco and Alldata are available for use, free of charge. Vicki Sullivan, who attended intensive training in Washington, D.C. for completing the online annual report for LSTA, said the project was selected as a good example of how to use outcome based evaluation.

Knapp asked for consideration and possible vote on the proposed *Policy on ODL Board Meetings*, setting forth policy on items to be placed on the agenda and public comment at board meetings. It was suggested that under Agenda, the sentence beginning Members of the public may request..... be the beginning of a second paragraph in the section. Kinney made a motion to accept the policy with proposed changes. Roberts seconded. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Bass, yes; Kilmer, yes; Kinney, yes; Knapp, yes; Roberts, yes. Absent: Briggs.

Knapp asked for consideration and possible vote on the FFY2003 Federal Library Services and Technology Act Grant proposals. McVey said the appropriations bill has passed, but ODL does not have the actual amount yet, but is expected to receive approximately \$100,000 more than last year. All projects listed are continuations of existing projects. Discretionary or pilot grants will be acted upon at the next board meeting in April. Kilmer moved to accept the Library Services and Technology Grant proposals. Bartmess seconded. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Bass, yes; Kilmer, yes; Kinney, yes; Knapp, yes; Roberts, yes; Briggs, absent.

McVey announced that Donna Skvarla will be retiring, effective March 1, 2004. Although ODL is sad to see her leave, she is pursuing new and wonderful interests. Skvarla said coming to ODL nineteen years ago was one of the smartest things she had ever done and it had been a pleasure to work at the agency. Knapp said ODL has been very fortunate to have had Donna.

Knapp asked for comments from the board. Bartmess asked what publicity the *Almanac* received. Texas runs newspaper ads for their *Almanac*. Bartmess thought Oklahoma should actively market the *Almanac*. Young said the *Almanac* has been sold at book stores in the past. The next two *Almanacs* will be connected with the Centennial and ODL will be looking at ways to better publicize it. The *Oklahoma Today* magazine will run editorial ads upon request. Several board members commented on how useful the *Almanac* is.

FOLIO's Literary Landmark is in its fourth year. Previous years winners were Woody Guthrie, in Okemah; Ralph Ellison, in Oklahoma City; and Lynn Riggs, in Claremore; and in October 2004, Angie Debo will be honored. Oklahoma State University holds Debo's papers and will receive a plaque on October 1st. In Marshall, a plaque will be housed in City Hall, as Debo's home is not owned by the state. The plaque ceremony will be during Prairie City Day on April 17, 2004.

The Oklahoma Book Awards will be March 13, 6:30 p.m., at the Petroleum Club, Oklahoma City. The 2004 Arrell Gibson Award for Lifetime Achievement will go to Carolyn Hart. The Ralph Ellison Award recipient is Lynn Riggs. Winners in other categories will be announced at the ceremony.

The Pioneer Library System's legislative lunch was held and was a great time to thank legislators for funding provided for libraries. A *Honk and Holler* skit was performed.

Oklahoma State University's Edmon Low Library won a John Cotton Dana Public Relations Award for their 50th commemorative anniversary celebration, *That Was Then....This Is Now*. Pioneer Library System also won a John Cotton Dana Award for the *Red Dirt Book Festival*, an event celebrating the Oklahoma literary experience. Tecumseh Public Library has won the Public Library Association's *Small Rural Library of the Year Award* for its literacy programs from a field of approximately eight thousand libraries.

The next board meeting is on April 16th, 2004, 10:00 a.m., at the Adams Mark Hotel in Tulsa, during the Oklahoma Library Association Conference.

Knapp asked for consideration and vote to adjourn. Kinney made the motion to adjourn. Kilmer seconded. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Bass, yes; Kilmer, yes; Kinney, yes; Knapp, yes; Roberts, yes; Briggs, absent. The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00.

Susan McVey, Secretary