

Minutes
ODL Board of Directors
April 1, 2005
10:00 a.m.
National Center for Employee Development
Room I
Norman, Oklahoma

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, Anne Geurkink, Hannibal Johnson, Judi Knapp, and Susan McVey, ex officio. Absent: Doyle Kinney, Sherry Roberts.

Guests and staff present: Adrienne Butler, Karen Currie, Linda Gens, Susan Gilley, Gary Harrington, Marilyn Hinshaw, Lynn McIntosh, Vicki Mohr, Donna Morris, Vicki Sullivan, and Colleen Woolery.

Knapp asked for consideration of the minutes of the January 28, 2005 meeting. Johnson moved the minutes be approved. Geurkink seconded. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Bass, yes; Geurkink, yes; Johnson, yes; Knapp, yes; Kinney, absent; Roberts, absent. The motion passed.

Knapp asked for consideration of the minutes of the February 28, 2005 meeting. Geurkink moved the minutes be approved. Bass seconded. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Bass, yes; Geurkink, yes; Johnson, yes; Knapp, yes; Kinney, absent, Roberts, absent. The motion passed.

McVey asked for introduction of new staff. Vicki Mohr introduced Linda Gens. Gens will work with libraries in the central region and coordinate the computer lab. Gens comes from the Metropolitan Library System where she worked with the children's department and did adult programming.

Colleen Woolery, Literacy department, spoke about the *Read Across America* event. It is an early literacy program, held annually on Dr. Seuss's birthday at the Capitol Hill High School. Partnering with OETA, the event trains teachers, parents, and daycare providers on early literacy. Approximately 750 preschool children attend the event each year. The program has served over 12,641 children and has given approximately 115,364 Dr. Seuss books away to young children. Activities range from dance, hat-making, coloring, drawing activities, videos and more.

The Literacy Department also works with "at risk" zero to eight year olds in the *Ready to Learn* program, partnering with the Department of Human Services. The project uses the learning triangle concept of film clips, reading and activities and stresses the importance of reading at an early age, and brain development of children.

An Early Literacy Workshop will be held on May 9, 10, 2005, and will be aimed at people involved with family literacy.

Bartmess spoke about how wonderful the Oklahoma Book Awards ceremony she and Knapp attended was. Linda Cavanaugh served as the Master of Ceremonies. Molly Griffis shared the Young People's Book of the Year Award with her book *Simon Says*. Arlo Guthrie attended for Woodie Guthrie's award.

The Oklahoma Library Association honored former staff member Donna Norvell with a gathering at the Sooner Theatre where friends and family shared memories of Donna. A video and music program was presented. A Donna Norvell scholarship fund will be established to assist those interested in obtaining a library science degree. The Governor signed a proclamation making it *Donna Norvell Day* in Oklahoma. The proclamation was presented to the family during OLA's Opening Session.

McVey reported that ODL's budget meetings were different from previous years. Each Chamber has introduced a budget for all state agencies at a stand still level. The Senate proposed a stand still budget and a final level of funding with an additional \$500,000 added to the base appropriation for State Aid. The House has its own bill and will be discussing the differences. McVey and Sullivan will present to the House Appropriations Sub-Committee on Education for the new money. ODL is encouraged and is hoping for the full amount.

Sullivan spoke about the new Core/PeopleSoft system, which will have major impact in the fiscal area. She, as well as business office staff, will be attending training this month on the budget work program. The new system is complex and there is not much time to learn how it operates.

Sullivan said the agency has been invited to participate in the Library of Congress' digitizing project in Washington, D.C. Web Manager Michael O'Hasson, Gary Phillips, Oklahoma Documents, and Gary Harrington, Archives, will attend as guests of the Library of Congress. The project offers an opportunity to meet and talk with other states on how they save electronic information. A follow up meeting will be held in New York in the fall to develop a short term strategic plan.

McVey introduced staff member Adrienne Butler, who was attending the conference and board meeting. Butler works in information and tech services, on the web catalog, digital projects, outreach and the DVD collection.

Knapp asked if there were any public comment. Marilyn Hinshaw, Director, Eastern Oklahoma District Library System, spoke about State Aid. Her handout follows.

Marilyn Hinshaw, Executive Director
Eastern Oklahoma District Library System
April 1, 2005

Public comment – Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board meeting

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak when illness prevented me from attending the last ODL Board meeting. My comments are about the topic you discussed last time, the use and division of state aid. I will use several phrases you recognize to make my points clear.

Equity of taxpayer participation

To maintain a system made up of many small political entities requires immense effort by the System Directors. It is the job equivalency of a school superintendent or a city manager. The systems, a larger district library unit, were created and supported by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries as a means for citizens to pay directly for their own library needs.

As a system director, I worry about the long term effects of using a 25 cent allocation per person to give all county residents the equivalent service received by a municipal resident at a municipal library nearby. The residents of counties in systems also pay municipal sales taxes when they shop in the city. But, they already pay a direct tax of \$25 to \$40 per household for library service. If residents of the counties not in systems get equivalent service at a municipal library for 25 cents when we charge \$25 or more to each county taxpayer in 28 counties, someone is bearing a tax burden that cannot be called equitable. It is reasonable to consider the fear of system directors that participating counties, hearing of this inequity in taxation for library service, could decide to bail from our systems.

Parallel funding with schools and vo-techs

Schools and vo-techs levy a direct tax on all residents of the area served. That is what is uniform and equitable in the school funding arena. The same formula, applied to those libraries in library districts, has been parallel up to now. Schools, vo-techs, and district libraries must repeatedly appeal to taxpayers for the local support they receive, and that is what, since their inception, has qualified them via the distribution formula, for the matching state aid they now receive. In this plan, municipal libraries will provide no parallel funding effort that applies equitably to all county residents. There will be no contracts, no representative governance and so far, no inclusion in the long range plan for the library. The only way for library funding to parallel vo-techs and schools is that all libraries uniformly become library districts, as all schools are in school districts.

Hold Harmless

There has been discussion of hold harmless for the smallest of public libraries. Several of Oklahoma's small regional library system directors have smaller budgets and are paid less than half a dozen municipal library directors. What will protect them from loss of state aid that they have no means to replace as long as ad valorem for the rural systems is capped? State aid taken from them to fund a municipal library that is actually larger, better funded, and the director more highly paid than the small system, *will be harmful*. System Directors have made it clear that they do not want to lose current levels of state aid, but are willing to give "new" money for a

municipal library funding formula allocated through state aid. At the very least small systems must be exempted from any plan to re-distribute state aid to the benefit of municipal libraries.

Keep funding decisions in the hands of the ODL Board

The reason System Directors fought SB 429, a legislative direct distribution of the funds requested, is our belief in the Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board’s role. It has been to develop programs to fund, and prove successes with evidence of their effectiveness. We believed that role should remain in place and functional in the allocation of current state aid and any “new” money that has been discussed. To earmark the money we had already made a consensus decision to support carried a message that the library community and the ODL Board could not be trusted to keep its promises. SB 429 carried a benefit for some of the library community, but not all. It removed the ability to be flexible in seeking the “tweaking” that can make for a plan that becomes a win-win for all involved.

And even then

Thank you for your patience, your judicious consideration, and the time you have given to the concerns of everyone involved. We need the ODL Board’s leadership to correct weaknesses in the proposal as it stands, and to support us while we do more work to bring our other funding needs (millage caps) into focus in future years. My colleagues, the other system directors, have already had their turn voicing their support for additional state aid to use in the way it has been proposed by the Public Library Director’s Council, which I have chaired for the last year. I add my personal commitment to the proposal and pledge to go out to my legislative districts and work to put this money in the ODL budget, with the ODL Board continuing to act as the objective decision-making body, making distributions from a base of information that is validated from all corners of the public library community.

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Knapp passed out a State Aid article that appeared in the *Daily Oklahoman*. McVey said that Senate bills 428 and 429 are both dormant.

Knapp appointed a nominating committee of Betty Bass, Anne Geurkink, and Hannibal Johnson. The committee will report back to the board at the June meeting. The location of the September 9th meeting will be changed. The Institute of Terrorism does not allow open access to their facility. Anyone wishing to make public comment to the board would be required to register in advance to be allowed access to the facility. Donna Morris, Metropolitan Library System (MLS) Director, invited the board to use the new MLS headquarters in downtown Oklahoma City.

Lynn McIntosh, OLA President, invited the board to attend any OLA conference meetings and visit the Exhibits area following adjournment. Geurkink made a motion to adjourn and Johnson seconded. Votes were as follows: Bartmess, yes; Bass, yes; Geurkink, yes; Johnson, yes; Knapp, yes; Kinney, absent; Roberts, absent. The motion passed. The board adjourned.

Susan McVey, Secretary