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Minutes

Maine Library Commission

January 7, 2008

The Maine Library Commission met at the Maine State Library on Monday, January 7, 2008 at 1:10 pm.

Members present: Gretchen Asam (via ATM), Charles Campo, Inese Gruber, Barbara Harness, Barbara McDade, Elizabeth Moran, Steve Nichols, Steve Podgajny (via phone), Joyce Rumery.

Members absent: Karl Aromaa, Charles Cawley, Moorehead Kennedy, Jamie Ritter.

Also present: Dean Corner, Shirley Helfrich, Linda Lord, Gary Nichols, Valerie Osborne, Gail Waddell.

Minutes:

The minutes of the November 5, 2007 meeting were unanimously approved.

Legislation (Gary):

LD 793, An Act to Provide Essential Library Resources to All Maine Communities, was held over from the last legislative session. There will be a work session but no hearing on this bill. Likelihood of funding is slim. The bill won't be taken up until late in the session unless all funding bills are killed before April.

LD 1993, An Act Establishing the Commission to Review the Accountability of the State Cultural Agencies, submitted by Senator John Martin, was initially a bill that restructured the agencies under the Secretary of State. That was unanimously defeated.

LD 1993 is a compromise and study bill with broad definitions of accountability. The proposed membership on this new commission has no strong presence by the cultural agencies. The Cultural Affairs Council, an advisory group but not a representative of the cultural agencies as policy agencies, would like to restructure the new commission membership but will focus on working with Senator Martin. Governor Baldacci has been informed of the status of this bill.

LD 1876, Cultural Building Task Force, was also carried over from the last legislative session. This bill recommends funding \$100,000 for an architectural consultant.

It would be very helpful to have a Library Commission subcommittee work with Gary to communicate how the current State Library structure works to the benefit of libraries and Commission members; how and why the Commission is insulated from politics; and for this subcommittee to discover if there are any restructurings that would improve the State Library's relationships with libraries and the individuals served.

Gates Opportunity Hardware Grants (Linda):

There are 223 libraries eligible to participate in this grant application. Criteria include poverty levels and technology plans. This would be a two-year program with libraries matching 25% of the grant in the first year and 50% in the second year.

NELINET (New England Library Network) has agreed to handle reporting requirements that Gates wants before, during and after the grants are awarded.

Maine InfoNet (Barbara McDade):

An offer has been made to one of the candidates for the Maine InfoNet CEO position and the board is waiting for a response.

InfoNet staff are working on a new version of its web site.

Board meeting dates have changed from the third to the fourth Wednesday of the month. Meetings are held at MSL.

Consultants (Shirley/Valerie):

A progress report on the consultant's New Century grant and an SMLD newsletter were distributed.

Shirley reported that the first Library Trustee meeting was held and that continuing education is their number one concern. The Trustee web site is also being reconstructed.

Valerie announced the 35th anniversary of the Maine Regional Library System celebration in the Hall of Flags on January 15. A 10:30 press conference with Beth Edmonds and Tim Sample will be held.

The MARVEL promotional DVD with Tim Sample and Molly Larson (Rockport Public Library) will be released to each Legislator, public library and some schools. Funding for production of the DVD came from the New Century program, a Gates Rural Sustainability grant, and private funding. The DVD was then played for the Board.

Budget (Gail):

We have been instructed to cut \$40,285 from the 2007-2008 budget. Since all fiscal year grants have already been paid, the only discretionary account we have is library materials.

Our 2008-2009 budget has been reduced by \$64,137. This decrease will come from books (\$34,137), MARVEL databases (\$25,000), and newspaper reader services for the visually impaired (\$5,000).

Code of Ethics (Gail):

The Commission's code of ethics is out-of-date. The current code that is being used by most state agencies can be found on the Controller's web site. It is the ethics code adopted for employees of the State Library.

On a motion by Moran and a second by Harness, the Commission unanimously adopted the State of Maine Code of Ethics for Commission members.

New Century Bonds (Gary):

In this past November's election, voters approved a \$2 million bond for New Century funding. The Cultural Affairs Council working group has operated on a funding distribution mechanism which awarded 20% of the funds to MSL, 15% each to Maine Humanities Council and Maine Historic Preservation and 10% each to the Museum and the Archives. The full Cultural Affairs Council has held a special meeting to approve this.

Archives has objected to this distribution. There will be a full CAC meeting on February 4 at 1 pm to discuss the New Century bond funding distribution. Each of the agencies' and commissions' chairs and vice chairs is requested to attend.

The bond money is currently available to the agencies but it will not be requested from the Budget Office until April 1.

Maine Library Commission Handbook (Linda)

This binder was distributed to Commission members. It has been fully updated and includes recent reports that were required by the State of Maine and LSTA.

MLA Minimum Standards (Commission)

Currently, public libraries must meet these Minimum Standards to be eligible for MSLN internet connections, to apply for grants, and to belong to the Maine Regional Library System.

The Commission is not now enforcing any Standards' requirement to be eligible for an MSLN internet connection.

Charles Campo stated that the onus of complying with the Standards should be on the libraries and that the onus should also be on them to come to the Commission for a waiver.

On a motion by Moran and a second by Gruber with unanimous passage, the Commission decided that it will abide by its November 7, 2007 vote that held that libraries must comply with the Standards by 2010. In addition, Dean will research rule-making capabilities that the Commission may have with the Attorney General's Office.

Other Business:

The Juice Conference was praised and special merit was given to the keynote speaker, futurist Andrew Zolli. The conference also spotlighted how Maine's future demographics will impact the library community and how it provides services.

The Future of Maine's Libraries Conference is tentatively being scheduled for 2009. The costs for such an event are not insignificant and the funding issues are not resolved. Both COSLA (Council of State Library Agencies) and NELINET will be asked to contribute funds.

Joyce Rumery reported on the Orono scanning project that has already scanned a number of town reports held by MSL.

Executive Session:

At 3:05, a motion to move into executive session to discuss a personnel issue was unanimously approved.

The Commission voted to move out of executive session at 3:20 with no action taken. Also at that time, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Dean Corner