



Library Development & Legislation (LD&L) Committee

Friday, March 20, 2020
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Virtual via Go-To-Meeting

MINUTES

Members present: *(all attending remotely)* Connie Meyer, Kathy Klager, Kris Adams Wendt, Mark Arend, Nick Dimassis, Jennifer Chamberlain, Bruce Gay, Heather Johnson, Pete Loeffel, Vicki Teal Lovely, Sherry Machones, Larry Oathout, Kathy Pletcher, Jim Ramsey, Nyama Reed, Plumer Lovelace (WLA Executive Director), Steve Conway (Conway Consulting)

Members absent: Paula Kiely, Steve Ohs

Guests: Kurt Kiefer (Dept. of Public Instruction), Martha Berninger (DPI), Ben Miller (DPI), Shannon Schultz (DPI)

Co-chair Meyer called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. The agenda order was approved by consensus after moving the Legislative Day Report up to follow the Legislative Update.

Approval of minutes from the January 24, 2020 meeting. The minutes of the January 24, 2020 meeting were approved unanimously on a **motion from Arend seconded by Oathout**.

Legislative update. Conway reported the capitol is largely deserted due to COVID-19 pandemic precautions. The Senate's final floor session has been "postponed until spring." Final bills passed by the Assembly will be taken up, with those passed being sent to the Governor's desk. Conway continues to work on an agency related solution to the previously discussed two Milwaukee Public Library issues.

Library Legislative Day Report. Loeffel reported there were around 160 attendees once cancellations and same day registrations were tallied. Considerable discussion ensued during which positive effects of improvements made to event publicity, registration/scheduling deadlines, and registration table check-in were noted, as well as the great morning briefing despite the usual juggling of guest speaker schedules and last minute substitutions. Remarks by Lt. Governor Barnes and State Superintendent Taylor were well received. Ramsey will work with WLA staff to set up a small group meeting to address concerns about the way Memberclicks registration data interacts (or doesn't) with Access in mysterious ways only Stef Morrill understands to produce the appointment schedules, and try to improve the process. Reed confessed to also being trained in Access, much to everyone's delight. Loeffel announced the next Legislative Day is February 16, 2021. Dimassis has already submitted speaker requests forms for Governor Evers and Superintendent Taylor (confirmation not expected until January), with a bipartisan legislative component to the morning briefing yet to be determined.

State Biennial Budget Request. Conway noted that while the basic process for consideration of the 2021-2023 budget remains the same, it's highly likely that the rapidly evolving global pandemic will take a toll on projected revenue and expenditures at all levels of state and local government, as well as any

previously projected surplus. The 2021-2023 budget timetable will move forward notwithstanding COVID-19 crisis uncertainties. He advised setting up virtual meetings in April with the Governor's office and DOA. Kiefer suggested a target date of May 1 to finalize WLA endorsed items for the DPI/DLT budget so as to meet internal deadlines.

Meyer reviewed the WLA 2019-2021 budget request and initiated discussion, noting that current biennium system aids are now the new base rather than a "one time only" appropriation as in 2017-2019. There was consensus that the 2021-2023 biennial budget request for an increase in system aid should be the same as in 2019-21, i.e. an extra \$2.5 million in the first year and \$4 million (the \$2.5M from the first year plus another \$1.5M) in the second. Amounts for statewide resource contracts, BadgerLink and Newslite for the Blind are yet to be determined and will be shared by DPI/DLT as soon as requests are known. Pursuing inclusion of Recollection Wisconsin as a new fifth contract at a first/second year level of \$150,000/\$300,000 was again supported.

Discussion moved to consideration of the Wisconsin Public Library System Technology Collaboration funding proposal, with Lovely introducing an overview with single year cost estimates based on preliminary conversations among multiple public library systems and the Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC). Questions were posed regarding project capacity and sustainability, the level and extent of commitment by systems to the project, and possible alternative funding sources. Concerns were expressed about the difficulty of coordinating effective legislative messaging regarding statewide benefits if all public library systems are not invested in/benefitting from the new project; the need to hold current system funding harmless, especially for non-participating systems; how any extra funding that might be received would be allocated if it were not sufficient for both "regular" state aid-covered expenses and the new project; and whether, considering the current and expected future economic turbulence, it is the right time to add this project to a request. Given the discussion and absent information on alternative funding sources besides state library aid from the Universal Service Fund (USF) or pursuing a separate General Purpose Revenue (GPR) ask, no consensus was reached. It was suggested that a special SRLAAW meeting in April to assess support for the technology project and address the need for united messaging would give LD&L more information to help with decision making going forward. Machones will survey SRLAAW members to find a suitable date. Kiefer offered DPI/DLT expertise to assist with enterprise infrastructure details.

Pletcher/Machones motion to proceed with developing a 2021-2023 biennium public library system aids request for a first year \$2.5 million increase and second year \$4 million increase to base funding, and a fifth contract request to support Recollection Wisconsin for \$150,000 first year and \$300,000 second year funding, as well as yet to be determined cost to continue requests for the four statewide resource contracts, BadgerLink and Newslite for the Blind, with a target deadline of May 1.

Meyer and Klager asked for volunteers to join them, Conway, and Lovelace on a budget task force and received interest from Dimassis, Machones, Pletcher, Wendt, Lovely, and Ramsey. Conway suggested reaching out to experienced WLA members who participated in past legislative committee hearings and meetings with key legislative leaders.

County work group. Meyer spoke at a recent meeting of a Wisconsin Counties Association committee concerned with legislative matters. Her broad overview of WLA's expected requests during the next budget cycle was well received and she was encouraged to return when there were specifics to share. Klager noted concerns had been brought to her attention regarding the effect of COVID-19 related library closures on 2020 circulation statistics and Act 420 requests in 2021 for 2022 payments, and asked

that the topic be added to a future agenda for discussion. Pletcher noted the need to guide the Act 420 mindset of county officials from “costs they can’t control” to the high value of service received for a relatively small investment and volunteered to collaborate with Klager on messaging. As Bridges Library Service Director, Meyer recently wrote a letter regarding Act 420 reimbursement to Washington Co. library directors who are engaged in studying the topic of cross county library service for a presentation to the Washington Co. Board of Supervisors.

Federal Relations Coordinator. Machones delivered the report linked [here](#).

DPI/DLT update. See DPI Update to LD&L 03-20-2020 report linked [here](#).

Conference programs. Oathout reported that the LD&L WAPL program panel presenting on local campaigns to maintain and/or increase municipal and county support for library services is ready to go. If WAPL is cancelled due to the pandemic, the program can be held over to the annual fall conference. Lovelace reported that the WAAL Spring Conference has been cancelled. Everything is very fluid with health and financial considerations related to remaining WLA events under discussion.

Remaining meeting dates for 2020. May 15, July 24, September 25, November 13

Announcements and other business.

Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 11:52 AM on a **motion by Klager, seconded by Wendt.**

Respectfully submitted,
Kris Adams Wendt, Recorder