

Meeting Notes for May 31, 2017

Des Moines Library  
King County Library System



*Present: Patricia Cutright, Chair; Cindy Aden, Kyle Cox, Patricia Devine, Laura Dushkes, Trish Henry, Lynne Kanne, Ann Lally, Jeff Martin, Lorena O'English, Marci Howells, Christine Peck, Susan Hildreth and Maura Walsh*

*Not attending: Beth Hudson, Elizabeth Partridge, and Susan Whitford*

*Guest: Steven Thomas, KCLS Regional Library Manager*

## Meeting

Cutright called the meeting to order. We reviewed and approved the agenda and meeting notes. Steven Thomas welcomed us to the Des Moines branch and gave us an update on the library and system. He shared their current emphasis on immigrant populations, computer classes, jobs, citizenship, children's services, and gardening.

## State Librarian Report

Aden reported that LSTA funding appeared secure through September 2017. Both the Office of the Secretary of State and the Washington State Department of Corrections are poised to request additional funding from the legislature. Aden will check to see if there are specific ways for Council members to do outreach. Microsoft Imagine Academy funding was not secure, but Aden was still hopeful. She also reported that she was hoping to reinvigorate a Friends group for WSL. We have many programs that would resonate with funders. Martin reminded the Council that we have received foundation funding in the past. Although some of those organizations have changed focus, we are still close to them.

## Five Year Evaluation

Martin reviewed the evaluation and discussed the recommendations.

### Electronic Resources

- Recreate the Statewide Database Licensing and Anytime Library models of interaction with libraries for other potential group purchases.
- Assess available data and develop an evaluation rubric to monitor changes in use patterns. Better data, in particular, about use to help clarify its significance.
- Develop outreach and promotional strategies for databases to use in libraries and their communities.

### Institutional Libraries

- Continue to build relationships with the Washington State Department of Corrections, trying to increase measurable outcomes enabled through LSTA funding.

- Build programming that leverages library strengths and fills gaps, such as information literacy, to help meet the needs of inmates.
- Include community and technical colleges to address the infrastructure barriers to digital literacy education. They may be effective collaborators in addressing security and logistical challenges.

### **Washington Talking Book & Braille Library (WTBBL)**

- Increase awareness services. Based on Census estimates electronic downloads and associated reading apps are likely to be of growing interest.
- Seek new funding and resource sharing partnerships to extend disability services. WSL may be able to expand the services offered to support people with other types of disabilities. This could include additional training and support for local libraries.
- Help libraries address accessibility barriers in libraries. Training for library staff on online accessibility requirements in serving patrons with disabilities would help reach more users.

### **Digitization**

- Continue to invest in supporting local digitization projects and training the library workforce to preserve historic artifacts.
- Seek to broaden discovery of digitized materials through linked data and partnerships.

### **Digital Literacy**

- Set up environment for libraries to share teaching materials developed from LSTA funding. Increase attention to capturing results, collecting materials developed, and making them available to other libraries.
- Carefully track available data about persistence and completion rates for Microsoft Imagine Academy for better evaluation.

### **Continuing Education**

Continue offering a variety of opportunities. Library staff must continuously update their skills and seek new ideas and approaches to services to respond to the changing needs and expectations.

### **Consulting Services; Statewide Assistance for Libraries**

- Develop robust metrics and tracking systems for consulting services.
- Develop a standardized data collection method for tracking training sessions, attendance, and learning outcomes. Implementing standardized rosters and forms would help track activities.

### **Teacher Librarian Common Core Cadre (TLC3)**

Continue to develop collaborative curriculum support initiatives as additional standards are adopted in schools. Creating a master development schedule and roll-out process would maintain momentum and attract support. Working collaboratively and sharing with SLAAs and school libraries in other states would be a contribution to the entire library community.

## Libraries as Open Education Leaders

No further LSTA funding will be directed to Libraries as Open Education Leaders as the program is in its final year. Further work should focus on disseminating educational content and best practices gathered. The program has laid a solid foundation for further work in this area.

## Recommendations for the Next Five Years

- Forming partnerships: WSL is a potential agent in helping form inter-library partnerships among libraries of different types.
- Communications and collaboration: Libraries across the state look to WSL for assistance in providing collaboration tools and opportunities to reduce redundancies and respond to emerging needs.
- Evaluation and metrics: Increase training opportunities on evaluation practices and facilitating work on common metrics among libraries in the state.
- Staffing: WOIS/The Career Information System projects about 450 annual vacancies in library positions through 2022. WSL leadership may help cultivate new librarians by working to ensure graduates are equipped with the skills they need to be successful.
- Professional development: WSL provides many professional development opportunities, but management and more traditional areas may need more emphasis.
- Statewide Services: WSL should continue this work to build further capacity within libraries of all types and sizes, and within all areas of the state through statewide services and grant awards.

General discussion noted that the evaluation does not always reflect our own analysis. This may be partly because the goals from the last five-year plan dictated the evaluation. It may also be because the evaluators were not always aware of everything that we were doing. For example, their analysis of WTBBL indicated that outreach should be improved. Yet WTBBL just received the Network Library of the Year Award from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, part of the Library of Congress, for its outstanding services to readers who are visually or physically impaired. It is the second time in ten years, and WTBBL is the only library to receive this national award twice.

## Strategic Goals

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We discussed the WSL strategic goals. These have been updated and are available in the materials posted for this meeting. This summary reflects both discussion during the meeting and comments from the Survey Monkey members completed prior to the meeting.

### **Goal 1: Contribute to the state's economic prosperity and cultural richness by providing relevant and high-quality education, literacy and reading, and lifelong learning.**

We discussed how Workforce Development operates with and through libraries with priority service channels, where funding goes, what libraries' roles could or should be, if WSL can be the connector or convener, and what capacity different libraries have. We need to recognize the specialized skills needed by a librarian to provide patrons (including students) with quality services. Workforce Development partnerships can be especially helpful in rural communities. This certification can be a valuable extra resource for K-12 and Community College students. Programs like newspaper digitization and the Rural Heritage program are valuable primary source resources for 4-year institution students, and outreach efforts impact faculty and students. Microsoft Imagine Academy has not been as highly used by patrons as first thought.

**Goal 2: Connect Washingtonians to their history, employing digital initiatives, and other preservation strategies to tell the stories of local communities and to celebrate our common heritage.**

Our digitization and metadata initiatives help preserve unique histories. We discussed how important this was to enable research and access at schools and universities. Information about communities that is available through local and regional newspapers is priceless. Digitizing materials not only solves the problem of deterioration, but also provides storage and universal access. Without digital initiatives, many histories might remain inaccessible in boxes or drawers, or worse, discarded. The more libraries can improve access to special collections, the more valuable and relevant they will become. Unifying access in one searchable portal is ideal.

Another area of interest is oral histories. We should look at what already exists, then extend or complete. Management is a problem because work is growing mathematically. There are so many groups involved: historical societies, museums, libraries, archives, universities, etc. all doing Pacific Northwest history.

**Goal 3: Expand the reach and effectiveness of the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library (WTBBL) with innovative outreach initiatives to increase overall user population, establish and strengthen borrower relationships, and promote relevant high quality, accessible library and information resources.**

Council also felt that connecting WTBBL patrons with their local library staff would be helpful, especially in the rural communities and for youth outside of Seattle. Local production of local information could also be useful.

**Goal 4: Expand and enhance the provision of direct library and information services to incarcerated and hospitalized populations in support of education, literacy, recovery, recreation, and reentry.**

No discussion at meeting.

**Goal 5: Elevate the quality of library service and caliber of library staff through facilitation, consulting, grants, training, and modeling best practices to build capacity in libraries statewide.**

This goal received the most attention, especially in the online (Survey Monkey) comments. Everyone felt this was critical, for many and varied reasons, and wanted to call attention to the following:

Statewide projects

- Projects can become very political in public libraries. Even if something makes sense from a business model perspective, without local buy-in, city libraries and smaller districts will maintain autonomy due to political factors, rather than business factors. Can the state library take the lead on this?
- This strategy supports efforts already underway in the Library Leadership Council; ASK Wa and SDL are heavily used and very important to us. We don't formally exchange information with public libraries and do so in limited ways with 4-year institutions.
- Getting more information to more libraries will make programs better, regardless of resources.
- Being able to pull and pool resources would be a great help for libraries, especially when other libraries have managed to create a similar program or activity successfully.
- Facilitating cooperative services is a big benefit to our understaffed rural libraries.
- Early learning and summer reading partnerships are very important in rural communities.
- We should employ strategies and ideas that help equalize the service levels available to our citizens regardless of where they live in the state.
- Database licensing should focus on staff. They often access it for patrons more than patrons access it themselves. WSL is also concerned about the cost effectiveness of SDL. Vendors need to improve the

data supply and we need to force promotion and usage. Vendors should supply training if we buy their product.

- Washington State Library has partnered with the Seattle Public Library to create the Washington Center for the Book and sponsor statewide programs to promote literacy and a love of books, reading, and libraries.
- Collaboration across the CTCs is one of the most valuable opportunities offered through LSTA funding. This strategy has allowed us to tailor projects to meet current needs.
- A simple, ongoing statewide message to encourage citizens to think of the library as a source for meeting these needs would go a long way to getting rural and urban citizens alike to think of their library. PSA's in radio, newspapers, and social media plus signs on public transportation and public areas would serve to repeatedly remind people to try the library. Statewide "Value of using libraries" message could be helpful for all citizens to recognize the importance of publicly funded libraries. The old marketing adage -- if you hear a message often enough, you believe it.
- Can the council offer input on the new standards revision that allows teachers to become endorsed in library by taking a test?

## Grants

- Fund pilot programs in the local libraries and enable them to train others, rather than the state library being the primary trainers. Fund pilot projects conceived, developed and already deployed by libraries.
- Professional Development grants for groups are very useful and important to us and are very valuable as libraries struggle with declining budgets and limited funds.
- Can preference such as higher priority be offered to grant applications from schools with certificated teacher-librarians?

## Training

- Online and in-person training opportunities (webinars, WebJunction, VR conferences, state conference programming, etc.) are valuable not just to librarians, but also to library staff.
- Access to a variety of training is very important to rural library staff; especially helpful is providing assistance for staffing the library while staff are involved in training. Smaller libraries don't have the funds to do this alone.
- Training in measurable outcomes 'lite' would be most helpful. Staff do not have an excess of time but would always benefit from outcome thinking and planning.
- Simple, step-by-step project management that makes it easy and not time-consuming for library staff in the state's smallest libraries would be the best.
- Many programs seem designed for public/school/institutional libraries. Professional development grants and training, and online resources are most valuable to 4-year academic libraries. An increase in programs and promotion of these and similar training opportunities, projects, and grant would be welcome. A 'matchmaker' service, helping to match academic libraries with tribal, public and other libraries for digital literacy/digitization/other grant opportunities and partnerships might be good.

## Modeling best practices

- Project management for libraries receiving funding and undertaking projects can be very important, especially for newer librarians who don't know about the actual process of working within the confines and requirements of a grant.
- Standardized measurement tools are potentially helpful as long as they account for library differences.

- Make sure that the important work done by WA state library in early learning remains a priority. Its continuation is not explicitly established in WSL goals or plans.
- We don't have standard curriculum for non-professional staff. Statewide metrics could be useful and would build mobility for staff. This could also reinforce rural standards.
- Workforce Development and institutional libraries are creating a good framework to give the newly released more and better tools. All non-profits and community colleges that are partners in the process need to be at the table.

## Sharing and upcoming

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We will have four openings for LCW next year: Underserved, Technology, Schools and Special.

Cutright, Dushkes and Henry will form the nominations committee. They will review applications and make recommendations to Aden at our next meeting in October. They will also nominate next year's chair and vice chair for LCW.

We have selected potential dates and will arrange a two-day October meeting in either Walla Walla or Spokane, with the hope that we'll be able to visit an institutional library.

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