



MARYLAND STATE  
LIBRARY RESOURCE CENTER  
ENOCH PRATT *free* LIBRARY

**STATE LIBRARY RESOURCE CENTER**

**OVERSIGHT COMMISSION**

**MARCH 16, 2021, 10:00 A.M.**

**VIRTUAL MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**CHAIRPERSON:** Elizabeth Hulett

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tonya Aikens, David Dahl, Vivian Fisher, Michael Gannon, Laura Hicks, Gordon Krabbe, Morgan Miller, Dana Newman, Irene Padilla, Tamar Sarnoff, Michael Walsh, Wesley Wilson

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Hulett called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Hulett called for a motion for acceptance of the minutes of the January 19, 2021 meeting. L. Hicks motioned for approval. The motion was seconded by D Dahl. The group voted and the minutes were unanimously approved.

**III. SAC REPORT**

Michael Gannon, Chairperson

M. Gannon provided the following update regarding the SAC Meeting:

We haven't had a meeting since our last SLRC Commission meeting, and you will recall we went to quarterly meetings. There is nothing to report except for the status of the WIFI map project, the free WIFI for Maryland project. After placement of the public libraries on the map, the next step is to bring on the academic and school libraries; now in process. Eventually we will be able to roll out and include all libraries. T. Sarnoff and I have been talking about getting the municipalities that have free WIFI and some point, involve more non-profit or community government-based groups. The next meeting is not until April. There will be more updates after that meeting.

I. Padilla asked M. Gannon if there was a way to show a demo of the WIFI map.

M. Gannon responded that a demo will be shown at the next MAPLA meeting.

I. Padilla pointed out that some members will not be attending the MAPLA meeting and probably will not see the demo. Due to this concern, M. Gannon stated he would now take the time to locate the demo for display to everyone and suggested that the group move on to the next agenda item.

#### **IV. FY 2021 FINANCIAL REPORT**

G. Krabbe reported the following regarding the SLRC FY 2021 Budget Expenditure Report:

Everyone should have received the table that was sent out separately by Wesley. The projection is through the end of February 26th. We are in good financial shape at this time. There is nothing major to report. At this point in the fiscal year, the percentage of budget spent is low in areas such as Sailor due to when the databases invoices are paid and some of the contracts as well as purchases for equipment are completed in the last quarter. We also have to pay the delivery contracts. At the present time, we are evaluating where we think we will be at the end of the fiscal year. Also, the MOU we have that needs to be updated requires that if we spend plus or minus more than ten percent on a certain activity, we obtain approval from Irene to spend in a way that deviates from the budget. We are working on this and will get back to her. We do not anticipate any major issues to balance the fiscal year.

#### **V. WIFI DEMO REVIEW**

M. Gannon displayed the demo on the screen for viewing by the group. He demonstrated how to use the map by keying in random addresses and clicking on the search button to retrieve the area. He explained that the Google map set-up will list free exterior, interior and in-building WIFI only. He stated that it will be populated with the academic and school libraries. He informed everyone that a survey will be sent to the academics to find out about their current access.

During this portion of the meeting, there was a brief discussion regarding the various and inconsistent ways students, teachers, staff and the public are currently accessing their WIFI and the importance of, through the survey, learning what the schools are doing now to provide access, and obtain this information with clear questions to avoid any confusion.

It was decided that L. Hicks and T. Sarnoff will work together to compose a well-written survey.

I. Padilla stated that the map looked good and thanked T. Sarnoff, M. Gannon, M. Walsh, and M. Brown for their work on this project. She asked M. Gannon if there is a plan to roll-out after the demo is shown at MAPLA. She added that the plan is based on the Texas model, therefore, we can look at how they advertised their rollout.

M. Gannon agreed and said the rollout will be in phases.

#### **VI. FY 2022 BUDGET DISCUSSION**

G. Krabbe reported the following:

Most of you know what is going on with last year's legislation regarding the funding provided for SLRC that includes the new funding mandate for several years by the governor and overwritten by the legislature. One of the quirks of the way an override works is that the funding has to wait until the next

budget that the governor formulates which would be fiscal year 2023. The governor's budget includes a \$5,480 increase that amounts to a .00049% increase for the current fiscal year. That is really small on an \$11.2 million dollar budget. We got the Chairs of the Budget Committees to send a letter to the governor to provide the funding in fiscal year 2022 in the supplemental budget. This would be roughly an additional \$240,000 which is about a two percent increase over SLRC funding that we have right now. This is a more manageable amount. It may or may not be successful. In the meantime, what we are looking at are options in the cost containment and what will be the impact on services. A flat budget is not disastrous, but it will be felt because there will be costs that are going to be increasing. The City of Baltimore unions are looking at pay increases for the next fiscal year. It would be easy to manage without this action. This is informational and there is really nothing we need to do at this point. If anyone has questions or thoughts, I would appreciate hearing them as we are looking at those costs containment measures.

I. Padilla explained that she sent out an email recently regarding the American Rescue Plan that has a set aside of \$3.3 million and we need to explore how we can use these funds. She stated that they are looking for ideas of what can be done statewide, and she would like to know if there is anything that SLRC needs to purchase especially regarding digital resources.

G. Krabbe responded that this time next month we will know what the situation is regarding the state budget and then we can take some action. He stated that the City is having some funding issues and they are actually counting on the funding they plan to receive for support of Libraries, and this will help us to continue services. Financially, this is not a great year, but we are thinking that things are starting to pick-up and there are some other resources that can help fill the gap; we will look at all of them.

## **VII. FY 2021 Annual Plan Update**

W. Wilson reported the following regarding the 2021 Annual Plan:

### **Awareness**

A meeting was held with Dana Newman and Scotti Oliver about the SLRC Liaison program. The meeting was positive. They discussed the priorities of the Talbot County Free Library System and they presented an amazing outline of the following priorities:

- Training: Assist in planning ongoing, annual, required staff training;
- Human Resources;
- Help with improving staff and public communications;
- Assistance with grants.

It was determined that direct assistance from SLRC could be provided for training and grants. Other resources will be identified to assist them with human resources and communications.

### **Maryland Statewide Circulation Conference**

This year the participation number doubled, and it was an amazing conference. Topics that were covered: customer service, resiliency, wellness, and trauma with a preconference of yoga and relaxation. There were 56 plus participants at each of the sessions.

### **SLRC.info Website**

There has been extensive review of the website lately in the past year. The design was done several years ago. It is attractive and reasonably easy to find things on the website but it was coded by an individual who is no longer employed with the Library and this person also designed the site, therefore, changes cannot be done by public services staff. Candace, web manager, has been working with SLRC to develop a plan to revamp the website beginning in April. This will allow for a new look and the editing can be done much more freely.

### **Marina**

The RFP for software vendors is being prepared and will be sent out. There will be vendor demonstrations in April and a selection in May. Some counties, Dorchester and Harford Counties, have reached out to Paul Chasen, Coordinator, of Lib Answers, Lib Chat, and Lib Guide, concerning locating guides on developing their virtual records survey. We are glad to see that we can provide that service in this particular area. The Pratt SLRC review of Lib Guides revealed that we have been doing web guides for decades, they are Human Resource intense, and are a shift away from the way customers and those of us in this meeting are using the Internet. The search engines replace the web guide process although the web guides do provide the best resources, however, for accuracy and better access, it is clear that we need to improve that process so that we can create guides that are more trend related. Our plan is to move the Web Guide process to Lib Guides. A number of libraries have already done it, and this will be a positive change for us.

### **Sailor Databases**

There is a timeline and framework for the database renewal project. It will have an RFP, vendor presentations and a survey for the MPERLS group in this process.

### **Digital Maryland**

Large amount of support provided to various initiatives. Some ongoing projects are:

- Discussion with McDaniel College regarding a partnership.
- Met with the Jewish Museum of Maryland to discuss their significant oral history collection for inclusion in Digital Maryland.
- Discussion with Maryland Art Place is moving forward with the process of them looking to launch their collection in summer 2021 and;

- Mutual Benefit Society Collection – consist of three ledger books from the R.F. Lewis Museum. A significant tool for genealogists as well as outstanding research potential.

### **State Documents**

Shipments have resumed to our partner institutions so that they can receive the visible documents.

### **Monitoring Broadband**

M. Walsh reported the following:

We are going through an analysis of each county and there will be some increases once the contract is set up. You may recall that last time the internet providers and Comcast were going to be rebid. There is only one bid for the Comcast which is Comcast and we received four for the internet. We will get one new provider and keeping another provider for the coming year. Basically, we are in good shape for that. The other project we are working on is the MUNI Building to connect the additional Comcast connection. One of the internet providers will be on site if things go bad.

### **Staff Development and Training**

Grants development and training is very active. The Lunch and Learn series will be launched in April which gives larger groups an opportunity to participate in the training.

### **The SLRC Conference**

The SLRC Conference for the LATI was really less of a conference and more of a presentation describing SLRC resources. It was the first virtual tour of the building and it seemed to go very well. The LA's found it extremely useful and were surprised to see the depth of the collection. There will be a SLRC Conference on June 7<sup>th</sup>. When we are planning this, we are looking at moving in a different direction of beginning with a thematic Conference. We are looking to hold a symposium in June and possibly another symposium in August and then back to a standard SLRC Conference agenda for a wide variety of training with a keynote speaker in the Fall. We really want to be more responsive to what the demands are in the state. We continue to go back to that survey that was taken during lock-down and then the survey later on asking how SLRC can help. A number of priorities were mentioned such as, DEI and this subject will play a big role in the summer conference.

### **SLRC Webinars**

There has been a resurging interest for specific Webinars during this pandemic period. There has been requests for the customer service, the Edgar Allan Poe, privacy and copyright, preserving family documents and oral history webinars. We have been making sure customers have access to what's available in a do it yourself process.

### **Entrepreneur Academy**

It is going extremely well. There was an expanded regional cohort this time and Western Maryland was included. We have seen something very interesting in this particular cohort. There were 181 registrations and usually after the first meeting we see a 40% drop off - that's to be expected. We had only a drop to 155 active participants and this is a significant uptick from the past. This group was very interesting to watch, they were incredibly engaged, knowledgeable and had very interesting questions related to the pandemic. Despite the pandemic, they were not at all shocked about expanding small businesses or their side hustles. It's been an interesting process and we presented a small presentation to the Prince George's County and Anne Arundel Library staff to not only give them an update of where we were but to describe how the program was developed. Anne Arundel County and Prince Georges County are looking at starting a regional Entrepreneur Academy in their locations. We are very pleased to see that the toolkit is used, and we can help other systems create other small business and workforce development presentations as well as opportunities that will be helpful to all of our customers.

### **State Archives Series**

The series is continuing and has an amazing attendance of 100 to 120 participants in each session. People statues were looked at with an amazing description of how the use of forensics sculpture was used to actually create sculptures that accurately give the viewer an understanding of the individual. The view was not only in stature in physical form in appearance but also in their actual addition to history in Maryland. The Fatal Path of Judgement with Christopher Haley very distinctly detailed the Laws of Racial Control and Oppression from Maryland's Founding to the Post-revolution. One of the fascinating pieces of this presentation was that Chris centered on primary resources and there were a number of questions from the attendees about primary resources. One thing I found interesting about this lunch and learn series is the State Archives used this as an opportunity to encourage customers to visit them and to utilize their services and in this way, they also are promoting public libraries. In this particular series, Chris spoke of newspapers on microfilm and other documents that can be found in public library collections around the state. It has been fascinating to see how this partnership is supporting both types of collections and making the them more visibly available to customers.

I. Padilla asked if these events were for archives customers and what type of direct marketing is used to notify customers.

W. Wilson explained that the events are advertised through social media, the web page and in the Compass brochure. He stated that the one direct marketing piece resulted in very low attendance. He added that the State Archives markets the symposiums.

I. Padilla remarked that it seems as if the customers are being reached but she would like to receive the advertisements announcing the events. She stated that the programs are very good, and she is impressed by the content.

W. Wilson will talk with the communications director for suggestions about extending the marketing efforts.

W. Wilson concluded his review of the Annual Plan and Chair Hulett asked for a motion to approve the updates. L. Hicks motioned for approval. The motion was seconded by M. Gannon. The group voted and unanimously approved updates to the FY 2021 Annual Plan.

### **VIII. STRATEGIC PLAN FY23 – FY26 (REVIEW OF PROPOSED PLAN)**

A one sheet proposed plan was displayed on the screen. I. Padilla reported the following:

This is a preliminary look at the planning process. I do want us to get going on this because we have at the state level, MSL, a plan that has to be developed over this next year, and we have to do the assessment of the current plan because the libraries will be very busy once they open again. I pulled together a minimal proposed plan that includes an Executive and Planning Committee. I tried to make it representative of the three regions of central Maryland. Heidi and I will be the Executive Committee and the Planning Committee names are listed. We need to solidify the Planning Committee members and I am open to any suggestions for other people to serve on the Committee. We also need to talk some more about what the Committee's responsibilities will be and establish a timeline as well as the scope of work. We then need to obtain feedback form vendors prior to releasing an RFP, evaluate applicants and select a consultant. We do not have to do a full new plan. We can take parts of the current plan and do updates. We are coming into a heavy timeframe for planning and my thinking is that this Committee needs to begin the process very soon. I will be happy to help in any way. I would like some feedback.

D. Newman responded that it looks like a good plan.

I. Padilla mentioned that at this time, we do not have representation from academic or K-12. It was agreed that L. Hicks will participate for K-12, D. Dahl will recommend a person from the academic side and W. Wilson will coordinate the process.

W. Wilson explained to I. Padilla that in terms of moving forward for next fiscal year with a plan, they can take the previous plan after the strategic plan and sort of move forward. He added that he encourages the Commission folks to look at that plan to make potential adjustments; not to necessarily change the initiatives. He stated that this can be done over the summer and in the fall when we were to present the annual report for this fiscal year, we can have a plan for next fiscal year for review and approval. He mentioned that he would be open to hear recommendations from the Commission and will reach out to people for feedback.

W. Wilson added that a main goal would be to have a draft plan by the May meeting for review and response by the Commission at the May meeting or by the September meeting when we present the Annual Report.

Chair Hulett called for a vote to extend the current FY 2022 Annual Plan. A motion was made for the extension. The motion was seconded by T. Aikens. The motion to extend the current plan was unanimously approved.

## **IX. MEMBER UPDATES**

Academic Libraries – Report of D. Dahl: Some colleges and universities are starting to make some preliminary announcements and plans about a return to close to normal or full operation for their fall semesters. They are looking at late August and early September time-period with the anticipation that the vaccination process will improve our situation. Three institutions have made public announcements. I am sure others will be doing the same in the coming months if things keep trending in the right direction. Libraries will be following suit as we continue to conduct business as usual in an unusual time.

K12 Libraries – Report of L. Hicks: Most school systems are back in some form with face-to-face instruction and most of school librarians are back in their buildings at least part-time. Some have been pulled out of libraries to instruct in classrooms and have turned their libraries into classrooms. Overall, librarians are functioning as information literacy leaders in their buildings. Other big news from the Office of Instructional Technology and School Librarian Media is that the Office of Management and Budget has approved the purchase of a new management system. They are switching from Blackboard to Canvas. Canvas will be the state learning management system for online professional learning and for online student learning.

Public Libraries – Report of D. Newman: Six of the Eastern Shore Libraries have returned to limited capacity service with plans of returning on April 5<sup>th</sup>. We are doing computer by appointment and it has been successful. A number of libraries are making plans for the summer to do some virtual in-person programming as well as outside story time. We are planning to do an example in June. Our Sixth Annual Chesapeake Children's Book Festival will be both hybrid and virtual with Brian Collier as the main children's author along with some other children book authors.

M. Miller: Cecil County are all open as of yesterday. The first week we saw about 1,400 visits. They have expanded a little since the Fall, most staff have been vaccinated, they are excited about the grants through the Rescue Act, they have a new Board Member and are excited about the new branch opening.

T. Aikens: We are just announcing later today our opening on April 5<sup>th</sup> and this will be the first time we are offering walk-in service. Some staff have been vaccinated. We are getting a new racial equity initiative off the ground and it is running great.

M. Gannon: Staff getting vaccinated and looking forward to a reopening in April with only computer appointments.

Regional Libraries – Report of Chair Hulett: Business as usual and still operating on a hybrid model for staff. One thing the three of us will be cooperating on is the facility study expiring at the end of next year and we need an update for the other regionals that may be are interested in partnering with us. Also, a salary compression study will be completed. All three libraries in western Maryland opened March 1<sup>st</sup>. It was the first time Allegheny County opened since last March. The Garrett Library was one of the first in the state to open. Washington County received word last week that they will be vaccinated. One other big project being worked on is the Shared Collection Development strategy within all three counties. They are looking to save money by combining Collection Development.

Maryland State Library Agency – Report of I. Padilla: They are thrilled that a position that has been frozen for two years will be filled in the finance department. About 70% of staff are now vaccinated. We have our budget in place for 2022 pending approval by the Maryland General Assembly. We are looking forward to funds from the American Rescue Act and the state broadband grant to break the digital divide with the funds to be available through September 2030. Another upcoming source is the Build America’s Libraries Back that supports construction and renovation. If it passes, \$88 million dollars will be available so we will need people to start thinking about their projects now in case the funds are available.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Hulett asked for a motion to adjourn. D. Dahl motioned for adjournment. The motion was seconded by L. Hicks. The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

V. Scriber Landon  
SLRC Office