

Western Council Minutes  
Summer, 2021

President Michael Scott called the meeting to order at 1:15 PM.

Members in attendance:

Debbi MacLeod – CO  
Buzzy Nielse – OR  
Mike Strom – NV  
Jennifer Chilcoat – AR  
Holly Henley – AZ  
Patience Frederiksen – AK  
Eric Norris – KS  
Rod Wagner - NB  
Stacey Aldrich – HI  
Eli Guinnee – NM  
Mark Smith - TX  
Jamie Markus – WY  
Brenda Hemmelman – SD  
Stephanie Bailey-White – ID  
Michael Scott – IA  
Robin Westphal – MO  
Mary Soucie – ND

Officer Election:

The Nominating Committee was convened by Past President Mark Smith and included Rod, Eli, and Stephanie. The committee put forth Stephanie to stand for Secretary. Michael called for additional nominations but there were no additional nominations from membership. There was a motion to accept the committee's recommendation. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Bylaws change:

Vice-President Jamie Mark presented the proposed bylaws changes recommended by the Board. Eli moved, seconded by Mark to accept the bylaws as presented. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

PDE's:

Treasurer Robin Westphal reviewed what PDE's are and how they can be used. Please let Robin know a form is coming before sending it. Robin reminded that the Board extended 2020 PDE's through June 30, 2022. The Board will review the expiration date over the next 18-24 months. Dues will remain the same for FY22.

#### Future meetings:

The Fall 2021 Meeting will be held virtually. The Board will send a Doodle Poll to gather information to assist in choosing a date for the meeting. The group discussed where to hold the Annual Meeting in 2022. After a robust discussion, the group decided to explore HI since that was the 2020 site.

We will offer WestCo Drop-ins every other month. Michael will send out an invite beginning in August.

#### Staff support:

We discussed if there is a need to support a conference for LDDs, AKA as the Westies and also if we should support meetings or conferences for other groups such as YS consultants. COSLA provides support for the CE Director meetings. It was suggested that we ask the Westies to come up with a proposal that outlines requested support, possibly adding a day to the 2022 PLA conference in Portland, OR. Jaime will serve as liaison to the Westies group and will explore with Westies what they want for their staff. One suggestion to support LSTA Coordinators was to perhaps support a half day after grants to states program. Opportunity to support add-ons to other events. WestCo could consider collecting a registration fee to recoup costs.

#### Member Updates:

##### OR:

Posting for SL up this week with process finalized by Sept. Budget in good shape – status quo budget. Can move forward with filling vacancies of 6 positions.

ARPA - Plan written. Accepting applications for competitive grants, due end of month.

Plan includes flexibility depending on comp grants received. Open to museums.

Releasing RFP soon for LSTA process. Focus will be on data gathering for plan, writing themselves with input from consultants.

##### NE:

Budget – Came out pretty well. Legislature adjourned early. Anticipated budget requests didn't happen; received what they requested.

ARPA – Great plan. Lot of funding going in formula payment to public libraries – base amount plus per capita. Use based on local needs within parameter of legislation. Will have to sign off on assurances. OverDrive. Competitive grants. Retaining some for future designation.

LSTA – Finalizing with a consultant expert. LSTA plan written by staff, board, council, and library community.

##### ID:

Budget looking good. Record surplus. Legislature has turned down federal funds.

ARPA - Closed yesterday comp. grants 1M set for tribal, school, and public, and academic libraries. Received 2.8M. Pull some plans for operating and use. Hiring bilingual – bi-cultural coordinator for Hispanic community. Hoping to keep on OverDrive books.

LSTA – Amanda Stonderfor starting next week, Fast Forward Libraries. Evaluation. Staff writing plan.

AK:

Left 10 positions vacant due to deficit from museum and COVID. May not have a budget if legislation can't agree and shuts down July 1.

ARPA – Easy grant for buying stuff. Libraries, archives, museums – 3500 plus 2500 for PL's for books plus projects.

LSTA – Quality metrics on evaluation will work with Governor's Advisory Council on Library's for writing plan.

WY:

30% cut on budget for state – 0% for State Library.

ARPA – No subgrants. Statewide ILS costs for all libraries from FY21 and FY22.

Allotted OverDrive fees for each library. Annual amount – paying directly to OverDrive. No forms needed.

LSTA - Carson Block for evaluation – by December 1 if possible. Plan will be updated from current.

TX:

Texas needs strong libraries – 3.75M for biennium, 1.75 workforce, 1M tech pilots, 1M offset increases for e-Resources. Five additional employees. Funding for 2 additional archivists.

ARPA – Hired project manager. 2.5M on broadband and new tech. 750K in subgrants. Digital navigator Library Resiliency. 750K on devices for TB Program.

LSTA - LD team moving forward with evaluation.

MO:

State Aid for Libraries largest ever.

ARPA – Statewide platforms- homework help, tutoring, teen digitization

e-Book collection

Statewide project

Targeted subgrants – pandemic response

Large libraries

LSTA – Quality metrics. Helping gather data, staff will write plan.

Debbie – CO:

Budget was fine. No reductions. Restoration of 500K for statewide grants.

ARPA – Using formula for statewide grants. Simple form.

LSTA – Keith Lance doing evaluation. They will write plan, updating current plan.

NM:

Level funding. State grants to libraries level. Can't fill long term vacancies; able to fill 3 but, some positions deleted. No classification changes or raises.

ARPA – Governor's office will make decision. Adding Navajo Chap house libraries.

LSTA – Request for bid for evaluation. IMLS Virtual site visit with follow-up in fall.

Doesn't expect big changes in plan. Looking at re-imagining future of bookmobile services.

SD:

No major impacts. Staff turnover. Assistant State Librarian left, eliminated position.

Director for Braille and TB left, rehired. Assistant State Librarian became library tech coordinator. State Library tech coordinator left and replaced.

ARPA – Doing subgrants. Wrapping up shortly. OverDrive, and Reference Books added to Gale Virtual Reference. New scanner for digitization.

LSTA Plans – Hired Carson Block for evaluation. Will write plan themselves.

KS:

Level funding. Waiting for budget to be finalized. Five vacancies – long term. Trying to hold positions. No raises.

AR:

Level funding. Hired first CE Coordinator.

LSTA – Evaluation and plan - Hired someone for evaluator from Department of Education, Eric Flavers who subcontracted to academic libraries.

ARPA – Subgrants. Application deadline yesterday. Delayed grant application option.

Last deadline Sept. 1. 4% of available funds requested. Formula grants. No county got less than 10K they could apply for. Initial costs for statewide union catalog.

IA:

Flat budget. Has vacant positions that could fill.

ARPA – Subgrants. 1.8M for Public Libraries. Up to 5K to accredited libraries at tier 1 or 2. Deadline begging of July. Re-evaluated statewide resources and may use ARPA funds to cover gap.

LSTA – RFP process. Hired a local consulting firm for evaluation, will do own plan.

AZ:

Secretary of State Office – waiting for the budget to be finalized, expecting a flat budget. Proposal for Legislative Council to take over State Museums.

ARPA – 2M to formula funding, 400K to statewide databases. Funding to e-Content – pay vendor, libraries select. Pulled grants from LSTA process that are ARPA eligible.

LSTA – RFI. Signing with someone to do evaluation and draft plan but reserve right to make changes.

KS:

ARPA: Using ARPA funds for statewide access to Tumblebooks, up to \$2 million for competitive project grants up for \$25,000 each, support of Talking Book Program.

LSTA: RFP in process. They would like advice on restructuring to be more efficient, etc., but may just need to stick with status quo for another year or two.

OK:

Budget: Didn't lose funds this year, which was good compared to some recent cuts. They have had seven key positions turn over in the last 14 months and covering administrative duties has been a challenge. They are using some ARPA funds to hire a temp coordinator to help manage grants and projects.

ARPA: Going with formula grants for public libraries – half of their award will go toward this. They are prohibited from providing support to school and academic libraries.

Provided some targeted grants for tribal libraries and museums. Using some funds to support workforce development resources and plan to continue that beyond the ARPA grant period with LSTA funds.

LSTA: Quotes are due soon and they awardee will help write their plan as well as do the evaluation.

Arkansas:

Budget: Level funding this year. Recently filled library development position with a dedicated continuing education person – something they had piecemealed out to various staff for many years.

ARPA: They had formula grants with applications due June 15. Made \$2.4 million available with a minimum of \$10,000 per eligible library entity. Also using funds to launch a statewide union catalog that they will continue funding with their regular budget post ARPA.

LSTA: They avoided the RFQ process by selecting a state employee who can do the evaluation and help with the plan.

Their E-rate Coordinator was just named an LJ Mover & Shaker.

ND:

Budget: had a good budget this session. Lost one position but State Aid for Public Libraries and Library Vision grants were funded at the current level.

ARPA: appointed an LSTA Task Force that is working to help set the plan for APRA money.

LSTA: Will be hiring a consultant to complete the evaluation and write the plan.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:10 by Michael.

## **Utah Member Update 6/16/21 submitted via email**

### **Budget Impacts-FY22 and beyond:**

Last summer all UT state agencies were asked to provide the legislature with 5, 10, & 20% budget cut scenarios. In the special session it was decided that every agency would take the 5% cut. It was challenging, but it did make us take a deep dive into our budget and see if we were indeed spending state funds in the most impactful ways and according to our mission. Some of that data has been useful as we evaluate programs and services.

The State Library is under the Department of Cultural and Community Engagement along with 7 other divisions. Our department leadership was able to advocate in this year's legislative session to have our agency 5% restored. The request passed. We are grateful to not have to operate at our lowest base budget numbers... BUT even with those cuts restored we have not seen an increase in funds from the state for a long time so we were already operating with a pretty flat ongoing funding structure. The CARES and ARPA are a great win for libraries, but it is one time funding that has some limiting criteria on how you can spend it. We would really like to request an increase in our ongoing state funding so that we could expand areas where our demand is highest. We have been told it will probably not be something we should even attempt to request for several years and in the meantime we should be gathering strong data for our request and research other funding opportunities.

### **ARPA:**

Utah was awarded \$2,708,103.00. We spent all of April hosting Town Halls with each different library type we serve, public, school & academic, tribal & special. We also sent out a survey to all our libraries and held individual meetings with libraries, community and other government agency partners, and State Library staff. We will reassess in October and see if there are any other projects or grants we would like to do with the remaining funds.

### **List of current projects/Grants**

OverDrive Consortium Charges- we covered the cost for our consortium libraries that they usually pay in for one year. We also purchased a couple of additional services OverDrive offers for a year.

Prison Projects- We met with the prison library staff and are funding a few projects and a part time staff person to help as they reopen and get caught up on demand for services while they were closed.

Hydroponic Gardens- Our survey results revealed that there were several communities struggling with fresh food scarcity and food desert issues. We are partnering with our STEM Action Center to do several Hydroponic Gardens in several rural locations. The sites will have a public library and a school library in the same area work together on a community garden at the public library in the summer and then they will start a garden at the school library once school starts. We are paying for all of the equipment, training,

and some funds for the school librarian to work at the public library this summer to help with the project. We hope to do 2-3 more locations in the fall.

Hotspots year 2 service- We did a project with CARES funding for libraries to purchase hotspots and pay for the service for a year. We are using ARPA funds to pay for the 2nd year of service.

Digital Equity Grant Round- Starting July 1st we will have a Digital Access and Education position funded for 2 years. We were awarded a grant from our School Board to use some of their CARES funds for this position. Once they are onboarded they will run a digital equity grant for libraries and use some of the funds for training.

Collections Grant- We are doing several collection grants for both our public and school libraries. This is a formula grant. We are doing one for the physical collection and one for digital collections. This was one way we were able to free up some of the library's general funds so that they could use the money they would usually use for collections for maybe staff or operational gaps they have due to budget cuts.

*\*We will also be giving our bookmobile staff money to replace many of the items in their collections that they lost during covid. We have 5 bookmobiles serving 10 rural counties.*

Staff Day grant- This grant will be for libraries to do a staff day where they can address mental health and/or other issues they may be facing. This grant allows them to bring in professional trainers, counselors, etc.

General Grant Round- We are running a competitive grant round for libraries that encompasses any projects they would like to do that fits the ARPA criteria. We have had a really good response to this grant and lots of amazing projects libraries want to do in response to covid and reopening.

Website support for libraries- We will be offering a grant to help libraries make their website more accessible and update it so they can utilize all of the new functionality that is available now.

Homeschool/Learning Pod resources and training- As I mentioned yesterday we are researching and developing some homeschooling resources we can share with libraries as well as looking for some training that we can offer our libraries by professionals in this area.

### **LSTA Plans:**

We are partnering with Nevada on our Request for Purchase to hire a consultant to do our evaluation and plan. The RFP will go out for bid this week. We hope to have someone hired in July.

This is the first time myself and my LSTA coordinator have gone through this process so we are trying to learn what we can and not panic! We are gathering all the information and data IMLS said we will need to give the consultant so that we are ready to go as soon as the contract is signed. There are some pieces of our current plan that we think we will keep. We like our main goals, but definitely want to update/rethink some of the projects we will be focusing on the next 5 years.

One of the things we added to the RFP was for the consultant to take a look at UT's changing demographics and offer some insight on areas where we are missing opportunities to engage and serve.