

**LIBRARY BOARD OF RHODE ISLAND**  
**The regular meeting of the Library Board of Rhode Island was held on**  
**September 16, 2019**  
**at the Department of Administration,**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Conference Room B,**  
**One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908**

**Members Attending:** Heidi Blais, John Bucci, Aaron Coutu, Melody Drnach (Chair), Annette Feldman, Kenneth Findlay, Louise Herrington, Phyllis Lynch (ex officio), Monica Nazareth-Dzialo, Robert Sloan

**Members Absent:** Cristina Amedeo, Rosita Hopper, Marcus Mitchell, Doug Norris, Leslie Page, Amanda Richman

**Present from the Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS):** Karen Andrews, Nicolette Baffoni, Donna DiMichele, Karen Mellor

**Guests:** Walter Dzialo

**Materials Distributed:**

- LBRI: Report on School Libraries Draft, September 11, 2019
- LBRI: Report on School Libraries, Recommendations, September 11, 2019
- 2019-2020 Proposed LBRI Meeting Schedule
- LBRI Legislative Committee Report, September 16, 2019

**I. WELCOME**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:18 p.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES from the June 17, 2019 meeting**

**Moved by:** Mr. Bucci

**Seconded by:** Mr. Coutu

The meeting minutes were approved as presented.

**III. REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Ms. Drnach welcomed the Board to the meeting.

**IV. CHIEF OF LIBRARY SERVICES REPORT**

**A. Ongoing**

**i. State Budget**

The approved state budget was signed by Governor Raimondo in June. OLIS is fully funded at the current service level with 13 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions; one FTE position was partially-funded. OLIS plans to fill the open position, Library Program Manager, in Spring 2020.

Through the efforts of the Rhode Island Library Association (RILA), the state budget includes an additional \$200,000 for public library grant-in-aid (GIA) for a total of \$8,800,000. With the increase, GIA for FY2020 is funded at 22.14% of municipal annual appropriation and expenditure in FY2018.

ii. Public Library Annual Survey

Public libraries have completed the Annual Survey which closed September 13. All 48 library systems have submitted their online reports and are under review by OLIS. Data gathered is reported to the federal government and used to develop state aid allocation. Through the survey, libraries apply for state aid and certify the expenditure of prior year GIA funds. Data from the survey provides an overview of the state of RI public libraries.

(a) Maury Loontjens Memorial Library (Narragansett)

The Maury Loontjens Memorial Library in Narragansett currently does not meet the maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement for GIA due to a substantially reduced allocation by the Town of Narragansett for library services, from \$841,000 in 2019 to \$400,000 in 2020. The Town may apply for a waiver if it does not meet the MOE requirement.

B. Summer 2019

i. OLIS Diversity Summit

OLIS convened an Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Summit at the University of Rhode Island on August 7. 80 librarians attended the event that featured keynote speakers, panelists, and hands-on exercises. A primary goal of the summit was to demonstrate ways people can understand and challenge their personal systemic biases to affect organization-level changes.

Keynote speaker, Loren Spears (Narragansett Tribe), Executive Director of the Tomaquag Museum in Exeter, Rhode Island, spoke about the experiences of disenfranchised indigenous people especially members of the Narragansett Tribe. Diversity Talks facilitated break-out sessions to increase cultural competencies. Cheryl Burrell, Associate Director RI Department of Administration, Office of Equity, Diversity, and Opportunity led a panel discussion with individuals from marginalized populations. The final segment was a small group exercise on developing library solutions to shape organizational change.

ii. Summer Reading Program (SRP) Wrap-up (Ms. DiMichele reporting)

The adult summer reading program continues to grow. 10 libraries reported that 1,000 adults participated in summer reading activities at 20 libraries.

Preliminary data from 38 libraries indicates that 9,000 children and 1,800 teens participated in summer reading activities, and 21,000 children and 5,000 teens

participated in age-specific programs. A complete report will be presented at the October meeting of the board.

C. Continuing Education (CE)

i. Continuing Education Planning (Ms. Baffoni reporting)

Ms. Mellor introduced Nicolette Baffoni, OLIS' Adult Services Coordinator and Continuing Education Coordinator.

Ms. Baffoni reported about the Continuing Education (CE) planning retreat attended by OLIS' professional staff July 25 at Barrington Public Library. Staff reviewed 2018-2019 programs and strategized for the development of future programs. A new CE database tool to gather data and generate participant reports, created by Jason Ackermann, Digital Services Coordinator, was previewed and program evaluation questions were rewritten to address outcomes.

In the 2019-2019 OLIS CE session, 679 people attended 45 programs, averaging 15 attendees per session. Attendee evaluations were mostly positive, and a review indicated that an area for OLIS to work on was helping attendees to feel confident about what they learned in programs.

In the early summer Rhode Island librarians were surveyed about past OLIS programs. 131 responses were received. Two-thirds of respondent indicated that they worked in a library for 10+ years and reported that OLIS News and Updates is their primary source of information about continuing education. OLIS will investigate if newer librarians are being reached effectively and plans more extensive CE marketing and email communications. Enhanced support through face-to-face learning, strengthening of resource guides, and provision of online learning will be explored, along with non-traditional programming, book clubs, and learning circles.

OLIS will focus on bringing more awareness and better access to continuing education programming through improved organization and communications and continuing to develop programs that best meet the needs of RI librarians.

ii. Continuing Education Fall Schedule (Ms. Baffoni reporting)

The complete Fall/Winter 2019-20 CE Calendar is available on the OLIS website. Programs are designed to be responsive to the library community, developed from librarian feedback and surveys, and chosen to help librarians develop the skills needed to better serve communities.

The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) Institute "Teen Services with Impact," was held on September 10 at Cranston Public Library, and included librarians from Connecticut and Massachusetts. Welcoming New Americans and English Learners is scheduled for October 17, and the Librarian's Guide to Homelessness on December 11 will feature Ryan Dowd, author and executive director of a homeless shelter in Chicago. Decoding and Disrupting Dominant Narratives workshop, presented by Wee The People (WTP) at North Providence Union Free Library December 17, will explore popular

children's literature as opportunities to disrupt dominant narratives about marginalized identities.

**D. National Library Service (NLS) for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Biennial Visit**

A National Library Service (NLS) representative visited OLIS on September 12 and 13 for the biennial federal guidelines compliance review of Talking Books Library. NLS will be changing its name to the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled. NLS is developing a new voice-activated reader machine, and broadening user participation criteria.

**E. Construction**

Providence Public Library's construction project is progressing smoothly with an anticipated completion date of Spring 2020. Board members who would like to tour the construction site may contact Ms. Mellor.

**V. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**A. Federal & State Legislative Updates (Mr. Coutu reporting)**

New federal bills seek to expand broadband services in various projects or endorse existing proposed broadband legislation. House Resolution 2426 seeks to establish an alternative dispute resolution program for copyright infringement through small claims court.

**B. Federal Budget (Ms. Mellor reporting)**

The development of the 2020 federal budget is being monitored regarding funding for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) which includes funding for the Institute of Museum of Library Services (IMLS) and the Grants to States Program. A House bill was introduced to fund LSTA at a level that would fully fund the \$1,000,000 base grant to states, an increase of \$17 million for LSTA. This would result in an increase of \$320,000 in Grants to States funding for RI. The Senate has not yet submitted a companion bill.

**VI. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

**A. Mr. Bucci**

- i. Cornucopia of RI's (CORI) Annual Conference is Thursday, November 7, at 5:30pm, at the RI State Library. Keynote speakers will be Kayon Murray-Johnson, Assistant Professor, University of Rhode Island, and Ricardo Lopez, Lecturer, Northeastern University.
- ii. A Coalition of Library Advocates (COLA) program in March 2020 will focus on organizational awareness for library friends' groups and trustees.
- iii. COLA's program "Launching Young Lives: Why Authors Love Libraries" will be at the Barrington Public Library on September 21. The free program will feature a panel discussion and book signing with four RI authors. The authors' books will be for sale and the authors will be available to sign books.

B. Mr. Coutu/Ms. Feldman

Mr. Coutu was approached by Cumberland Public Library staff who are concerned that OLIS will no longer host the annual Summer Reading Performers Showcase. The showcase gave libraries the opportunity to access and schedule performers for summer reading programs. Ms. Feldman stated that the loss of the showcase will be detrimental to libraries, and the program cancellation decision did not consider consequences to libraries.

Ms. Mellor noted that although OLIS has coordinated the Summer Reading Performers Showcase for many years, the content of the summer programs does not correlate to learning outcomes, as defined in OLIS' strategic plan. As an alternative to OLIS' funding of two summer reading performers for each public library, OLIS will offer grants for programs that focus on summer learning.

C. Ms. Nazareth-Dzialo

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## **VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. Approval of Revised Library of RI (LORI) Standards Updates (Ms. Mellor reporting)

The RI Office of Regulatory Review (ORR) review process includes an interagency review by agencies that could be impacted by revisions to regulations. During the ORR 30-day review, the RI Department of Education (RIDE) commented on the proposed changes. RIDE was unable to meet with OLIS during the 30-day review window but will meet with OLIS on September 17 to discuss the impact of the revision on school libraries. After the RIDE meeting, ORR will reopen the review. Any substantial changes will be brought to the LBRI for consent. OLIS hopes to have the new standards in place by January 2020 for the annual Library of RI (LORI) certification process.

B. Review and Consideration of the Report on School Libraries Committee (Ms. Mellor Reporting)

A LBRI committee established in December 2018 was charged to develop a report on school libraries. Three charges were given to the committee:

- Review the current status of school libraries, including library facilities, library staffing, and librarians' duties in Rhode Island's K-12 institutions;
- Identify challenges to the inclusion of successful school library media programs in Rhode Island schools; and
- Make recommendations in a written report to the Library Board of Rhode Island for actions that would strengthen school library media programs in Rhode Island schools.

Ms. Blais chaired the committee of 14 members who met 8 times from January to June; three subcommittees researched the committee's charges and presented a draft report at the June 17 meeting. Following discussion at the June 17 meeting and a reconvening of the committee, a revised draft was presented to the LBRI for approval that incorporated the

Board's recommendations that report recommendations be more closely aligned with board research findings.

**Motion to approve:** Mr. Bucci

**Seconded by:** Mr. Findlay

The LBRI Report on School Libraries Committee was approved as presented. Prior to the report's publication, Ms. Mellor will speak with the Department of Administration's Public Information Officer.

#### **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

No new business.

#### **IX. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

#### **X. FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next LBRI meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2019, from 4:15 – 5:45 p.m., at the Department of Administration, Conference Room B, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI.

The proposed 2019-2020 meeting schedule will be approved at the October meeting.

#### **XI. ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by:** Mr. Bucci

**Seconded by:** Mr. Findlay

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.