

**IDAHO BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
October 15, 2020
Idaho Commission for Libraries
325 W. State St., Boise, ID 83702**

The Idaho Board of Library Commissioners meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. MDT on Thursday, October 15, 2020. Participating in the Boise office were: Chair Janet Franklin, Commissioner John Held, and State Librarian Stephanie Bailey-White. Participating via Zoom: were Vice-Chair Michael Strickland and Commissioner Dave Mecham. Commissioner Pat Raffee was absent. Participating via Zoom from the Idaho Commission for Libraries were: Deputy State Librarian Tammy Hawley-House, Administrative Services Manager Roger Dubois, E-Services Program Supervisor Dylan Baker, and Talking Book Service Program Supervisor LeAnn Gelskey. Recording the meeting was Office Specialist II Josie Bradford. Also present via Zoom was Legislative Services Office Senior Analyst Janet Jessup.

I. Call to Order

A. Introductions – Introductions were made

B. Agenda Review / Approval – action item (board document 21-12)

M/S Mecham/Held moved that the agenda for this meeting be approved. Roll call vote:
Held: aye; Franklin: aye; Mecham: aye; Strickland: aye
Motion carried unanimously

C. Announcements

II. Public Comment

III. Minutes Review / Approval

A. August 13, 2020 meeting – action item (board document 21-11)

M/S Held/Strickland moved that the minutes of the August 13, 2020, Board of Library Commissioners meeting be approved as distributed in Board Document 21-11.
Motion carried unanimously

IV. Legislation - Policies – Rules

A. Legislation

B. Policies – E-Collection Development Policy – action item (board document 21-13)

Bailey-White was pleased to announce that the ICfL will be launching a new e-services program called the Idaho Digital E-Books Alliance (IDEA). This program will be discussed later in the meeting. Hawley-House is the lead on the project, and Bailey-White and Baker are also on the team. The policy as presented in Board Document 21-13 has been put together to assist with collection development.

Franklin stated that she was glad to see that the project was moving forward. Bailey-White explained that the policies presented before the board will also cover the LIL databases and will hopefully mitigate any issues that may arise with online databases and e-services.

Hawley-House stated that this policy, as well as the subsequent policy, must be passed for this program to move forward. She has a cartful of books ready for purchase and just needs the board's approval to move forward.

Mecham stated that good policies are essential, and these are good, solid policies that will back these services.

M/S Strickland/Mecham move that the Board of Commissioners adopt the E-Collection Development Policy as presented in Board Document 21-13.

Motion carried unanimously

B.2 E-Resources Borrowing Policy – action item (board document 21-14)

Bailey-White explained that this policy complements the other policy in terms of borrowing conditions.

Franklin wanted to verify that when it stated that no fines would accrue on electronic resources, it meant that the item would disappear from the device. Bailey-White said there are many benefits to electronic resources. There are no fines, items disappear when they expire, there are no germs, and you can access e-services anytime.

Mecham asked how residency would be verified. Bailey-White explained that the e-services team is still working on authentication procedures. They are looking into how they can assure that the 280,000 Idaho residents outside of tax-supported library districts can get access to e-services. Hawley-House explained that most Idahoans will be able to access these resources through their local library, and for those living outside of library districts, verification may need to come through a digital library card issued by the ICfL.

Bailey-White was enthusiastic about the fact that this will level the playing field for K-12 students who do not have e-book access through their school or public libraries. There are only about 20 library districts that offer e-books through OverDrive, so there is a real gap in services that can be addressed through these resources.

M/S Mecham/Held moved that the Board of Commissioners adopt the E-Resources Borrowing Policy as presented in Board Document 21-14.

Motion carried unanimously

B. Rules

V. Federal Fund

A. Finances

B. Program, Idaho Digital E-Books Alliance (IDEA) – information item (board document 21-15)

Bailey-White introduced the board to the “big IDEA,” which stands for the Idaho Digital E-Books Alliance. This new service was announced last week at the virtual Idaho Library Association conference. IDEA is a statewide partnership between the ICfL, Idaho public libraries, and Idaho school libraries, which includes a three-pronged approach that is outlined in the board document.

Bailey-White stated that the ICfL will launch the collection with some funds from the CARES Act, which were received through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Of those funds, there are about \$79,000 remaining. Additional LSTA funds will also be used to launch the collection. Other funding sources are also being explored.

Initially, 75 percent of the IDEA collection will be used for children, juvenile, and teen titles. Additional e-audio titles will be the focus of the remaining 25 percent. The demand for e-books and e-audiobooks has skyrocketed due to COVID-19. E-books and e-audio titles are often much more expensive purchases than traditional hardcover books, and there are several lending restrictions put in place by vendors that drive up costs.

Bailey-White stated that this is an alliance because it will require a lot of work from the ICfL staff to get in place reciprocal agreements between public libraries, school districts, and the ICfL. Every school district will need to have access to an OverDrive account to access these services. School libraries will be using SORA, a student reading app available through OverDrive. This app has a lot of additional features for teachers and students. There is a notes section, a section to ask questions, a look-up feature, dyslexic fonts, badges that can be awarded for achievement, and it tracks books students read. The initial service is free, with 170 titles that can be accessed immediately. Once school libraries sign a Public Library Connect Agreement with their public library, they will have access to that library’s juvenile and young adult collections, plus, they will be able to tap into the Commission’s IDEA collection. There are many curation controls through the school’s side, and it also retains student privacy.

Bailey-White further explained that there are 32 public libraries that do not offer OverDrive, but the ICfL is hoping to connect them with an existing consortium that can offer OverDrive access.

Hawley-House stated that one of the nice things about this plan is that students without a public library card can still access the public library IDEA collection through the SORA app. This is done with the school's information system, so parents do not have to sign up for library cards to access these services.

Held asked if Payette was part of a consortium. Hawley-House stated that they are part of the Idaho Digital Consortium that is already offering e-books, so they should be able to sign on with that consortium. Hawley-House is hopeful that once the Commission gets agreements from all the consortiums, the ICfL should be able to launch e-services right away.

November 1, 2020 is the kick-off date for getting consortiums on board and opening the collection.

C. LSTA grant applications received – information Item (board document 21-16)

Bailey-White shared this agenda item and explained that grants were awarded to the Ada Community Library and the Buhl Public Library to help employees take library science courses. Bailey-White explained that some of the Continuing Education grants for conferences decreased due to COVID-19.

D. CARES Broadband Funds – information Item (board document 21-17)

Bailey-White was excited to announce that the ICfL was awarded two \$1 million CARES grants from the Department of Commerce. These grants will be awarded to 49 libraries, and they will be used to extend Wi-Fi services beyond the library building. It also provides a six-year service agreement that covers state-mandated filtering costs.

The ICfL staff worked hard to secure these grants. It involved mapping all the libraries with a population of 10,000 or fewer. We have contracted with Ednetics, an Idaho-based company, to install new Wi-Fi equipment at all 49 libraries. Ednetics has been working every day to get this equipment installed. The work must be finished by mid-December in order to comply with grant regulations.

Bailey-White stated that the director in Payette recently gave a good example of how important extending Wi-Fi service is during COVID-19. He explained that people were coming to the library and holding devices against the window in order to apply for jobs, fill out unemployment forms, and complete homework. Now all these things can be

done more comfortably from a personal vehicle in the parking lot. It's not ideal, but crucial for many Idahoans right now.

Baker reported the ICfL was thrilled to be able to receive these grants. Staff called every eligible library that didn't respond quickly to the opportunity and encouraged them to apply. He explained that most libraries that did not apply already had good equipment. Every library that was awarded these funds is excited about the impact extended Wi-Fi service will have now and for years to come.

Held thanked Baker for his diligent work, and Franklin said that this is exciting news.

VI. General, Miscellaneous Revenue, & Library Services Improvement Funds

A. 1. Finances – FY2022 budget submission – information item (board document 21-18)

Bailey-White reported the good news that Governor Little approved the ICfL's request for enhancement funds. Although state agencies were not encouraged to submit a request for enhancements, revenue projections are above what was anticipated, and the state is in a good position financially. The ICfL will request \$307,000, approximately \$1 per Idaho student, in ongoing state funds to support the IDEA collection. The ICfL will not publicly announce the enhancement until the governor announces his budget at the beginning of January. Bailey-White explained that once this enhancement is announced, it would be great if the commissioners could send a thank you letter to the governor.

Bailey-White clarified that this enhancement still must be approved through the legislature, and this could pose some challenges; but there is a strong need for e-services, and the governor is a huge proponent of literacy.

To supplement the \$225,000 set aside to launch the IDEA collection, the ICfL hopes to garner support for the use of the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funding that hasn't already been earmarked for other projects. As demand grows for e-books, there may be a need to increase the annual funding for this program.

Held asked Dubois to clarify which column in Board Document 21-18 is state and which column is federal. Dubois explained that the first column is state, the second column is federal, and the third column is miscellaneous. Held pointed out that \$307,000 is between 5-10 percent of our budget, so that is a positive increase.

Franklin asked when the governor will announce the budget. Bailey-White stated that it will be announced in January. Franklin asked Bailey-White to inform the board when the announcement happens, so they can write thank you letters.

2. Finances – Purchase Request for ICfL Building Changes – action item (board document 21-19)

Bailey-White explained this request is to tap into the Library Services Improvement Fund (LSIF) to create two new offices in the ICfL building. Bailey-White explained that two new management positions have been added, the Partnerships and Programs Supervisor and the E-services Program Supervisor, and it is essential that supervisors have doors that can close in order to maintain confidentiality. The ICfL is planning to use \$10,000-\$20,000 that had been budgeted for travel to cover construction costs, but if more funding is necessary, LSIF funds may be needed to complete the project. Bailey-White explained that the ICfL does not like using these funds because they are not replenished, but this project is important, so supervisors have private areas to work and discuss confidential matters with staff.

M/S Held/Mecham moved that expenditures of up to \$10,000 be approved from the Library Services Improvement Fund for construction costs needed to provide two enclosed offices and an enclosed multi-use room.

Motion carried unanimously

B. Program

C. Kindergarten Readiness grant applications received – information item (board document 21-20)

Bailey-White said this is the third year the ICfL has offered the Kindergarten Readiness program. This is funded annually with \$60,000 from the agency's state appropriation. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this year's programs will be a little different. However, the ICfL is offering more flexibility with these funds, and there has been a healthy response from libraries with creative ideas of how to continue the program in the current environment.

Franklin asked for some examples of different ideas libraries have had for this program. Bailey-White explained that Latah has a program called Yay for Pre-K, which offers kits that parents can check out that include puzzles, games, books, and educational resources. Some libraries are offering online Kindergarten Readiness storytimes to prepare children for school. Other libraries are investing in equipment to provide quality online programming. Franklin stated that having online options with educational resources are great since so many young kids are using devices now and not all content is equally educational.

D. Idaho Learning Partnership grant applications received – information item (board document 21-20)

Bailey-White provided an overview of this program, which is a partnership between the ICfL, the State Board of Education, and the Lumina Foundation. The Lumina foundation granted the ICfL \$100,000 through the State Board of Education. This grant was offered to 10 rural Idaho libraries and provides \$1,000-\$8,000 in funding to assist adult learners in their communities. The ICfL was able to award grants to every library that applied, and the funds were used to enhance device checkout, hotspot checkout, and for computer upgrades. The public library in Orofino, for example, used the funds to upgrade computers in their recently remodeled adult learning center so they can offer programs such as college and career readiness classes and assistance for getting a GED. Nine of the 10 libraries that received grants are piloting Tutor.com. If this goes well, the ICfL may consider it for a statewide service on LiLI. Dubois is the lead on this program. His experience with veterans and ability to connect with this population make him an asset to this partnership.

Dubois said he is happy to be working on this partnership, believes it is an excellent program, and he has received a lot of positive feedback from the libraries. Glens Ferry Public Library reported that Tutor.com has been a great resource. It's simple, meets their needs, and has a vast number of benefits. Dubois stated it's been a pleasure to work with the State Board of Education and the Lumina Foundation to distribute funds that will help get adult learners back in the classroom.

E. School Library Access grant applications received – information item (board document 21-22)

Bailey-White explained that this document lists the school libraries that received School Library Access grants provided through state funds. The ICfL received fewer applications this year due to COVID-19. However, there was still quite a bit of money awarded, and what wasn't utilized was returned as part of the 5 percent holdback.

Franklin asked what the requirements are for this grant. Bailey-White explained that the funds must be used to support the library's collection. Part of the funds must be used on nonfiction titles for preschool through second grade. The grants also stipulate that students must be allowed to check out at least two books per week. In the past, many schools were not allowing younger students to check out books. However, research shows that having books at home for parents to read to kids vastly improves literacy skills, and school librarians are learning that younger students are just as likely as older children to return the books.

Bailey-White stressed that elementary school libraries have a lot of needs. When she was reviewing the applications, she found libraries that were dealing with books that were 65 years old. Some libraries do not have enough books for all their students, and a lot of the collections are worn out. These funds really help school libraries build and maintain their collections.

Mecham stated that these funds have made a huge difference in the Firth School District. He said it's not easy for districts to carve out funds for the school library since it's not mandated to have a line item in the budget for these expenses like many other areas that are required. If it was a state requirement, more schools would likely increase this line item.

VII. Operations Report

A. State Librarian and Management Team members (board document 21-23)

Bailey-White

Bailey-White reported that the Idaho Library Association (ILA) held their annual conference virtually last week. There were 140 registered participants, which was down from usual, but not bad considering the new format. The ICfL staff presented several sessions during the conference. Bailey-White presented two topics: "How the ICfL Supports the Role of Idaho Libraries Now and Post-Pandemic" and "ICfL and ILA: Who Does What and How They Can Help." The ILA conference was a great opportunity to talk about new services that the ICfL is offering and for new staff members to introduce themselves and their roles in helping the Idaho library community.

Bailey-White will also present on "the role of Idaho libraries today" at the Osher Institute next month.

Bailey-White stated that the ICfL's application to the IMLS for \$475,000 to help launch the statewide e-books program was declined. The IMLS received 1,701 applications, but they were only able to fund 68 proposals.

Hawley-House

Hawley-House reported that this month marks the 25th anniversary of the My First Books program. There will not be a huge celebration due to COVID-19, but she was pleased to report that 38 libraries will still be participating in the program this year.

She also reported that staff members have been diligently working to develop partnerships with Idaho tribal libraries and helping them apply for funding through the IMLS. Hawley-House was pleased to learn that the Shoshone Bannock tribe received a

second IMLS grant of \$150,000 to rebuild library services and infrastructure that was destroyed in a roof collapse in 2019. Hawley-House stated that thanks to the support, encouragement, and help with the application process, these libraries were able to obtain much needed funding to improve their library services.

Dubois

Dubois reported that funding in the first quarter of the fiscal year is running smoothly. State revenue is above projections. Dubois reported that he has transitioned out of supervising IT staff and handed it over to Baker.

Gelskey

Gelskey reported that this is her six-month anniversary with the ICfL, and she is pleased that the Talking Book Services (TBS) is making great strides in the state of Idaho. The Idaho TBS was one of the first in the nation to be able to transition locally recorded magazines into the new Scribe system, and other states are following the ICfL's lead. The TBS volunteers are beginning to return to the ICfL building, and we are thankful for the support. The TBS outreach programs will look a little different from last year. The ICfL staff will soon be sending out TBS packets to libraries. Gelskey is also looking into how the TBS can host a book club through a call-in telephone service. They are planning to launch this program during the spring of 2021.

Baker

Baker explained that he is really excited about his new position as the E-Services Program Supervisor. He had been busy getting his team together and getting them on board with the transitions ahead. He was pleased to be able to bring together staff who were helping support technology internally and externally, and he is hoping he will have a cohesive team that can pivot to support digital inclusion, remote services, and broadband services. Baker also reported that he has been hard at work trying to get the Department of Commerce grants out and services in place by the December 15 deadline.

B. Personnel – information item (board document 21-24)

Bailey-White explained that the ICfL is hoping to fill the Broadband Consultant position soon. It's a hard position to fill, but there are five applicants and three finalists, and interviews should begin soon.

Bailey-White stated that Kemp left some final remarks to the Commissioners in his report.

Bailey-White announced that the ICfL has offered the Partnerships & Programs Supervisor position to Amelia Valasek. She is currently the director at the Cascade Public Library and has worked for the state in workforce development and adult education with the Department of Education. She has the perfect background to step in and take on this role, and she is excited to return to state service.

Held asked where Valasek lived and how the transition to the ICfL will work. Bailey-White explained that she will begin in mid-November. She will have to sell her house and will likely be teleworking, as others in the agency are, for up to three days per week. Roger will be supervising her team in the interim before her start date.

VIII. Old Business

A. Additional information on elementary school library budgets – information item (board document 21-25)

In response to Held's request for a deeper dive into elementary school library budgets, School Library Consultant Jeannie Standal compiled a report with information from the SLA and Bucks for Books grant applications from the last three years. Bailey-White explained that on page two of the board document, there is a summary of book budgets for the 160 schools that applied; 30 percent of these schools had no book budget; 18 percent had a yearly budget of \$1-\$500; and only 12 percent of libraries had a yearly book budget that was greater than \$3,000.

Mecham stated that because of the SLA grant, his local school, A. W. Johnson Elementary, was able to leverage their budget amount to almost \$3,000. Assistance from this grant helped demonstrate the need for more books in the library and a larger selection of materials.

Franklin asked if the budgets were a result of lack of funding or lack of priority. Mecham stated that it is generally low priority, and it comes down to how badly principals want to fight for new books in their school. Often school administrators can leverage textbook money, if they can find resources for their libraries that support the curriculum.

Franklin was stunned to see how low the budgets are, and she wanted to know if donations are welcome. Mecham explained that schools and school districts do accept donations. He said the state has never included a line item for libraries. If the state did include libraries as a line item, they would have to be a priority. He further explained that the real problem is that there is no set funding for libraries, and whoever wants the library to have money must fight for it.

Bailey-White stated that providing new books to students correlates to higher reading scores and expanding collections and including nonfiction increases excitement and helps narrow the gender gap in reading. She thanked Mecham for sharing the news about how the SLA grants have been successful in Firth, and she is hopeful that they will be one the first districts to adopt the new e-book program.

A. Board appointment – information item

Mecham’s paperwork had been processed, and he is an official board member for the next five years. Bailey-White is glad he will continue his work with the ICfL.

IX. New Business

X. Strategic Issues

A.1. Topic(s) for next meeting

Franklin suggested that the board discuss how the ICfL can help get more books in the hands of kids. Bailey-White stated that, this year, one of the best services the ICfL can offer are e-books. The ICfL hasn’t had the funding or mechanisms to provide and sustain this service in the past. E-books are expensive, and schools and public libraries often don’t have the budget to meet the increased demand for this service. The ICfL is hoping to provide a robust e-collection.

Bailey-White stressed the importance of contacting legislators and letting them know the needs of school libraries in conjunction with literacy development. The e-book service the ICfL will be offering also complements other initiatives that are happening in the state, such as the distribution of devices in public schools and the expansion of broadband services. Bailey-White agreed that there is a need to provide an increased awareness about the lack of funding in school library budgets.

Held thanked Bailey-White and Standal for putting together the board document on the status of school library funding that provides a clear picture of the state of school libraries.

A.2. Overview of ICfL donations

Bailey-White explained that Raffee requested that the ICfL provide a report on miscellaneous revenue funds, including how they are used, and how these funds can be boosted. Dubois will collaborate with Bailey-White on this report.

Held wanted to make sure that we have a topic on ways board members can approach legislators to thank them for the enhancement funds.

Bailey-White explained that hopefully by January we will know for sure about the enhancements. There will also be an update on GEER funds, and hopefully we will be able to thank the governor for his support.

Strickland asked if there was currently a budget surplus in the state of Idaho. Bailey-White stated that there is a large surplus. The DFM report shows that Idaho is currently leading the nation in revenue.

Dubois reported that the state is currently \$69.1 million over projections for the first quarter, and the annual revenue is estimated to be \$500 million over projections. Strickland pointed out the contrast between the state surplus and school library budgets.

Jessup specified that in the context of a surplus, most funds are one-time funds, so it is important to distinguish that when asking for requests from the legislature. Bailey-White asked her about specifics regarding when the state budget is announced. Jessup explained that she is not sure what it will look like yet. They are currently putting together the JFAC team, and two members will not be returning. The state is also working out the specifics of how to make sure the legislature has the capacity to hold meetings in the safest way possible. Governor Little usually makes his State of the State address in the second week of January. Jessup advised the commission not to wait until the State of the State to contact legislators and stress the need to support libraries.

Strickland stated that a budget amount is temporary, but a book can affect a child forever.

Meeting Evaluation / Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m. MDT

Next meeting: December 3, 2020, virtual, at 10 a.m. MST