

**IDAHO BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS  
MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 12, 2021, 10:00 AM MT  
HELD VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE & AT THE  
IDAHO COMMISSION FOR LIBRARIES, BOISE, ID 83702**

The Idaho Board of Library Commissioners meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. MST on Friday, February 12, 2021. Participating in the Boise office were: Commissioner John Held and State Librarian Stephanie Bailey-White. Participating via Zoom: were Chair Janet Franklin, Vice-Chair Michael Strickland, Commissioner Dave Mecham, and Commissioner Pat Raffee. 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, Talking Book Service Program Supervisor LeAnn Gelskey, Partnerships and Programs Supervisor Amelia Valasek, Youth Services Library Consultant Staci Shaw, and Library Technology Consultant William Lamb. Recording the meeting was Office Specialist II Josie Bradford.

**I. Call to Order**

**A. Introductions** – Introductions were made. William Lamb, the new library technology consultant, introduced himself. He served as the former director of the Mountain Home Public Library for four years, where he also worked in information technology for more than 20 years. He is excited to be a part of the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL), and he looks forward to working with everyone. Amelia Valasek, the new partnerships and programs supervisor, also introduced herself. She is the former director of the Cascade Public Library, and she has previous work experience with the state of Idaho where she oversaw the Adult Education program. Amelia brings with her extensive experience in workforce development and connections with the Department of Labor, the Idaho Vocational Rehabilitation program, and the Idaho Commission for the Blind. She is excited to be a part of the ICfL and to bring her expertise and experience to Idaho libraries.

**B. Agenda Review / Approval – action item (board document 21-27)**

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

**C. Announcements**

**II. Public Comment**

**III. Minutes Review / Approval**

**A. October 15, 2020 meeting – action item (board document 21-26)** Raffee suggested an amendment on page 7 section D. to change devise to device.

**M/S Strickland/Held** moved that the amended minutes of the October 15, 2020, Board of Library Commissioners meeting be approved as distributed in Board Document 21-26.  
*Motion carried unanimously*

#### IV. Legislation - Policies – Rules

##### A. Legislation

##### B. Policies – TBS Loan Period – action item (board document 21-28)

Bailey-White explained the request to extend the Talking Book Service (TBS) loan period from five weeks to six months. This policy change is a result of the new Scribe system that allows multiple titles to be downloaded to the same cartridge. Held asked how many versions of any item can be downloaded at the same time to separate patrons. Gelskey explained that any title is available at any time, so there are no limits to how many items are available for check out and will not cause any restrictions for other Talking Books patrons.

**M/S Mecham/Raffee** moved that the loan period for Talking Book Services be extended to six months.

*Motion carried unanimously*

##### C. Rules

#### V. Federal Fund

##### A. Finances

##### 1. LSTA re-authorization – information item (board document 21-29)

Bailey-White reported that the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) allotment for the next fiscal year will increase by \$49,126 for a total of \$1,524,829. This year the ICfL will have to do a five-year LSTA evaluation. It usually costs about \$30,000 for an independent evaluator to come in and review LSTA programs and expenses. However, there will still be some money left over after this expense.

Bailey-White reported on two other possible LSTA appropriations that are currently in Congress. On Monday, the House Education and Labor Committee released its COVID-19 reconciliation spending package. The draft bill included \$200 million in funding for the LSTA, including a \$2 million dollar state minimum for COVID-19 response and recovery. Public Information Officer Donna Eggers is currently working on a letter of support for the Build America's Libraries Act, which would provide funding for library construction projects, remodeling, HVAC systems and other upgrades. They are hoping for an allotment of \$5 billion dollars which would be a minimum of \$10 million dollars per state if approved.

##### 2. LSTA grant applications received – information item (board document 21-30)

Bailey-White explained this report outlines the Continuing Education grants that were awarded as well as the Welcoming Libraries grants and the Best Practices grants. The Best Practices grants are tied to a document available on the ICfL website that libraries and board members can go over together to help them identify areas for improvement. Some of the items that were requested in the Best

Practices grants, such as better signage, were not allowable expenses for LSTA funds, but the ICfL was able to utilize some state funds to make these improvements. Held asked if anyone who applied for the Welcoming Libraries or the Best Practices grants was denied. Bailey-White stated that the ICfL was able to fund everyone who applied this year.

## VI. General, Miscellaneous Revenue, & Library Services Improvement Funds (LSIF)

### A. Finances

#### 1. LSIF funds received – action item (board document 21-31)

Bailey-White noted that \$40,000 from the STEM Action Center was recently awarded to support the Summer STEM from your Library program, which will provide up to 65 libraries with \$500 mini-grants for STEM outreach programming. The Stem Action Center has funded many of our proposals throughout the years, and the ICfL has a strong partnership with them. The ICfL needs the board's support to approve the expenditure of these funds.

Bailey-White was pleasantly surprised by a call from the Idaho Scottish Rite Foundation with a donation of \$15,000 intended to provide approximately 7,000 books for summer reading programs. Staff from the ICfL were able to meet with two representatives from this group, give them a tour of the facility, and explain the ICfL's role in providing support for early literacy and summer reading in Idaho libraries. Libraries will be very pleased to have additional summer reading books that can be used for outreach opportunities and incentives.

The third item on the document is a request for funding from the Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (BUUF). They had heard about the Welcoming Libraries program and they were very interested in supporting the ICfL's efforts to create a welcoming library environment for all patrons. The ICfL staff worked with them to put together a video proposal for a Libraries Welcome All project. We haven't heard back if the BUUF plans to award these funds, but we are pleased by their interest in supporting Idaho libraries.

As outlined in Idaho Code, Board approval is required for all expenditures from LSIF.

**M/S Mecham/Held** moved that expenditure of up to \$65,500 from the Library Services Improvement Fund be approved for implementation of projects outlined in Board Document 21-31.

*Motion carried unanimously*

#### 2. General Funds report – information item

This item was skipped over on the agenda, but Dubois covered it in the operations report.

### B. Program

**C. Bucks for Books report – information item (board document 21-32)**

Bailey-White explained this is the second year the ICfL has partnered with the Idaho Lottery Commission on the Bucks for Books program. This year the funding was increased from \$30,000 to \$40,000, and this report shows which libraries benefited from those funds. Held suggested that the location of each school library be included in future reports, and Bailey-White stated that information can be provided moving forward. Franklin asked for clarification about the grant parameters. Bailey-White explained that these grants are similar to the School Library Access (SLA) grants. Libraries need to write a good needs statement and report on their collection budget. This information is passed through a committee that uses a rubric to determine who gets awarded. The top libraries get the award based on the amount of grant funds available. Raffee asked if the ICfL provided feedback to libraries that were denied grants. Bailey-White stated that she will have to check and get back to the board about whether feedback is given to libraries, since this is a newer process.

**VII. Operations Report – information item****A. Management Team members – information item (board document 21-33)****Bailey-White**

Bailey-White reported that the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC) Budget meeting was held January 11.

Bailey-White has been working with Valasek, Baker, and the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation to explore the possibility of a new telehealth pilot program in rural Idaho libraries. The ICfL is excited to see where this project will go and what opportunities it will provide for rural residents.

Next week Bailey-White will present at two regional superintendent's meeting to discuss the Idaho Digital E-Book Alliance, what it will bring to schools, and how schools can promote this service.

The ICfL continues to work toward improving customer and staff safety and will continue to look at state and health district recommendations to make sure everyone is as safe as possible during the pandemic. There have been no reported cases of COVID-19 among staff members, and Bailey-White is hopeful vaccinations will happen soon.

Held asked what the telehealth program would entail. Bailey-White replied that not many libraries are currently providing telehealth services nationwide. The ICfL staff looked for models around the country and found very few. The idea behind this telehealth project is that libraries will work with healthcare providers to provide private spaces with video conferencing capacity, good lighting, or perhaps laptops and hotspots to rural libraries that are farther than a 45-minute drive to a larger community and serve a community of fewer than 10,000 people. The ICfL is very interested to see if this small pilot program will meet the needs of communities and excited that Idaho may be among

the first states in the nation to provide these services.

Mecham asked if the telehealth program would be free or a pay per use service. Bailey-White replied that it will be a sustainable model that works with healthcare providers, and costs will be picked up through regular insurance or Medicaid. Strickland stated that the Terry Reilly Health Clinic had a healthcare provider on site at the Nampa Public Library several times a week, and it's been a popular and beneficial program for the community. He suggested that if the pilot program works, it could be expanded to a hybrid model with healthcare providers on site. Bailey-White offered to share some summary notes that she put together for the Blue Cross of Idaho. It includes some of the healthcare initiatives that are already being implemented at libraries around the state. She will get the summary report together post meeting and send it to the board.

### **Hawley-House**

Hawley-House is working with staff at the ICfL to gear up for the spring and summer months. The Idaho Digital E-book Alliance (IDEA) began in November. There are now 31 school districts participating in the program. Baker put together a video to help school districts learn how to add the collection to the Sora app. So far, 2,900 items have checked out, and this program is catching on and taking off. Hawley-House and Baker are working on getting more promotional materials out to schools and libraries, as well as how-to guides. There are two public libraries and one public library consortium that have joined the alliance and will be able to share their materials and access the IDEA collection through their public libraries.

Niche Academy is a new tool the ICfL is using to bring professional development opportunities to the library community. It offers library-specific courses and tutorials. The ICfL has purchased a statewide license to make these resources freely available to all library staff, volunteers, and trustees. Staff at the ICfL have embraced this e-learning opportunity to create tutorials that can be accessed remotely. They have also reached out to other state and public libraries to utilize content they have created to make it more accessible by the Idaho library community. Hawley-House said she is proud of the ICfL staff for all that has been accomplished this year. The ICfL services have continued to change and evolve, and we have a created capacity to reach more people and more libraries.

Held asked for an update on the 32 libraries that did not offer OverDrive and were not able to access the IDEA collection. Hawley-House stated that about six or seven of those libraries found a way to offer OverDrive with facilitation from the ICfL. Many libraries saw their funding shift during the pandemic, and the ICfL has been able to connect many of them to funding offered through the Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation to help them with the first year start up costs. Hawley-House explained that there is an ongoing cost for public libraries to be a part of OverDrive, and it is usually based on a sliding scale determined by population and the service area. Many Idaho libraries are part of a consortium, so they can pool their resources and share OverDrive items.

Hawley-House told Raffee to keep an eye out in her community for a Laundromat Literacy program. Raffee said she thought this program had been postponed due to COVID-19. Hawley-House explained that it was postponed in many libraries, and the ICfL wasn't able to roll it out the way they wanted to; however, it was left up to individual libraries as to whether or not they wanted to implement it, and several libraries were still interested in offering the program with safety modifications in place. Projects Coordinator Kristina Taylor and Youth Services Consultant Staci Shaw worked with the libraries that did want to introduce the program to reimagine different types of engagement that was safe and socially distanced, such as story walks. Hawley-House is hoping that next year the ICfL will have a better idea of how to move forward with this program.

### **Dubois**

Bailey-White asked Dubois to cover the general fund report since it had been skipped. Dubois reported that the general fund was significantly reduced this year. There was a reduction of 2% at the beginning of the year and an additional 5% percent through the governor's holdback, which meant that there was a significantly lower budget than in previous years. However, this year's state revenue report came in at \$263.4 million dollars over projections, and the current estimate is that the state will be \$600 million over projections by the end of the fiscal year. This will drive a lot of the budget decisions moving forward. Dubois reported that the JFAC committee approved a 2% Change in Employee Compensation (CEC), and the 5% holdback will be restored. This will boost our general fund expenditures next year.

There are two construction projects that are underway to create additional office space in the ICfL building. This project will cost about \$16,000 and will come out of general funds. Additional funding from the LSIF, as approved by the board in an earlier meeting, will not need to be used. In the spring, two ADA-compliant restrooms will be built upstairs and downstairs. This project will cost approximately \$100,000 and will come out of the state's facilities fund rather than the ICfL budget.

Dubois was happy to report that fiscal year 2022 will start off well, considering the state has such a large surplus. He anticipates that pay raises and the enhancement for the e-books and e-audiobooks will move forward. Strickland asked Dubois to define CEC. Dubois explained that it stands for change in employee compensation which are ongoing pay raises that must be approved by the legislators each year. Last year, the 2% CEC was passed. However, it was not implemented by the governor due to COVID-19. The Governor is working with the legislature to try to make up for that this year and next. Dubois further explained that the ICfL has identified a shipping and materials position that can be eliminated due to a retirement. The new Scribe system used by the Talking Book Service has made this position obsolete and will bring our FTE federally funded positions down by one, if approved.

**Gelskey**

Gelskey reported the Talking Book staff have been able to benefit from virtual learning opportunities during COVID-19. They have been able to participate in the National Library Service (NLS) virtual conference, the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) training, and they are currently enrolled in an introductory course to cataloging through the Library Juice Academy. Gelskey is thankful for Bailey-White and the Commission's support for her staff, and she is pleased that the ICfL offered these professional development opportunities and support throughout this difficult year.

Gelskey was also excited to report that the TBS staff just began their outreach program to public libraries. Packets have gone out to public library directors with flyers, bookmarks, and promotional materials. The TBS staff will also be presenting an Info2Go! Webinar on February 22 about what they do and how they support Idaho residents.

**Baker**

Baker reported that it has been a busy year. The two \$1 million grants from the Department of Commerce for the Rural Libraries Connecting Idahoans via Wi-Fi Hotspots Program were awarded and that funding has been expended. Baker is pleased with how that project turned out. Forty-seven public libraries benefited from those funds with expanded Wi-Fi coverage and a six-year service contract. The program was featured in a national Pew Research Center Issue Brief and an Associated Press news article, and libraries that participated in this program will benefit for years to come. This project also cemented the ICfL's partnership with the Department of Commerce. They were pleased with the project and believe it could be a model that could be replicated with additional libraries as more funds become available.

The ICfL hired a new library technology consultant. William Lamb is onboarding and getting acquainted with the position requirements. Baker is hopeful he will be able to take over more broadband responsibilities soon.

David Harrell, the IT Operations and Support Technician, has led a project to migrate staff files from a shared network drive to Microsoft Office 365 SharePoint storage. This is a modern cloud storage solution that is accessible outside the office and has become necessary with the transition to remote work.

Ben Bibikov, the ICfL's web designer and Doug Baker, the web developer, have been looking into a new web hosting platform that will save the commission money and improve the website's speed and performance. The current plan is to move over the ICfL's main webpage, followed by our other websites in a staggered fashion over the course of a year.

Baker mentioned that if board members were interested, they could be set up to access to the IDEA collection so they could test it to see what it looks like and what is available. The board members all agreed that they would be very interested in having access.



Raffee asked how the six years of network support and licensing funding that was provided with the Rural Libraries Connecting Idahoans via Wi-Fi Hotspots program would be addressed after the contract was up and how the ICfL will create an expectation that trustees will need to provide extended financial support. Baker explained that the federally funded E-rate program would pay a significant amount of the costs, and the ICfL would make sure to help them access this funding. Raffee asked if Baker's team collaborated with the library consultants, particularly Emily Sitz and Kevin Tomlinson, to make sure that the libraries are on board, and know what they need to do to make sure this service continues and is at the forefront of library planning. Baker replied that his team has been working closely with Sitz and Tomlinson, and it is the ICfL's goal to make funding this process as easy as possible for libraries.

### **Valasek**

Valasek is excited to be a part of the ICfL. Everyone at the Commission has made it an easy transition, and Valasek is looking forward to helping the Commission work toward the strategic goals that it has in place.

Valasek reported that the Summer Internship grant applications went out February 1. This is the third year the ICfL has offered this grant. This year, the focus will shift to be less about partnerships and more about mentorship and library careers. Valasek is hoping to have two or three meetings with the cohort of interns, discussing topics such as library careers, career exploration, and skill development. She is hoping that she can get the Department of Labor in on these meetings. Valasek also hopes to work with libraries to talk about what it means to be a good mentor, the process of mentorship, and how they can be intentional and strategic in this process.

Valasek is also working on relaunching the Let's Talk About It Program. Surveys were sent out to scholars and library staff who have participated in the past, exploring new ways to offer the program, how to expand the program to a wider audience, and how the ICfL can add new themes and update content and books related to older themes.

Valasek has also plugged into the Workforce Development system, and she is in the process of making meaningful connections, finding ways that workforce development fits into what libraries are already doing, and exploring how libraries can partner with these groups to bring new initiatives and opportunities to their communities.

### **B. Personnel – information item (board document 21-34)**

Bailey-White explained that she is waiting for a response from the Legislative Services Office (LSO) on the ICfL's request to eliminate a shipping and receiving material handler position. This would reduce the federally funded positions in the agency by one. It would also save the ICfL the cost of benefits since agencies are still required to pay benefits even if the position is not filled. This benefit cost is about \$11,500, and agency staff do not anticipate needing to fill the position due to the reduction in shipping with



the new Scribe system. An Office Services Supervisor position is also vacant, and the ICfL staff will evaluate it this year as they monitor changes in the agency's restructuring.

**C. Process for State Librarian evaluation – discussion**

Franklin appointed Raffee and Strickland to the State Librarian Evaluation committee. This evaluation will be included on the April agenda. Raffee asked Bailey-White to give the evaluation committee a summary of her relevant activities with the ICfL since her last evaluation.

**VIII. Old Business**

**A. Revisit Board Tour plans – discussion**

Bailey-White explained that the fall board tour had been postponed until spring. However, since the ICfL's in-person meetings have been postponed until July, she recommended that the board postpone the tour until next fall. Franklin agreed that was a good idea and is hopeful that by then people will feel comfortable about having an in-person tour. The tour had originally been planned to take place in the southwestern part of Idaho, and it was agreed to keep it in the same location. Deputy State Librarian Hawley-House will take the lead on planning the tour and it will be scheduled in October.

**IX. New Business**

**A. Idaho Preschool Grant information – information item (board document 21-35)**

Bailey-White invited Youth Services Consultant Staci Shaw to attend the board meeting so she could answer any questions about the Idaho Preschool grant. Bailey-White explained that many partners have worked for years to get additional federal preschool funding. This grant, submitted by the Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children (Idaho AEYC), will create a partnership between several early childhood educational (ECE) organizations and stakeholders to strengthen ECE services and opportunities across the state. As outlined in board document 21-35, the state got an initial \$3 million dollar grant to do a needs assessment and for planning and it is receiving an additional \$6 million dollars to implement plans over three years.

Shaw pointed out that in order to apply for the federal grants, states had to have approval from the governor. The ICfL is grateful that Governor Little gave approval last year for the first round of funding, approved additional funding this year, and will hopefully continue his support in the future.

Held asked where activities three and four, which are maximizing parent and family knowledge and best practices for early childhood, fall on the timeline. Shaw explained that a statewide campaign is beginning this year that will offer professional development throughout the year through the Step Up Idaho campaign. Libraries will be able to take part in these opportunities, and there will be a statewide messaging campaign that libraries will support.

Mecham was pleased by this news. He stated that one of Idaho's biggest problems with literacy is that it is not introduced before children start school, and this will help lay the foundation needed to build strong literacy skills.

Shaw explained the model of the preschool collaboratives that are now being developed will be extended to more communities. The IAEYC website shows the current collaboratives. She hopes each collaborative will have a library representative on the advisory boards. Shaw is hopeful that this collaborative model will morph into something that could be used to create sustain and improve ECE in communities with coalitions of early childhood educators, libraries, healthcare providers, teachers, businesses, and policy holders.

Mecham stated that he is interested to see what outreach programs are being developed to reach children who are not in preschools, since it is one of the hardest populations to reach.

## **X. Strategic Issues**

### **A. ICfL Donations Report – discussion (board document 21-36)**

Bailey-White explained that this report was prepared to be a deeper dive into the ICfL donations for the board. There are two accounts that are used for the donations and grants that are received. There is the Library Services Improvement Fund (LSIF) that commissioners must approve expenditures from. There is also the Miscellaneous Revenue fund, which is a cash-based fund that is appropriated through the legislative process. Most of the ICfL donations and small grants that will go out quickly go into this account. The legislature approves the appropriated amount on this account. This year it is \$70,000. Expenditures in the fund are approved by the Division of Financial Management (DFM) and legislature when they are in session, so the ICfL must ask permission from them to spend funds from that account.

The board had asked how the ICfL staff decide which fund to use for donations and grants. Bailey-White explained that if it is a large amount, or will remain in the account for several months, they use the LSIF account because it accrues interest. It also ensures that board members are looped in on spending decisions.

The board had also asked how the ICfL promotes the ability to accept donation and what the five-year trend looked like. Bailey-White explained that donations are promoted primarily through the ICfL website and TBS program. The TBS program provide envelopes for donations in promotional calendars. Since they started doing this, there has been a significant increase in donations. The link on the ICfL website allows donations to be made electronically. Bailey-White stated that there is room for improvement in soliciting donations.

Raffee pointed out that she didn't see the Scottish Rights donation of \$15,000 in the report. Bailey-White explained that this report was prepared before the money came in.

Raffee also said the report lacked more specific information about where donations or grants were from. Bailey-White explained that many donations come from individuals and memorials, which are acknowledged in the TBS newsletters, and agreed that there is not a lot of detail in the report.

Raffee suggested that the report be updated and the chart be revised to provide a separate column that specifies who the donor, the grantor, and/or organization is that provided the funds. This would help the ICfL identify organizations or individuals who could be potential donors in the future. Dubois said it is possible to update the reports with any information the board needs.

Raffee stated the report shows where staff spends the money, but she would like more information on where the money is coming from and who the ICfL should be soliciting. Mecham stated that he'd like to know the organization that donates and the primary contact person. Held asked how far back the report should go. The board agreed that 2014 would be a good start. Dubois stated that he can go back as far as 2011, but he's not sure what the ICfL will be able to access after the new LUMA state accounting process begins. He also stated that he can list the organization, the individual, and the specific dollar amount, but there may be some issues with the TBS donation portion since a lot of those donations are from individuals, and it would vastly increase the size of the report. Franklin suggested that small donations just go under a column titled individual donation or memorial.

Raffee was also curious about a TBS patron who had left one-third of her estate to the Commission and requested an update on the status of that donation. Dubois stated that the estate is currently in probate, but when the donation comes in, it will go under the TBS column as an individual donation. Raffee would also like a column for this donation so that all donations could be quantified with more details for board members.

## **B. Topic(s) for next meeting – discussion**

Raffee would like to continue discussions with an updated ICfL Donations Report.

Franklin would like to have a discussion on how to get more books into elementary libraries. Bailey-White replied that she would like to continue this discussion as well and talk about how the ICfL can get more elementary libraries signed up for e-books through the IDEA collection.

Raffee stated that when Patrick Bodily left, the 2019 statistics book was not disseminated to the board. Bailey-White explained that the ICfL did not print hard copies of the statistics this year, but they are available online. Raffee stated that she would like a printed version and Bailey-White agreed to send her one.

Raffee would like a report on the ICfL's staff morale. There have been some large projects this year, there's a lot of creativity, and a lot of changes that have taken place

with COVID-19, and she would like to know how this has affected the morale and camaraderie of the ICfL staff. Bailey-White stated that she would put a report together on this topic.

Bailey-White explained that she would also like to have a discussion on digital equity and inclusion. This is an area the ICfL will be exploring with Idaho library community and it is likely that components of digital inclusion and digital equity will be included in the next version of the LSTA strategic plan.

**Meeting evaluation / Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m. MST**

Next meeting: Thursday, April 8, 2021 at 10 a.m. MDT via Zoom. Raffee will email Strickland about next steps for the state librarian evaluation.