

**IDAHO BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS  
MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 8, 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 10:20 a.m. MST on Friday, April 8, 2021. Participating in the Boise office were Chair Janet Franklin and State Librarian Stephanie Bailey-White. Participating via Zoom were Vice-Chair Michael Strickland, Commissioners John Held, Dave Mecham, and 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, and Financial Specialist Katy Place. Also joining the meeting was Division of Financial Management Analyst Krissy Veseth. Recording the meeting was Office Specialist II Josie Bradford.

**I. Call to Order**

**A. Introductions** – Introductions were made and Bailey-White stated that the meeting is being recorded for minute-taking purposes only. All recordings will be deleted after minutes have been approved.

This will ensure that there is a clear standardized system for recording and deleting of Zoom meetings, and it will be part of the announcements moving forward.

**B. Agenda Review / Approval – action item (board document 21-38)**

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

*Motion carried unanimously.*

C. Announcements

**II. Public Comment - none**

**III. Minutes Review / Approval**

**A. February 12, 2021 meeting**

**M/S Held/Mecham** moved that the minutes of the February 12, 2021, Board of Library Commissioners meeting be approved as distributed in Board Document 21-37.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**IV. Legislation - Policies – Rules**

A. Legislation

B. Policies

C. Rules

**V. Federal Fund**

**A. Finances – FY2021 Object Transfers – action Item (board document 21-39)**

Bailey-White explained that this is a typical request that is usually made toward the end of the fiscal year for the approval of object transfers. The ICfL is requesting permission to move part or all the unexpended personnel spending authority to operating, and to move part of all of the unexpended operating spending authority to Trustee and Benefits (T&B) to implement the year-end spending plan.

Dubois stated that this supports the year-end spending plan and it requires board approval. After that it is sent to the Division of Financial Management (DFM) for approval. The ICfL is hoping to have some salary savings that can be transferred to operating to support security upgrades to the ICfL building.

**M/S Held/Raffee** moved that the FY2021 federal fund appropriation be adjusted by transferring part or all of the unexpended personnel funds to operating and transferring part of all of the unexpended operating funds to Trustee and Benefits if needed to implement the year-end spending plan.

*Motion Carried Unanimously*

**B. Program – American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 – (board document 21-40)**

Bailey-White reported the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 designates \$200 million in pandemic response funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Idaho's allotment of approximately \$2.4 million will be used to help support Idaho libraries' efforts to keep students learning and adults earning.

These funds will need to be spent by September 30, 2022. The ICfL cannot start spending the funds until after July 1, 2021, pending legislative approval. Unfortunately, this means the legislature will have to reopen the ICfL budget which was already passed through the Idaho House and Senate.

The preliminary plan for the ARPA funds is to award the bulk of the money to multi-type libraries to support student learning and keep adults earning. This is the first time the ICfL will be able to award this type of money to support one-time programs, equipment, and services. This one-time boost in funding will benefit the state for years to come, and we are looking forward to approval from the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC) and House and Senate. The ICfL is already working on grant applications, and once authority has been granted, the funds will be awarded to libraries as soon as possible after July 1, 2021.

Mecham asked if there was a stipulation in federal legislation that says that these funds are for use to support and not supplant the budget. Bailey-White said the legislature also asked about that. She is hopeful that JFAC will not take back some of the funding that has already been appropriated. Bailey-White explained that she will have to double check the wording, but she believes the funding can be used to support library operations through sub-grants, and those are not intended to supplant existing funds, so it may be difficult for libraries to figure out how to shift funds. The ICfL is planning on expanding current statewide programs, and once the budget is back to its typical state,

those programs will return to what they look like now. The allowable expenses for the ARPA funds are broad, and there are a lot of opportunities that libraries can take advantage of. However, the funds cannot be used for construction or general marketing of libraries.

Bailey-White believes this is a great opportunity for the Idaho library community. She said the ICfL may need additional support from commissioners and encouraged them to contact their legislators to talk about how these funds could benefit Idahoans and the Idaho library community. The Idaho Library Association will also likely support the new budget bill. Franklin asked Bailey-White when commissioners should contact their legislators. Bailey-White replied that any time soon would be good. This bill is on the JFAC agenda for April 9 or the subsequent days if they need more time to get through agendas. Bailey-White does expect some opposition to the new budget. The original budget bill passed through the House and Senate easily, but that has not been the case for many state agencies this session.

### **C. Grants – LSTA Applications Received – (board document 21-41)**

Bailey-White stated the ICfL awarded one Continuing Education (CE) grant from the Lewiston City Library for a Management of Technology course since the last board meeting. Franklin asked if the ICfL is anticipating spending the remaining balance in the account. Bailey-White said some of the federal funds have carry-over authority, so the ICfL will be looking into how those funds can be shifted and utilized in the next fiscal year.

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

**A. Finances – 1. Report on current budget situation** – Bailey-White said this was reported on as part of the ARPA agenda item.

### **2. Summary of next FY appropriation compared to current year – (board document 21-42)**

Bailey-White reported this document shows the current FY22 budget in comparison with the FY21 budget. The FY21 holdback is reflected in this chart, and those funds will be restored in FY22. \$307,000 requested in ongoing state funds to support the Idaho Digital E-book Alliance (IDEA) was awarded in Federal CARES Act funds and will come out of the governor's discretionary CARES funds. The ICfL was happy to see this enhancement approved. Funds will be used on collection development for K-12 e-books. This was only approved as one-time funding, and the ICfL may need to ask for this enhancement again in FY23. There are about 24 libraries that still are not offering e-books, and the ICfL is encouraging them to get connected with consortiums to offer these services to their patrons.

### **3. FY21 General Object Transfer – (board document 21-43)**

Dubois explained this transfer is similar to the federal object transfer. The ICfL will have salary savings with the state general appropriations. Board support is needed to transfer these funds if the need arises.

**M/S Mecham/Raffee** moved that the FY21 state general fund appropriation be adjusted by transferring part or all of the unexpended personnel funds to operating and transferring part or all

of any unexpended operating funds to Trustee and Benefits if needed to implement the year-end spending plan. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**B. Program**

**C. Grants – Libraries and Telehealth – (board document 21-44)**

Bailey-White was pleased to announce the ICfL received \$30,000 from the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation to launch a telehealth pilot program with two libraries in Clearwater County. The ICfL has been meeting with Blue Cross and the directors from libraries in Orofino and Weippe, and both partners are excited to get this program up and running. This program will help rural Idaho residents get some of the medical care they need without having to drive long distances for appointments. The two libraries selected by the Foundation will use the funding to purchase necessary technology and equipment required for telehealth appointment to take place at these public facilities. \$10,000 was also awarded to the ICfL to help with site visits and marketing. The Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation is interested in expanding these programs if they are successful.

In the last meeting the board approved spending of up to \$10,000 from the Boise Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. This organization exceeded their fundraising goals by \$5,000, so the ICfL is asking to bump up this spending permission to \$15,000.

**M/S Held/ Strickland** moved that expenditure of up to \$35,000 from the Library Services Improvement Fund be approved for implementation of projects as outlined in Board Document 21-44. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**VII. Operations Report**

**A. Management Team members' reports – information item (board document 21-45)**

**Bailey-White** reported that most of her time has been spent focused on how to use the ARPA funds, what the grant process will look like, how subgrants will be handled, and how the ICfL will use the funds to support operating and personnel at the Commission for the next fiscal year.

There will be a forum for library directors who serve populations of over 10,000 scheduled for May 5. The ICfL will use this opportunity to talk about the ARPA funds and how libraries can use them and build relationships with these directors.

Next week Bailey-White will provide the closing keynote at the end of the annual ILA conference. She is hoping to share good news about the ARPA funds and how the Idaho library community can utilize funds to address the five elements of digital inclusion and digital equity.

Raffee asked if commissioners would be able to observe the May 5 online forum. Bailey-White said she would be happy to send them an invite for the forum. She also invited the commissioners to attend the ILA conference on April 16.

**Hawley-House** reported that on June 18 there will be a three-hour Trustee Connections meeting,

hosted by the ICfL and Montana State Library. Hawley-House said she would send an invite and encouraged the board to save the date.

Baker and Hawley-House are still working on developing the IDEA (Idaho Digital E-book Alliance) connections. There are currently 13 public libraries and 43 school districts making up the alliance. Hawley-House reported that two of the largest library consortiums have joined the IDEA, and they are just waiting on OverDrive access to get connected. Hawley-House stated that her team has been busy working on many projects outlined in the report, and she is currently reviewing the strategic plan and soliciting input from staff on projects and visions the ICfL could be working on in the next five years. This information will be incorporated in a document for the next board meeting.

**Dubois** said the end of the fiscal year is approaching. The ICfL is working on finalizing the Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) plan. Dubois also reported that Luma has been delayed, but the ICfL should find out later this month when the new start date will be. There are a lot of moving parts with the Luma project, but it is moving forward.

The ICfL is also looking into reclassifying a vacant position that can hopefully be funded with ARPA funds. This will temporarily help the ICfL manage the workload associated with utilizing these funds.

Dubois also reported that the two construction projects in the ICfL building have been completed. There is one other construction project for ADA-compliant restrooms that will begin later this year. The ICfL is also looking into security improvements such as automatically closing doors, key passes, and security cameras. Hopefully the ICfL can fund some of these projects with the year-end funds.

Dubois also announced that he will be transitioning and will be moving to Mississippi to be closer to family. He said he plans on staying with the ICfL until at least the end of the fiscal year, and he hopes he can get everyone set up so that the transition to Luma is as smooth as possible.

The board congratulated Dubois, and Bailey-White expressed appreciation for everything Dubois has done over the last ten years for the commission. She is hopeful there will be some overlap in the position and Dubois will be able to assist with training his replacement.

**Gelskey** reported that the National Library Service (NLS) has expanded the list of professions that can certify the eligibility of applications for those with reading disabilities to include reading specialists, educators, school psychologists, and librarians. She is hoping that this will encourage more people to take advantage of Talking Book Services (TBS).

Gelskey also reported that it is time to distribute the TBS patron satisfaction survey. There was a link in the last newsletter and patrons can complete the survey online or on the phone with a Customer Service Representative (CSR). The deadline for the survey is June 15. Gelskey will provide a full report on the survey findings at the August board meeting.

Gelskey explained that her team is working on updating the TBS webpage. They have added a donations button to the site and will revamp the TBS Advisory Committee page next.

Mecham asked what the certification process was for the TBS. Gelskey explained that on the application there is a space for someone to certify a disability. The updated application will include all professionals the NLS has deemed eligible to certify a reading disability.

Held asked how Gelskey's presentations went to the VA and the Federation for the Blind, Gelskey stated that they went very well. They are good groups to work with, and they are more aware of what the TBS has to offer and how to access these services.

Bailey-White mentioned that once there is approval to spend ARPA funds, the TBS will reach out to assisted living facilities with a public relations campaign about our services, as well other services such as e-books and large print books from their libraries, and encourage these Idahoans, who have been isolated for the past year, to take advantage of these resources.

**Baker** was pleased to report the ICfL made it through another E-rate application season with a record number of library participants. Baker has been working with the new Library Technology Consultant William Lamb to sign up new libraries for this program. There are now 73 Idaho libraries that participate in the E-rate program, and with the support of the Education Opportunity Resource Act (EOR), these libraries are getting 100% of their broadband costs covered.

Baker stated that in addition to the \$2.4 million in ARPA funds the ICfL is receiving, there may be some additional funding sources through ARPA that will be available to help broadband connectivity costs, and Baker and his team will be gathering as much information as possible to see how libraries can take advantage of these additional funds.

**Valasek** has been spending her time working with her team, building trust, and developing supervisory functions. She is excited to be on the team that is heading up the ARPA grants. Valasek has done a lot of grant work in previous jobs and she is excited to be a part of this initiative.

The summer internship grant will be kicking off at the end of April, and Valasek will be working with libraries to help them successfully work with summer interns.

Valasek also hosted a theme development committee meeting with the Idaho Humanities Council (IHC), librarians, and scholars. This committee worked on developing two new themes for the Let's Talk About It (LTAI) program. The LTAI theme development committee also worked on refreshing existing themes, and Valasek is hopeful that the ICfL will be able open applications for the program to public libraries in June and launch the program in October.

Franklin asked which libraries received the summer intern grant. Valasek replied that there were eight libraries, several of whom had applied before. Since there was funding for eight grants, everyone who applied received a grant. Valasek did not have the names of the libraries handy, but Hawley-House was able to post them in the chat. They included McCall Public Library, Mountain Home Public Library, Valley of the Tetons District Library, Cascade Public Library, Challis Public Library, Donnelly Library District, Emmett Public Library, and Middleton Public Library.

**B. Personnel – (board document 21-46)**

Bailey-White stated that Office Specialist II Jessica Rodriguez has accepted another position. The ICfL will be sad to see her move on, but happy for her to move forward with her career. Bailey-White stated that this position is hard to retain due to the pay scale.

The ICfL is looking into some temporary hires to assist with the ARPA funds if they are awarded. There is already someone the ICfL has in mind to come in up to 10 hours a week to help with the IDEA collection development.

The ICfL is also working on a reclassification process for the vacant materials handler position. Hopefully, this position can be reclassified to include a bicultural/bilingual project coordinator to assist with outreach to the Latino population. This population is often underserved and comprises 19% of the student population in Idaho. To reach Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) goals and ensure more students become proficient readers by third grade, it is important to do more outreach to this population. This would be a full-time, limited-service hire, but it may be possible to utilize LSTA funds post-ARPA funding to make this position permanent.

The ICfL is also looking at other staffing areas that can be enhanced so staff are not stretched too thin with the anticipated upcoming projects.

**C. Other**

**VIII. New Business**

**A. FY2021 Board meeting dates – (board document 21-47)**

Bailey-White presented board document 21-47, the tentative meeting dates for FY22 and FY23. The in-person library tour and meeting to be held in southern Idaho is scheduled for October 21-22, 2021. Bailey-White is hopeful that by this time the board will be able to meet face-to-face again. Everyone agreed with the proposed meeting dates.

**M/S Raffee/Held** moved that the FY2022-23 meeting schedule for the Idaho Board of Library Commissioners as described in Board Document 22-47 be approved. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**B. Board appointments – action item**

Bailey-White wanted to give the board notice that Franklin's term was coming to an end at the end of June, and she was up for reappointment. She is interested in serving another term.

Franklin explained that Strickland was appointed to represent Congressional District 1. He recently moved from Nampa to Pocatello and there will need to be some rearrangement of members to keep him on the board. Commissioners were willing to do this to retain Strickland. Bailey-White stated she checked with Deputy Attorney General Andy Snook and he replied that this is possible, and members can likely keep their current terms, if the governor's office approves the proposal. There was board consensus to pursue this option and they asked Bailey-White to correspond with the Governor's Office about next steps.

**C. Commissioners' responses to phone calls**

Franklin explained that she got a phone call from an irate patron from the Garden Valley District Library requesting all the laws that authorize the library to have a mask mandate. Franklin handled the situation as best as she could by explaining that the ICfL does not govern individual libraries, and she referred the patron to Bailey-White. Franklin stated that this was an upsetting conversation and she felt caught off guard by the interaction.

Bailey-White explained that the commissioners' phone numbers are posted on the ICfL website, and it is important to allow the public access to contact the commissioners in case there are issues with the State Librarian's performance, for example. However, there is a generic email account that is provided for each commissioner for this purpose, and she wanted to know if the commissioners would prefer that their personal phone numbers be removed from the webpage. There was board consensus to just have the email contact moving forward, and phone numbers will be removed from the webpage.

Franklin stated that Raffee had recently emailed a link to an editorial from the Idaho Freedom Foundation, and asked if this was an appropriate time to discuss it. Strickland stated that he thought there were a lot of inaccuracies in the article, but he would like an executive summary of the inaccuracies, and he was wondering what the ICfL counterpoint to the article would be.

Bailey-White stated that she has not drafted a response to the article, but some inaccuracies center around replacing classic literature with more diverse titles. She said the ICfL provides resources and tools to help libraries with collection development and in developing services to meet the needs of communities, but we do not govern what they should or should not have in their libraries.

Bailey-White stated she will work with Public Information Officer Donna Eggers to write up some talking points on this issue. She is not sure if they will write up a formal counterstatement, but the Idaho Library Association has drafted letters of support for the preschool development grant that was voted down, and Bailey-White reiterated that the ICfL does not govern library decisions, and it is up to local library boards to make decisions about collection development policies.

Raffee wanted to make sure that, if the ICfL is providing tools to help libraries make decisions about collection development, the final decision about what is in the collection is still up to individual staff



and trustees. Bailey-White explained that the ICfL provides quality information and access to resources to address issues they see, but there is no mandate or requirements that are passed along to the local libraries. We simply act as consultants for library staff and provide tools and resources to help build capacity.

Franklin requested that Bailey-White provide the commissioners with her response and/or talking points so they would have some information they could use to write letters to their representatives and senators, many of whom are currently influenced by the Idaho Freedom Foundation. Raffee stated she was also concerned about the Idaho Freedom Foundation's influence and misinformation that was present in the editorial. She would like some talking points about how public libraries are locally governed and the ICfL is just here to support and build capacity in Idaho libraries.

Bailey-White will get talking points to the commissioners as soon as possible.

## **IX. Old Business**

### **A. Updated Donation Report – (board document 21-48)**

Bailey-White stated this report was requested during the last board meeting to provide a deeper dive into where the ICfL's donations are coming from and trends that are present. This report shows that the bulk of the donations come from partnerships with state agencies such as the STEM Action Center, the State Board of Education, and the Idaho Lottery Commission. However, it is also broken down into smaller donations by individuals, particularly donations to the TBS.

Raffee found this report very helpful. Held asked if there was anything specific that Gelskey was doing to solicit donations from the TBS patrons. Gelskey explained that a donation button was just added to the TBS webpage. She is also looking into different ideas such as legacy gifts, giving trees, or gifting in memory of patrons. These are ideas that have been implemented and used by other organizations. Gelskey is still in the brainstorming process, but she will share her ideas with the board in the future.

Held asked what type of contacts the ICfL is making for donations of \$500 or more. Gelskey replied that these donations are always followed up with a thank you letter, but a larger thank you such as engraved sidewalk bricks, might not be a bad idea. Held suggested getting some quotes from people who have donated about why the TBS was so important to them and using those quotes to encourage others with connections to donate.

Raffee referred to the bylaws and explained that it is only the board's role to receive donations of money, materials, and other real and personal property for the benefit of the ICfL, and they are not allowed to solicit donations. Raffee asked Bailey-White if it is accurate that the ICfL is not allowed to solicit donations since it is a state agency. Bailey-White explained that there is a gray area when it comes to soliciting donations, and conversations with the deputy attorney general about the donation protocol have been held, but it has been several years ago and she wasn't always privy to those. Bailey-White stated that she will have to review her notes and investigate what other state

agencies are doing about soliciting donations, but she does know that some do solicit donations although it is not consistent from agency to agency on how they approach it. Bailey-White explained that this fiscal year the focus will really be on managing the ARPA funds, but it is something they will investigate in the future.

## X. Strategic Issues

### A. Board Report on Staff Morale – (board document 21-49)

HR Specialist Pete Nelson helped Bailey-White compile this report. Bailey-White explained that it is a good opportunity to show the board some of the ways the ICfL has tackled morale issues, especially during this difficult year. Bailey-White said she estimates more than half of all staff members have dealt with mental or physical health issues or those of close family members this past year, adding another layer of complexity to support of staff.

Held asked if any commissioners were interested in getting the staff newsletter. Mecham stated that he prefers to give the staff space to operate without the overview of the board. Bailey-White said a staff satisfaction survey that is done every three years is almost complete, and she can provide a summary report to the board at the next meeting. Bailey-White stated that they take the responses to the survey very seriously, and there is always follow up action to the survey. This is an anonymous survey, and the ICfL is continuously looking into ways to support staff and improve morale. The board agreed that they would like a summary report of the staff satisfaction survey.

It was agreed to that there would be a five-minute break before the executive session.

Meeting reconvened at noon.

## XI. Executive session Idaho Statute 74-206(1)(b), to consider the evaluation of a staff member -- (board document 21-50)

**M/S Mecham/Raffee** moved that the Board go into Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Statute 74-206(1)(b), to consider the evaluation of a staff member. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Meeting moved to executive session at 12:03 p.m.

Meeting Reconvened at 12:20 p.m.

The Board will provide a letter to the State Librarian for the personnel files and the necessary documentation as needed to address change in employee compensation.

### Meeting evaluation / next meeting

- Bailey-White proposed the topic of digital equity and digital inclusion. She will send out some “homework” assignments prior to the next meeting.
- A discussion of enhancements will likely be on the agenda.

- Board appointments will also be discussed.

**M/S Mecham/Strickland** moved to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 12:31 p.m. MST.

Next meeting: Thursday, June 3, 2021 at 10 a.m. MDT via Zoom.