

**IDAHO BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 12, 2021, 8:15 A.M. MDT
HELD VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE & AT THE
IDAHO COMMISSION FOR LIBRARIES, BOISE**

The Idaho Board of Library Commissioners meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m. MDT on Thursday, August 12, 2021. Participating in the Boise office were Chair Michael Strickland, Vice-Chair John Held, State Librarian Stephanie Bailey-White, Deputy State Librarian Tammy Hawley-House, and E-Services Program Supervisor Dylan Baker. Participating via Zoom were Commissioners Janet Franklin and Dave Mecham. Joining the regular business meeting at 1 p.m. MDT were TBS Program Supervisor LeAnn Gelskey, Partnerships & Programs Supervisor Amelia Valasek, and Administrative Services Manager Jamie Smith. Recording the meeting was Office Specialist II Josie Bradford.

I. Call to Order

A. Introductions

Strickland called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. MDT and handed it over to Held to lead the meeting. Introductions were made.

B. Agenda Review Approval – action item (board document 22-04)

Franklin/Strickland moved that the agenda for this meeting be approved.

Roll call vote: Strickland: aye; Mecham: aye; Franklin: aye; Held: aye

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Announcements

II. Minutes Review / Approval

A. July 28, 2021, Minutes – action item (board document 22-03)

Franklin/Mecham moved that the minutes of the July 28, 2021, Board of Library Commissioners meeting be approved as distributed in Board Document 22-03.

Motion carried unanimously.

III. Public Comment - none

IV. Executive Session for interviews of Board candidates - action item (board document 22-05)

Strickland/Franklin moved that the board go into Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Statute 74-206(1)(b), to consider the appointment of a new Board of Library Commissioner.

Motion carried unanimously. The meeting moved to executive session on 8:19 a.m. MDT.

Mecham/Strickland moved to leave executive session at 12:39 p.m. MDT. Once back in regular session, Strickland proposed a 20-minute break.

Strickland called the regular meeting back to order at 1:02 p.m. MDT and handed it over to Held to lead.

V. Legislation – Policies – Rules – Guidelines

VI. Federal Fund

A. Finances

1. **FY2022 object transfer – action item (board document 22-06)**

Bailey-White said this is a request for the Division of Financial Management (DFM) to provide \$23,000 in additional Trustee and Benefits (T&B) spending authority for FY22. This is a straightforward request based on the ICfL's projections for the year.

Franklin/Mecham moved that the FY22 federal fund appropriation be adjusted by transferring \$23,000 in operating funds to Trustee and Benefits to implement the FY22 spending plan.

Motion carried unanimously

2. **FY2022 federal program budgets – information item (board document 22-07)**

Bailey-White explained that this report has been formatted differently than it has in the past per requests from the board. The report shows the four main spending categories for federal funds and how much the ICfL budgets in each category. Franklin stated that she liked the format. Bailey-White said that the one drawback is that some programs and personnel costs use a combination of federal and state funds, and this format isn't great at showing that. It is in the report, but it's not as easy to see.

Mecham stated that he noticed that personnel costs were at \$646,000 in the line item, but had a total of \$676,000, which is a discrepancy of \$30,000. Bailey-White stated that the upper amount could be the appropriation and the bottom amount is what is budgeted, but she will double check with Pete Nelson, the HR Specialist, and get back to the board with the answer.

Strickland asked if there are any potential future funding opportunities that may become available this fiscal year, for example funding through the infrastructure bill that was just passed through the Senate. Bailey-White stated that there are a few items that she is aware of. There will certainly be funding for broadband that will likely trickle down to the state level, and the ICfL may be able to apply for those funds. The Build America's Libraries Act funding that was requested would have provided \$10 million if it had been approved as written for Idaho. Bailey-White does not believe that it has made in onto the infrastructure bill that was passed, but hopefully it will make it into a follow-up bill. The ICfL will be following those funding opportunities.

B. Program

C. Grants

1. **ARPA grants – information item (board document 22-08)**

Bailey-White reported the ICfL staff were pleasantly surprised to see so many applications come through. The ICfL received requests for \$2.837 million in funding; \$1 million had originally been set aside, and the ICfL was considering offering a second grant round if there were not enough quality applicants. Due to the quality of grants, staff decided to move some funds budgeted from operating to get as much funding out to the Idaho library community as possible. The ranking team read all 78 applications and scored them according to the IMLS standards which put priority on digital inclusion projects, then addressed health and safety initiatives related to COVID, and then regular library services. The ICfL was able to approve grant requests for 48 libraries across the state including nine school library projects, one academic library, one tribal library, and the rest to public libraries. The funds have been awarded, and the ICfL is working on promotional efforts to leverage PR.

Mecham asked what the Shoshone Bannock Library planned to do with \$350,000. Bailey-White explained that this was the largest grant request that was received, and the library had a really good application. The funds will be used to purchase a full-size bookmobile that will service the residents across the reservation and will offer digital access, books, and other library services.

2. **Continuing Education grants – information item (board document 22-09)**

Bailey-White stated that most of the grants in this report are for library science courses. There were a few more first-time grant applications that came in for conferences. There is an Association of Rural and Small Libraries conference that will be held in Reno this year, and there is the Public Library Association conference that is going to be held in Portland this spring. It is likely the ICfL will see more grant applications coming in for these nearby conferences.

VII. General (state funds), Miscellaneous Revenue, & Library Services Improvement Funds

A. Finances

1. **Year-end closing – information item**

2. **FY2022 program budgets – information item (board document 22-10)**

Bailey-White explained this report highlights how the ICfL plans to spend the \$4.25 million appropriated in state funds this year. She said the majority of the funds will go toward personnel and LiLI databases. School Library Access (SLA) grants and broadband reimbursement for libraries are also larger budget items.

Mecham asked the other commissioners if it would be helpful if this document was color coded based on the categories the money comes from. Bailey-White stated that that is an excellent suggestion, and it should be easy to color code by object for next year's report.

Strickland asked if the budgeted amount was a decrease from previous years. Bailey-White stated this budget is a bit of a bump from last year's since the 5% holdback from COVID was reinstated into the budget.

Mecham was glad to see that state money is being used for the LiLI databases.

3. FY2023 budget submission – action item (board document 22-11)

Bailey-White reported on budget changes. This year, all state agencies received a memo stating they could not request more than 3.1% of their general state appropriation for enhancements. Some of these enhancements cover contract inflation for the LiLI databases, a 1% increase in personnel funds for potential salary increases, the state bill for technology services, and the regular enhancements that the board approves. The ICfL had also hoped to include \$40,000 to increase Educational Opportunities Resource Act (EOR) funding. When all of these things were added up, the ICfL would be over budget by \$10,000.

With these projections, the ICfL would not be able to ask for the \$307,000 in enhancements to support ongoing costs associated with the Idaho Digital E-Book Alliance (IDEA). The governor's office did indicate that they support the program and see value in having a statewide collection that all students can access. They are also aware that nearly every public library in the state has signed on. However, they are going to hold the line on requests that go above the 3.1% cap. During last session's Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC) budget hearing, Representative Horman made a motion to utilize existing CARES Act funds that were awarded through the governor's office as discretionary one-time funds. These funds must be used by December. There is a lot of funding coming into the state from various funding streams and hopefully the state can find a way to fund the \$307,000 for the IDEA program. However, they are hesitant to fund ongoing projects at this point, and they recommended that the ICfL not ask for an enhancement for this project at this time. The ICfL will also likely have to reduce the \$40,000 in EOR funds to meet the 3.1% cap.

The third item on this report is the budget adjustments based on the five-year trends. The ICfL had hoped to wrap these three requests into one enhancement, but the DFM stated they each have to be a separate line item. Bailey-White recommended that the ICfL not include the miscellaneous revenue fund increase. Asking for an adjustment to the cap on federal personnel funds by \$50,000 will allow the agency to continue to fund some of the ARPA-funded positions. The agency will also ask for a \$30,000 increase for the cap in federal T&B funds.

Hawley-House asked for a correction to this board document. She noticed that there are two documents that are labeled 22-12, and this document should be labeled 22-11.

Mecham/Franklin moved to amend the document to 22-11.

Mecham/Strickland moved that the FY2023 agency budget request be approved as described in Board Document 22-11, including an ongoing increase of \$40,000 in ICfL's appropriation for the Education Opportunity Resource Act (EOR), \$307,000 in ongoing funds to support K-12 access to e-books and e-audio titles and that the State Librarian be authorized to adjust in the request as may be required by the Division of Financial Management or the Legislative Services Office.

Motional carried unanimously

4. FY2021 EOR reimbursements – information item (board document 22-12)

Bailey-White said board document 22-12 shows the libraries that received E-rate funding last year and the amount received. This amount was slightly above the appropriation because staff were able to move some year-end funds to cover the additional costs. Last fiscal year, the ICfL was able to fully reimburse libraries that applied for funding for content filtering and/or mobile hotspots. There was some funding that had been budgeted for travel; however, since COVID shut everything down, travel costs have been minimal, and the \$73,000 that was saved was used to cover these costs. This next fiscal year the appropriation will probably be short, but the ICfL has been told not to request supplemental funds. It will be difficult to cover content filtering and mobile hotspot reimbursements, but staff will be looking for cost savings to cover reimbursements and support library technology needs.

B. Program

C. Grants – LSIF Approval Consideration – action item (board document 22-13)

Bailey-White reported that the ICfL's partnership with the Idaho Lottery Commission (ILC) on the Bucks for Books grants continues. This year there will be an increase of \$10,000 for a total of \$50,000 that will be utilized to support school libraries which continue to be underfunded. There was some concern during the legislative session that the lotteries would be cut, but thankfully they will be supported for at least another year.

Franklin stated that she ran into Jeff Anderson from the ILC, and she let him know how thankful the ICfL is for their support.

Mecham/Franklin moved that, upon receipt of funds from the Idaho Lottery Commission, expenditures of up to \$50,000 from the Library Services Improvement Fund, be approved for implementing the Bucks for Books partnership.

Motion carried unanimously

VIII. Operations Report

A. Management Team members' reports – information item (board document 22-14)

Introductions were made since they were missed at the beginning of the regular business meeting. Jamie Smith introduced herself as the new administrative services manager. She has ten years of experience at the Idaho Department of Corrections in a variety of roles. Smith has a lot of experience with grant and contract work, as well as project management and quality assurance. Smith graduated from Boise State University with a degree in political science and sociology and has a master's in public administration. She is really excited to be with the ICfL and looks forward to working with libraries.

Bailey-White stated that the ICfL was really happy to get someone of Smith's caliber and experience in state government to fill this crucial role at the Commission.

The board welcomed Jamie.

Bailey-White reported that she has had a busy week of travel. She visited the telehealth pilot libraries in Orofino and Weippe with Baker. The trip was funded by the Blue Cross Foundation of Idaho, and they were able to meet with health care providers and see the pilot Telehealth and Libraries programs. The libraries reported that they have already had some people take advantage of the program and schedule appointments with their health care providers. On her trip, Bailey-White visited public and school libraries in northern Idaho, helped clear out the northern field office, and attended the Valnet meeting. Library directors were eager for the opportunity to show library remodels and discuss big picture library issues with Baker and Bailey-White.

Bailey-White explained that there has been a lot of turnover in the state government liaison positions. There is a new attorney general, a new representative at the DFM, and a new representative at the governor's office. The ICfL has been onboarding and meeting these new people. So far, the transition has gone smoothly, but the board should be aware that there are new people in these positions.

Tomorrow evening Bailey-White will be doing a commencement speech for the first Boise cohort of Emporia State University's Master of Library Science (MLIS) program. Held asked how many graduates would be present. Bailey-White wasn't sure how many made it through the whole program, but she suspected that it would be fewer than 12. The school has decided to offer a fully virtual MLIS program moving forward.

Hawley-House reported that the ICfL just finished hosting Summer Summit for school librarians. It was held at the Boise High school library as a hybrid model. There was a combination of people who attended the event in person and virtually. This model allowed for greater access, but it took more staff to coordinate.

The newest version of the Idaho Library Laws manual has been updated. Hawley-House provided the link in her report.

Hawley-House also reported that Continuing Education Consultant Annie Gaines was interviewed for a podcast on library ethics that was based off of a webinar she hosted last month. The webinar was very popular -- 250 people signed up and 95 attended live. This is a typical ratio for an event like this. The ICfL encourages people to register even if they aren't sure they can attend because they are automatically sent a link to the recording that they can watch latter.

The ICfL is also working on the five-year LSTA plan. A private evaluator will be hired. As part of the process, they will be meeting with ICfL staff, commissions, customers, and partners. Hawley-House wanted to give the board a heads up that they may be contacted as a part of this evaluation.

Smith explained that she will be updating the board on three areas: funding, HR, and facilities. The ARPA grants we covered earlier in the meeting, but Smith wanted to say that she was happy to see so many grants awarded from the appropriations approved through HB373 and the \$1.8 million in T&B.

Smith also reported that after wrapping up the fiscal year, the ICfL was left with a balance of \$2.01 that will be returned. This is quite the accomplishment and a good sign that the ICfL is doing an excellent job at balancing the budget.

Smith explained that Governor Little has initiated an HR modernization project. The plan right now is to have this project fully implemented by January 2023. She reassured everyone that Pete Nelson, the HR specialist, will stay on site. However, responsibilities within this position may shift and may include HR responsibilities for other state agencies.

In facilities, Smith reported that several surveillance cameras were installed around the ICfL building. Mecham asked if there were any other facilities projects on the horizon. Smith stated that there will be some ADA-compliant bathrooms installed that will come out of the Public Works budget.

Gelskey stated that the Talking Book Service (TBS) has been busy, and there has been some continuing education opportunities on KLAS offered to the TBS staff. They were appreciative of the opportunity to stay current on the software ICfL uses.

Mark Santangelo was recently named the Chief of Patron and Network Engagement Division for the (NLS). He recently met with the supervisors of the network libraries included in the western conference area. As part of his meet and greet, he was asked for input and information on what was needed for more patron engagement. Gelskey used this opportunity to share with him that staff at the ICfL and patrons would really like more tools, resources, and trainings on BARD and BARD mobile.

Gelskey also reported Megan Egbert has been hired as the new TBS Technical Support Specialist on a temporary part-time basis. Her first day was August 6, and it is exciting to have her as part of the team.

Baker reported that in addition to the \$1.8 million in ARPA grants, the ICfL set aside some money to help public libraries purchase more e-books and e-audiobooks as a supplement to the statewide collection offered through the ICfL. Of the 106 public libraries in Idaho, 97 applied for funds and were awarded with the \$310,000 from IMLS ARPA funds. Baker also reported that 14 libraries will be joining OverDrive for the first time, which will provide them access to the IDEA collection.

Baker explained that last year the ICfL was awarded two \$1 million grants to support broadband in Idaho. These grants were administered through the Department of Commerce, and 49 Idaho libraries received those grants and were able to purchase new state-of-the-art network equipment, six years of network support, and advanced licensing including content filtering. There was an additional \$10 million left in CARES Act funds from that initiative, and the Idaho Broadband Advisory Board put together a follow-up grant with those funds. Baker applied for another \$1 million grant. The ICfL was the only statewide program that had applied for this grant, and there seemed to be a lot of support for our application. Unfortunately, there were some other very competitive applications from cities and counties, and the advisory committee was not able to fund the ICfL's request. Advisory board members expressed support for the project, and hopefully there will be an opportunity to resubmit in the future if funding becomes available

Baker was also pleased to announce that he will be beginning the Emporia State University's MLIS program this fall. He will report back to the board on how that goes.

Valasek explained that most of the information on ARPA grants was covered in previous reports, but she would like to give a shout out to everyone who worked on getting those organized, reviewed, and out the door. Grants Officer Jamie Mott did the majority of the work, and she did an excellent job of answering everyone's questions. The fiscal team did a great job of managing the money, and the grant review committee spent a lot of time going over grants -- making sure they were complete and ranking them.

Valasek reported that she has also been spending a lot of time planning and organizing the Let's Talk About It fall/winter program. The schedule is just about finalized, and scholars are currently signing up for slots. Valasek created posters that represent book covers such as westerns, romance, and sci-fi. The posters have been printed, and she is excited to get those out into communities. This year, there will be 15 libraries participating. In choosing who got to participate, Valasek tried to make sure to include libraries from various parts of the state. She also made sure that preference was given to first-time participants and those who haven't participated for a while.

Finally, Valasek reported that the summer internship grants are wrapping up. She had planned on having three different cohort sessions for the interns. After realizing how busy everyone was, Valasek decided to scale it back to one session. Seven interns attended and they discussed library careers and showcased a video that Valasek and Public Information Office Donna Eggers put together. Interns provided feedback and ideas on how to make the program a more meaningful experience in the future.

B. Personnel report – information item (board document 22-15)

Bailey-White reported that there have been some personnel changes and these are reflected in board document 22-15. The ICfL has a new receptionist, Rheanne Ekhoft. Jeff Stratton has also been hired as a temporary studio production and training specialist. Stratton is well-known in the library community for his work with maker spaces, and he will be working with Volunteer Coordinator Colleen Clark. This position will be supported with ARPA funds.

The ICfL is still recruiting for the limited-service bilingual/bicultural project coordinator, as well as a public library field consultant. Held asked if the ICfL is planning on basing the new field consultant in northern Idaho or in Boise. Bailey-White explained that the person will be based in Boise, and the northern field office has been closed. Hawley-House conducted an exit interview with former Library Field Consultant Emily Sitz, and it was determined that it was a better financial and personnel decision to have the person at the Commission where they had team support. Zoom has also made meeting virtually with libraries and library directors a lot easier. Bailey-White has reassured public library directors that the ICfL's field consultants will continue to travel and get out to as many libraries as possible. Held pointed out that the new direct Alaska flight between Pullman and Boise will make travel a lot easier.

C. Talking Book Patron Survey Summary – information item (board document 22-16)

Gelskey reported that the TBS patron survey had been completed, and results were consistent from the last survey conducted two years ago. Included in this report are the questions, the results from this year's survey, and the survey conducted in 2019.

Gelskey explained that BARD mobile continues to be a struggle for a lot of people. It is not user friendly and the NLS is working on making improvements so more people feel comfortable using this service. Gelskey also explained that the ICfL relies mainly on the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired to promote TBS services. However, more libraries are doing a better job of promoting the TBS.

Based on this survey, the biggest issues are patrons not having a device or a strong internet connection. It can also be difficult to find someone to certify their disability, but hopefully by changing the certifying authority to include librarians, more people will be able to use the service. School Library Consultant Jeannie Standal and Customer Service Representative Rebecca McKay are working on getting the word out about certifying authority, and this should make it easier for more students to sign up.

Gelskey included patron comments from the survey, and many reflect the fact that the TBS was a lifeline for many during the pandemic.

IX. Old Business

A. Board appointment – information item

Held stated that the board interviewed four individuals for the vacant board position from a strong pool of nine candidates. He recommended submitting their names in ranked order of preference to the governor's office. The names are as follows, Dawn Wittman, Margaret Vaughn, and Bridget Carter.

Franklin/Mecham moved to submit the names of 1. Dawn Wittman, 2. Margaret Vaughn, and 3. Bridget Carter to the governor's office for appoint to the Idaho Board of Library Commissioners.

Motion carried unanimously

Bailey-White wanted to let everyone know that she has done some follow up on Franklin's board appointment with the governor's office. She was reassured that they do have Janet's information, but they are currently delayed. Franklin is still on the board until she is officially confirmed.

B. Final review of ICfL Strategic Plan – action item (board document 22-17)

Bailey-White explained that during the last meeting the board provided feedback on some areas for improvement to the strategic plan. Hawley-House has reworked the document based on recommendations, and it is being brought back to the board for approval.

Franklin/Strickland moved that the mission, goals, and strategies included in the draft FY2022-2025 strategic plan as described in Board Document 22-17 be approved.

Motion carried unanimously

X. New Business

A. Onboarding plan for new Commissioner – discussion

Held volunteered to help with the onboarding of the new commissioner. Bailey-White was thankful that Held volunteered and said having someone who is experienced with the Commission will really help the orientation process. Bailey-White stated that if the appointment goes through before the board tour, the ICfL will try to provide an extra day for the onboarding process. Bailey-White also invited Strickland to come early as well.

Bailey-White has updated the board handbook. Commissioners should have, or will soon be receiving, replacement documents for their handbooks, and an extra handbook has been created for the new board member. Bailey-White included an annual review process for the state librarian, as well as an example letter that goes to the governor's office.

Unfortunately, if COVID-19 numbers continue to increase, the commission may have to reevaluate the board tour plans. It is still tentatively scheduled at the College of Western Idaho Nampa Campus. Details for the schedule are still being worked out, but there are plans to visit several libraries in Ada and Canyon County.

Held asked if the plan was to be in Boise on Wednesday, October 20 for onboarding. Bailey-White stated that yes, that was the plan.

XI. Strategic Issues

XII. Meeting Evaluation / Adjournment

Mecham thanked everyone for being a part of the interview process. Meeting people over Zoom can be difficult, but he was thankful for the experience. Held was happy that there were strong candidates for the vacant board position.

Mecham moved to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m. MDT.

Next meeting: October 22, 2021 -- scheduled as part of the Board Tour. Starting time and location to be determined.