

Governor's Advisory Council  
on Library Development

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*February 11, 2021*  
*Virtual Zoom Meeting*

***Minutes – Final***

Present: David Belanger  
Marsha Everton  
Mary Garm  
Robert Lambert  
Rebecca Long  
Allison Mackley  
Beth Mellor  
Patrick Oates  
Susan Werner  
Barbara Zaborowski

Excused: Olga Negron  
Larry Nesbit

Office of Commonwealth

Libraries (OCL): Susan Banks, Director, Bureau of Library Development (BLD)  
Carrie Cleary, Executive Assistant, Office of Commonwealth Libraries (OCL)  
Sarah Greene, Director, Bureau of State Library (BSL)  
Cindy Heasley, Admin Assistant, Office of Commonwealth Libraries (OCL)  
Corri Hines, Library Development Advisor for School-Age Services (BLD)  
Glenn Miller, Deputy Secretary / Commissioner for Libraries (OCL)  
Heather Sharpe, Division Manager, Grants and Subsidies (BLD)

Guests: SNOE Region Collaboration (Seneca, New Castle, Oil Creek, Erie County)  
Jessica Church, District Consultant, Erie County/Crawford Library District  
Amy Geisinger, District Consultant, New Castle Library District  
Erin Joyce, District Consultant, Oil Creek Library District  
Leslie LaBarte, District Consultant, Seneca District Libraries  
Christi Buker, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Library Association  
Maryam Phillips, Executive Director, Hosting Solutions and Library Consulting  
Blane Dessy, Director, Erie County Public Library

### **1. Call to Order & Introductions**

Garm called the meeting to order at 9:31AM.

Council members and Office of Commonwealth Libraries (OCL) staff then introduced themselves.

### **2. Approval of the Minutes of the December 3, 2020 meeting**

Marsha Everton moved that the minutes of the December 3, 2020 meeting be approved as submitted. Robert Lambert seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **3. Chair's Report – Mary Garm**

#### **Distinguished Service**

Council member Allison Mackley has been recognized by the Pennsylvania School Librarians Association with its Distinguished Service Award. Allison has been an exemplary leader in the school library field, and this is but the latest of many awards that she has earned. There is a special distinction in receiving an award of this nature from one's peers. Congratulations to Allison for this recognition.

#### **Evolution of Library Services**

I have had the opportunity to spend some time in conversation in recent months with Sue Banks, Director of the Bureau of Library Development, OCL. Based on events that have occurred over the last year, our discussions have centered on the evolving role of library services in Pennsylvania. The change in designation of the District Library Center in Lancaster County will provide opportunities to take a fresh look at district services, not just in Lancaster, but across the state. The pandemic, of course, has made us all think about how to deliver library services in new and creative ways. And there are libraries in the Commonwealth who are already exploring new ways of collaborating and reconsidering traditional service methods. One of the places where this is happening is in the Northwest corner of the state where four district centers who call themselves the SNOE region are working together to improve delivery of district services. I'm looking forward to learning more about their experiences later in today's meeting.

#### **Reading Recommendation**

David Lee King is a well-known name in the field of technology here in the library world. He recently published an article in the journal *Computers in Libraries*, in which he describes 10 strategic lessons he and his library have learned from the pandemic. Among the things he notes are these: our libraries provide valuable services even when the doors are closed; customers may not be aware of your digital content, despite ongoing promotion of it; some new services and offerings (curbside, home delivery) will be permanent fixtures in the future; and our digital collections are really branches of the library. Most interesting to me, though, was his suggestion that libraries will want to adopt a digital-first, rather than print-first, model of library operations. That is something that many libraries have been doing since the pandemic required us to restrict access to our buildings. A link to the article will appear in the highlights of the meeting, but you can find it by searching "David Lee King" and "pandemic."

<https://www.infotoday.com/cilmag/jan21/King--Public-Libraries-10-Strategic-Lessons-Learned-During-the-Pandemic.shtml>

#### **4. Deputy Secretary's Report – Glenn Miller**

Miller noted that state employees will be teleworking through June 30, 2021 per Governor Wolf's order. On the subject of COVID-19 vaccines, efforts have been made to advise the Centers for Disease Control about the front-line nature of library work but since vaccine production is not keeping up with demand, it seems unlikely that librarians will be moved up in the queue.

He commented that the Information Exchange held on Monday, February 8, 2021, was a helpful sharing experience and the exchanges will continue to be held.

Miller is serving as the PA Dept of Education's (PDE) point person in the effort to dismantle systemic racism. The working group includes Susan Banks, Sarah Greene, and other PDE staff, with a focus on identifying causes of problems and what we need to do to more broadly to stop racism.

The final Public Library Subsidy payment is out and should have been received by libraries across the state.

Governor Wolf's proposed budget for 2021-22 provides virtually level funding for libraries next year. Miller feels positive about the budget even in these uncertain times, as the state's economy has not taken as big a hit as expected yet. Christi Buker's efforts at the Pennsylvania Library Association to keep libraries fully funded are greatly appreciated.

Budget hearings will be held virtually due to the COVID-19 safety precautions.

BLD is working on distributing CARES Act emergency relief funds through the District Library Centers. Additional funds available to OCL through the Governor's Emergency Education Relief fund is providing assistance to expand Open Educational Resources (OER) for college students, boosting Live Homework Help available through POWER Library's Chat With A Librarian, and supporting local libraries who are working on local connectivity problems.

Congress is working on a recovery bill of \$1.9 trillion dollars. It looks like the bill has a good chance to pass and may include an increase for libraries. The American Library Association is working on an infrastructure bill that includes capital funds for libraries.

Miller thanked OCL staff for their dedicated effort to continue to serve the public and the library field despite working in difficult circumstances during the pandemic.

**5. SNOE Region Collaboration – Jessica Church, District Consultant for Erie County Public Library System, Amy Geisinger, District Consultant for New Castle Public Library System, Erin Joyce, Oil Creek Public Library System, Leslie LaBarte, District Consultant for Seneca Public Libraries**

The formal exploration of merging district services was requested by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries (OCL) as a regional study beginning 2011. However, these four districts have successfully collaborated for decades of service. In 2016-17, a second grant was obtained to study how to regionalize within the confines of the current Library Code & Regulations utilizing an outside consultant. The potential loss of an entire district's funding (due to two districts being below the minimum district funding by population) was enough to dissuade a formal merger of the four districts. Instead, after developing regional mission, vision, and values statements the districts decided to maintain their current structure but formalize a working collaboration. If personalities changed in leadership positions, the partnership and leveraging of district expertise and services could still be maintained and continue to provide the libraries in the SNOE region with the best level of service.

One of the first steps taken to formalize their structure was the establishment of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), which included the sharing and collaboration on continuing education opportunities and sharing of consultant services. If a consultant is on vacation, there is a general email that the other 3 cover during the absence. Quarterly meetings with District Administrators and Consultants were scheduled, so Consultants could update Administrators of district issues and projects, while the Administrators began to shape the trajectory of the SNOE regions priorities. Some of the priorities identified for increased efforts were regional advocacy, collaboration with colleges & universities, and raising the floor for all libraries. The advocacy priority included instruction for directors, creation of materials, and coaching calls to make directors comfortable speaking with local and statewide officials.

Garm thanked them for their wonderful work, especially without new or additional funds.

Also in the northwest region, Barbara Zaborowski took this opportunity to congratulate the Erie Community College, whose establishment was recently approved. Dr. Zaborowski noted that Penn Highlands Community College is working with them.

Jessica Church thanked Blane Dessy for his efforts. Dessy has submitted a proposal to Erie County Public Library to serve as the library for Erie Community College and other colleges in the area.

Beth Mellor asked about the Library Island program. Erin Joyce responded that it's a regional library program involving a role-playing game for directors and trustees designed and led by Matt Finch. The consultants noted that the participating libraries were implementing what they learned. Mellor commented that this was great news, happy to hear that results are implemented.

Marsha Everton asked if the initiative has affected relationships with library boards? Erin Joyce answered that library boards have asked for more training, and an outside perspective can help. The program provides consistent answers which helps boards transition.

Leslie LaBarte commented that in some District Library Centers (DLC), boards aren't always receptive to advice, but when another District Consultant attends a board meeting with the same answer, the message often gets through to the board.

Amy Geisinger added that districts aren't involved in fundraising since districts encompass the same service area as local libraries and the district doesn't want to take funding away from local libraries. They will advise and assist with member library fundraising programs, however. Erin Joyce added that local fund-raising improved with the area libraries talking to each other.

Jessica Church commented that the SNOE region collaboration contributes to a sense of the greater good – helping an entire area rather than just specific libraries.

Marsha Everton commented that businesses will support the library community, and this leads to more business donations with this collaboration.

Garm asked about the collaboration's effect on advocacy. LaBarte responded that communicating with state officials in small ways – cards, greetings – leads to better communication. Doing this as a group, with a shared message, makes a bigger impact. The Consultants have noticed growth in the comfort level of librarians performing advocacy work as well.

Amy Geisinger explained that the group stays organized by using a shared Google drive to keep everyone informed. One person will create a flyer, put it in the drive, and any library can use it. LaBarte added that shared accounts work well as they are not reinventing the wheel.

Becca Long asked how they make sure it gets pushed to library directors. She lives in Erie County and was not aware of this collaboration but would have made use of it. She asked if there was a digital presence for Boards? Erin Joyce responded that it's not planned at this time, but they send weekly emails to member libraries. Since they do not have contact information for the boards, they rely on directors to pass on the information.

Long asked if HSLC would be able to help. Maryam Phillips said HSLC could help. Jessica Church added that they are still learning how each library prefers to communicate (phone, email, etc).

Garm thanked the SNOE region for creating this collaboration. Miller thanked SNOE for their support and noted that OCL ran into challenges working with SNOE due to the current language in the Library Code, and he appreciates their perseverance to serve their libraries.

## **6. Bureau Reports from the Office of Commonwealth Libraries**

### **Bureau of Library Development (BLD) – Susan Banks**

- **“Libraries Connect”** project coordinated at the county level by community libraries with project management support from KINBER funded by the GEER program under the CARES Act. The project will extend access to broadband and other technologies and resources necessary to help communities in need across the Commonwealth during the pandemic.
- **Library of Accessible Media for Pennsylvanians (LAMP):** website, rebrand and participation in First Lady Frances Wolf’s One Lens program.
- **Evolving District Services:** Statewide conversation and work with Library District stakeholders across the commonwealth to explore concrete ways in which, within the boundaries of current statute and regulations, our administrative structures can evolve to produce a more effective distribution of the support for and expectations of equitable library services to all Pennsylvanians.
- **PETE&C Conference Committee:** Corri Hines will join the effort for next year.
- **Owning Inclusion:** Pilot program with the Humanities Council and academic instructional designers in building a training program designed to be used at the agency and community level to establish better behaviors and practices around inclusive behaviors.
- **Library Advisors in Early Childhood and Advisory Services:** BLD is now in the hiring process for two new positions and working on a new State Aid Coordinator position.
- **Kerri Milliken’s Capstone** project for her library degree from Drexel University focused on clarifying and organizing PA’s Certification and Professional Development resources and support systems.

### **Leadership and Training –**

Statewide Library Staff Training - Governance 101 was well received and we have started the Board Deep Dives. More information is at this link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qOR8fGS0pB0XlckWwa-67e5K9xcAGC4F/view>

Wellness Series for District Consultants - Kicked off this seven-session monthly series with Caitlin Williams and Self-Care and Stress Relief – geared to address issues identified by the District Consultants in planning with Trina Walker and Matt Finch. Aimed at helping the Consultants (and thereby help their Libraries) balance internal and external needs during a time of great uncertainty and change. Other topics and presenters in the

description are at this link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LhSJW6g4HCqjNE1FcvcCU5c4P3ZXaufm/view>

Professional Development in Equity Diversity and Inclusion - This funding opportunity supports library workers to receive professional development training to apply principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the systems, practices, and work functions performed by library staff and experienced by library customers. Training in this area helps library organizations better support marginalized communities and improve service to underrepresented populations. Details can be found at this link:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1z\\_UJjcq01sBJT6MRKlhUyuqjmZqWkqlz/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1z_UJjcq01sBJT6MRKlhUyuqjmZqWkqlz/view)

### **Youth Services**

- **Out of School Time**

- Planning a series of fun, informal Summer 2021 sessions to best prepare youth services staff to engage with youth.
- Offering YALSA's "Train the Trainer" professional development opportunities to transform teen services for libraries - systems, districts, groups of library staff are encouraged to request trainings at this link: <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/train-trainer-project>
- Video Game Clubs of America (VGCUSA) Opportunity for PA School Libraries application is now live at this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VGCUSA2021>

- **Family Engagement**

- **Pennsylvania One Book** program will focus on emotional resilience, social/emotional wellness, and healing through books.

### **Other LSTA-funded or LSTA-related activity:**

**CARES Act Funding** – Under the leadership of Heather Sharpe and Hadiyah Cleveland is in the managing our distribution of \$1M in CARES Act funding from the IMLS destined for distribution to libraries across the state to address costs involved in keeping libraries, library users and library staff safe and to keep virtual library services growing and users connected to their libraries via high-speed internet.

### **Bureau of State Library (BSL) – Sarah Greene**

The renovation of Forum Building began in January and is expected to be completed in two years (January 2023). Greene anticipates on being able to move back into the building in the late spring/early summer of 2023. Due to receiving bids lower than expected, the Main Reading Room will also be restored. Staff are working with the Pennsylvania Department of General Services (DGS), construction schedules, and COVID restrictions to access the building. Access is available when planned in advance.

Inter-library Loan service is close to being restarted. Greene expects to be able to receive shipments from the Federal Depository soon. The State Library can provide access, but services in Keystone Building are not in-person as the building is shut down due to COVID restrictions.

The Library is participating in the “One Lens” project. This is a photo exhibit sponsored by Pennsylvania First Lady Frances Wolf. It began February 8 and will run through March 8 as an online exhibit. Once it closes, all material will be archived with the State Library.

GEERS Connectivity with PALCI – this is an educational resources funding program available to any Pennsylvania institute of higher education. Contact Greene for more information.

Marsha Everton asked if the renovation work will have HVAC equipment that can kill viruses, such as electro-static lighting. Greene responded that she would check with the PA Department of General Services. Miller added that this is a good time to talk with DGS about these systems. Garm commented that a major renovation such as the one at Forum building is challenging and thanked Greene for her efforts.

#### **7. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only**

Marsha Everton asked if librarians are classified as educators, and thus eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine under state rules. Miller replied that no, librarians are in class 1C and he does not expect that to change. Sue Banks commented that it is a topic among the library community. Everton commented that she is looking for every opportunity to get libraries re-opened. Banks added that every community is different, so vaccine eligibility is hard to establish.

#### **8. 2021 Committee Assignments**

A motion to appoint David Belanger as Vice Chair was made by Barbara Zaborowski, seconded by Susan Werner, and all approved.

A motion to appoint Allison Mackley to an at-large member of the Executive Council was made by David Belanger, Sue Werner seconded, and all approved.

Mary Garm listed the chairs of the committees: Planning, Barbara Zaborowski; Guidelines and Policies, David Belanger; Education and Advocacy, Beth Mellor; Communications, Marsha Everton; Bylaws, Allison Mackley; and Executive Committee, Mary Garm.

#### **9. Update on Lancaster Public Library and District Library Center – Sue Banks and Mary Garm**

Planning is in progress for the transition of the District Library Center to a new agency. The Library System of Lancaster County (LSLC) has been invited to serve temporarily as a District Library Center (DLC) for 1 fiscal year (June 2021 through June 2022). The Board



of LSLC is looking at the feasibility of this request. The LSLC Board has not yet accepted. Sue Banks noted that she will take over as District Liaison for LSLC when Anne Kruger retires on January 1, 2021.

#### **10. Governor Wolf's Budget for FY 2021-22 – Glenn Miller**

Miller expressed relief that the seven-month budget for 2020 resulted in only a slight dip in OCL's budget and the amount was small enough that it would not cause any significant cut in services or staff layoffs.

#### **11. COVID and Public Libraries – Glenn Miller**

Miller noted that the State will be teleworking until June 30, 2021. OCL will send out updated guidelines reflecting new mitigation orders from Governor Wolf soon. These changes affect travel and the size of group gatherings.

#### **12. School Libraries Update – Allison Mackley**

From the national level, Mackley shared information about the IMLS grant project, entitled "SLIDE: School Librarian Investigation: Decline or Evolution?" is directed by Debra Kachel and principal investigator Keith Curry Lance. The project, launched in September 2020, shows a 20% decline in the number of school librarians. It has not been determined if this is a true decline or if school librarians are being repurposed. The initial findings will be reviewed in April 2021 at the annual conference of the Pennsylvania School Librarians Association (PSLA).

Mackley also noted that a report "School Libraries and the COVID Slide" addresses how school librarians can help diminish students' learning gaps during the pandemic. Mackley is currently updating the introduction with narratives from approximately 50 libraries across the United States. The report will conclude with a policy implication in the areas of virtual learning, equity, social learning, and learning environment.

The "One Certified Librarian per Public School" are companion bills being introduced in both the PA House and Senate.

Mackley commented that the PSLA Leadership Academy and Institute are both focused on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The Leadership Development Institute includes 16 members who have become mentors to the Academy participants.

Robin Burns, PSLA President, has been attending a monthly task force led by Corri Hines (BLD), which focuses on building and developing partnerships between school and public library professionals with the shared goal of supporting all Pennsylvania youth.

At the local level, Mackley noted that school districts that have been financially stable are removing school librarian positions. The Hershey Middle School library position has not been filled during the 2020-2021 school year and the open position at the high school (after Allison's resignation in December 2020) has not been filled. In addition, the Early Childhood librarian will be retiring at the end of this school year. The DTSD school board just voted to remove K-1 library as a class and integrate it into the STEM class. Anecdotally, she noted that some librarians in

Pennsylvania have been removed from the library to each in content area classrooms as a mitigation effort during the pandemic.

PSLA is currently collecting information for their annual staffing survey. Of the 500 school districts, 120 public school districts and 20 independent schools had responded as of the beginning of February.

Garm thanked her for her report, commenting that COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on learning, particularly affecting school librarians. Garm congratulated PSLA and library leaders for measuring the impact of the loss of librarians in schools and collecting data that can hopefully be used to reverse the trend.

Marsha Everton asked Mackley if she is hearing of librarians being given new job titles. Mackley replied that that investigation is part of Deb Kachel's grant. Mackley noted that "information specialist" is one title that keeps coming up. Mackley also noted that PA Forward has a sub-group working on collaboration among school librarians and public academic librarians to strengthen the library ecosystem.

### **13. Rare Books Fund Update – Larry Nesbit**

Nesbit was not present, however Garm noted there have been no new expenses since the last meeting in December 2020.

### **14. Committee Reports**

- a. **Bylaws** – no report
- b. **Communications** – no report
- c. **Legislative** – no report
- d. **Guidelines and Policies** – no report

### **15. Public Comment**

Maryam Phillips at Hosting Solutions and Library Consulting (HSLC) commented that they are busier than usual during the pandemic, as there is a greater demand for electronic services. HSLC is focusing on removing barriers to access, such as developing a single sign-on for POWER Library. HSLC is also working on a POWER Library video to be used in Niche Academy trainings. In the fall, HSLC conducted training for 600 online Niche Academy trainings. Spring 2021 training will remain virtual. Phillips announced that Ed Wolf has joined HSLC as a virtual design director and will expand the "Chat with a Librarian" feature and virtual reference capabilities.

Christi Buker of the Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA) noted the hard work of the Legislative Committee and thanked them for their efforts. In February, work on the next budget will begin. She stated that the Annual Conference in October 2020 went well and,

hopefully, the October 2021 Annual Conference will be in person. Spring chapter workshops will be conducted virtually.

Rebecca Long, GAC member, asked for ideas to help libraries build useful, diverse collections that do not just sit on shelves unused by the community.

**16. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Heasley, Administrative Assistant, Office of Commonwealth Libraries

**Meeting Dates for 2021 – All meetings are virtual**

Friday, April 16, 2021, 1pm Open Forum at PSLA Conference

Thursday, May 13, 2021, 9:30 a.m. – Business Meeting

Thursday, September 2, 2021, 9:30 a.m. – Business Meeting

Late September (27-29) 2021 – Open Forum at PaLA Conference, TBD

Thursday, November 18, 2021, 9:30 a.m. – Business Meeting