

Governor's Advisory Council  
on Library Development

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Sept 2, 2021

Virtual Zoom Meeting

**Minutes**

Present: David Belanger, Marsha Everton, Mary Garm, Robert Lambert, Rebecca Long, Alison Mackley, Beth Mellor, Susan Werner, Barbara Zaborowski

Excused: 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)

Corri Hines, Library Development Advisor for School-Age Services (BLD)

Heather Sharpe, Division Manager, Grants and Subsidies (BLD)

Guests:

Erin Halovich, Hosting Solutions and Library Consulting (HSLC)

Vince Mariner, Hosting Solutions and Library Consulting (HSLC)

**1. Call to Order & Introductions**

Garm called the meeting to order at 9:32 AM.

Introductions:

Mary Garm, Chair

David Belanger, Vice Chair, Chair of State Library Search Committee

Alison Mackley

Barb Zaborowski

Beth Mellor

Sue Werner, trustee at Schlow in State College. Looking forward to meeting everyone.

Robert Lambert

Marsha Everton, attendance after Intros were complete

Intros from OCL Staff:

Sue Banks: Acting Deputy Secretary / State Librarian

Stacey Mulligan: Advisor, workforce and special populations

Heather Sharpe, Acting Director Bureau of Library Development

Diana Megdad: Advisor

Sarah Greene, Director, Bureau of State Library

Corri Hines: Advisor, School age

65+ Attendees

## 2. Approval of the Minutes of the May 13, 2021 meeting

The committee approved the minutes of the May 13, 2021 meeting as submitted.  
Correction of spelling of Pennsylvania.  
Approved as corrected.

## 3. Chair's Report – Mary Garm – report submitted.

Highlights include:

- Committee work commended
- Resignation of GAC trustee appointee, Olga Negron : **Send Mary any recommendations you may have for a new trustee member.**
- Open Forum at Pennsylvania Library Association Virtual Conference will take place on Wednesday, September 29, at 9 AM. GAC members should plan to attend.
- Book Recommendation: Made Free and Thrown Open to the Public by Bernadette Lear. The book examines the history of public libraries in Pennsylvania from their beginnings in the 1700s through World War II.
- GAC Support: Thanks to Cindy Heasley for past support. Current contact for GAC business is Carrie Cleary until the position is hired.

## 4. Acting Deputy Secretary's Report – Susan Banks: report submitted.

Highlights include:

- Commonwealth connections: Doing collaborative work with many newly appointed staff in PDE and leveraging other resources to connect with other program areas in the commonwealth. After a 3 day off site retreat, all people in PDE know more about libraries. Trying to reach adult learners and high school dropouts to ensure they can have post-secondary educational opportunities. Trying to find ways to help schools partner with libraries to spend some of the \$7.5 Billion that K-12 got through ARP ESSER. Thinking about how to best equip schools to do out of school and summer programming. Connecting further with OESE and OCDEL to make sure libraries can take full advantage of things in place for professionals attached to those offices. Strategic foresight around collaborative work we are doing. Pursuing a relationship with workforce development, Stacey Mulligan has been fostering for years. Sue has been meeting with Sheila Ireland from Workforce Development. Sue is proud to bring libraries to people who are new and in place now.
- Staff hiring: Working towards a new administrative assistant. We are happy to have more human power coming aboard in staff capacity.
- PHC announced a grant opportunity: <https://pahumanities.org/pasharp> Libraries are eligible for this grant, but should be cautious and not combine sources of federal funding for a program.
- Communication planning with Trina Walker concluded with priorities identified. We wrapped up the work with Trina, but we have work at the leadership level and with staff to implement the structure. Hopefully you will see fruits of the labor before you see a next report.

- OCL did an Information Exchange meeting on Monday. Those included snapshot survey results. These will change into a series of more targeted stakeholder engagement meetings—shorter and more frequent with targeted groups that will involve specific groups. Info exchange will transform into a written version, using the Compendium and an ongoing version of the Services Snapshot.
- Work in DEI and Belonging. In PDE we are talking about an equity and belonging mindset—not a lens, but a mindset in everything. Work will continue at an office level in both bureaus and will continue at PDE and link up with other commonwealth departments and continuing work on Including You. Currently in the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> class for Including You. Classes will train trainers in that work to understand your own biases and blind spots about how everybody belongs. Will work with Humanities Council to bring it to the library level to create a greater sense of belonging to libraries and communities. Will be presenting about it at the PALA conference in Sept.
- Just this morning, message about Masking Order: How the school order impacts libraries. It does not directly apply to libraries. OCL recommends you follow the guidance from PA DOH and CDC.
- Questions for Sue? None

#### **5. OCL Spotlight: GEERing Up to Support K-12 Virtual Learning in PA with Chat with a Librarian: Erin Halovanic, HSLC Director of Library Services**

Mary Garm introduced Erin, 3 master's degree and a long career history in libraries. Vince Mariner of HSLC also introduced himself.

Project was funded by Governor's Emergency Education Relief for enhancing services to help with learning. Chat with a Librarian (CWAL) is an important component of offering assistance. 92% of customers feel satisfied using live chat. It is more than just chat: It's virtual reference with chat, text, and email. Texting reaches those with only mobile phones and reaches GenZ. Information on slides shared.

Ask libraries to be sure they are using the correct links to LibAnswers.

Even if a library doesn't participate as a contributor, easy access points are offered to the statewide queue: <https://powerlibrary.org/chat/>

Neff Group worked with HSLC on CWAL to 1) Evaluate the User Experience (UX) for patrons and operators, 2) Increase awareness of service 3) Report to guide priorities for improvements.

Learned:

- Promote CWAL as human operators, not bots. Librarians are not gatekeepers to the collections but are docents to guide you to use the resources. We are in the position to serve the very specific needs of our designated communities. Need to be approachable.
- Neff did a service comparison: FL, WA, Delaware: also have software and statewide services.
- Created personas and did journey mapping to understand.
- 5 services/steps happen before they get to the services.

5 main conclusions:

- improved guidelines and messages.
- Get Teacher Librarians on board.
- Get Public Librarians on board.
- Working with this service is sometimes perceived as either competing or extra work: HSLC has to sell the idea and make sure it is a complement and supplement.
- CWAL has grown and people recognize it as Chat with a Librarian. Time to promote and increase awareness.

Now have a library user experience trained staff member on the team at HSLC. They put together a testing landing page.

Giving information to support the schools. Hiring contractors who have worked with students was successful.

All operators should be in a mindset to help kids where they are.

HSLC is increasing promotion to public libraries by doing social media posts and flyers.

There are Spanish speaking resources through Chat with a Librarian.

Questions: Floor open?

Marsha asked: Has there been thought to creating an app to access this chat function?

Erin answered: HSLC has talked to Springshare, the software provider, and they are working on development of an app. With texting you can resize the widget on your phone. As soon as there is an app option, we'll try to get it. Apps are a memory tool.

Marsha asked about QR codes: HSLC is part way there, new materials will take people to the portal directly.

Marsha asked: Anything to look at medical advice? How do librarians assist in that category?

Erin: Yes, we get those questions, and we get people to the info without opinions.

Librarians point directly into databases or articles in the databases, but keep in the FAQs sites that have been vetted by librarians. Get the connection to accurate and updated information.

Mary asked: When will librarians see the changes? Librarians won't notice the changes. Changes have been end user and operator focused. Working on a pilot project: Library promotion in a box. HSLC will help with the marketing. They are creating videos for the services in POWER Library.

Vince shared in the chat: Many of you may recall receiving a box of POWER Library outreach materials last spring. We are working on issuing another box later this year.

Promotion and awareness is what is needed. Libraries can tell HSLC what they need.

Beth commented: Concepts you are talking about are great at breaking down silos of information and making connections to constituents. Working in a state where libraries are old and established, the silos are concrete. It's a challenge in PA. Erin brings the public administration and library experience together. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, no one entity can meet all the needs of the community; partnerships are vital to survival.

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

a. **Bureau of Library Development (BLD) – Heather Sharpe** : report submitted

Highlights include:

- **State Aid:**
  - Public Libraries Survey (Annual Report) – IMLS certified the 2020 data.
  - District Library Center reports due August 10, 2021. Payments made on August 31, 2021.
  - Statewide Library Resource Center report opened August 30, 2021, due Sept 27, 2021.
  - County Coordination Aid applications expected to open in September.
  - Library, Library System, and Statewide Library Resource Center payments expected in January 2022.
- **IMLS Funding:**
  - LSTA FY2020 closing September 30, 2021. Projects wrapping up and new contracts routing for FY2021 projects.
  - CARES Act Funding through IMLS–All reimbursement requests due September 1st
  - \$634,893.02 has been reimbursed
  - \$359,773.16 reimbursements in-process
  - \$130,233.68 allocation remains, reimbursement to be requested
  - ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Funding through IMLS-Application open date is estimated for late October. Allocations are posted on the website: <https://www.statelibrary.pa.gov/Libraries/Subsidies-and-Grants/ARPFunds>.
- **Keystone Grants:**
  - 2021 Grant round open July 26 - October 29, 2021
    - 42 letters of interest totaling \$12,586,800
    - Approximate funds available - \$3.1 million
    - Award notification in March 2022
    - Grant period - April 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023
  - Kick-off meeting held with consultants who will be conducting the needs assessment and long-range plan. Expecting surveys of the field and municipalities to begin in October.
- **Operations/Personnel:**
  - State Aid Administrator: Interviews in progress. Position has been vacant for a year.
  - Library Advisors in Early Childhood and Advisory Services: Heather Smith and Amy Geisinger starting on September 7, 2021.

Question for Heather? None.

b. **Bureau of State Library (BSL) – Sarah Greene**

Sarah Greene reported that: The state library had a soft open for the location in the Keystone Building. W and Th from 10-4. The official opening date was September 8, 2021.

State Library remains open for virtual service M-F 8:30AM-5PM and provides assistance via phone or online meeting outside of in-person service.

State Library is open to ILL again too. ILL will be functioning, but many materials will not be accessible due to the renovations. Contact ILL if you have questions.

Sarah is meeting regularly with the DGS about the renovations to the Forum Building. The building will be finished by January of 2023. Estimate moving in in spring early summer 2023.

Mary asked Sarah to update a little on the renovations: Due to construction, the State Library is in multiple locations: Keystone Building as well as Makerspace and staff in State Museum.

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

**No comments.**

**Take a 5 minute comfort break.**

## **8. Deputy Secretary Search Committee Report : David Belanger**

Thanks to the search committee (7): David, Mary, Beth, Barb, Robert, Allison, Marsha Meeting regularly. Looked at Leadership Competencies. Updated job description and job posting, worked with Dept of Ed to get the information. Thanks to Sue Banks, Thanks to Chris Noble for getting things posted. Ready to go. Process was completed in early August, but will be promoting in Sept. Will be advertised in various locations. Committee will review applicants. If you know people who are interested or who will be a good fit, make them aware of it. Hope to begin interviews in October.

No questions.

## **9. American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) and Libraries – Susan Banks**

Everything we really have to report was in Heather's report and is on the website. The process we will be using through e-grants in order for libraries to get their allocations is being worked on. What we have to share so far is on the website. The distribution of the ARP funds was determined by the PA legislature. The entire amount was appropriated by the legislature at the time of the 2021/22 state budget. It referred to the same distribution as the 2020/21 Public Library Subsidy. If you have questions, direct emails to [hsharpe@pa.gov](mailto:hsharpe@pa.gov). Working on developing the guidelines and application. Hope to have it available late October. Are developing training materials. Links on website for how to prepare to apply. Get information prepared in advance. Have important numbers ready. Vendor numbers, AUNs, get EIN and DUNs numbers.

David asks: Explain more about the distributions... Heather answers: There will not be an expectation to update their plans. Allocations are made to each eligible entity. Any entity that received a state aid allocation gets the ARPA allocation based on that amount. Will system members need to apply independently or will the system apply on their behalf? The entities that receive the allocation will be expected to apply.

## **10. Evolving District Services Project – Cathi Alloway, Consultant**

Mary introduced Cathi as a consultant now... She had 50 years of working in libraries. Evolving District Services project has a mission to review and update the purpose, focus, and expectations for district services. Look at district services, a key factor for advancing equitable library services. We are in data gathering stage. Many members are the same as the Optimization Task Force who studied this in the past. The new mission is to gather data and produce a mission, vision, and 4-5 recommended action steps to revitalize or advance districts without a total overhaul of the code and regs and without a lot of additional funding. Focus on the core of services. List of members on the committee includes David Belanger, the GAC's vice chair for a direct connection. Starting with focus groups. Also doing one-on-one interviews: have already done this and started it. When the gathering is completed and summarized, identify trends and survey library community. Contact Cathi or David with questions as the project continues. No questions in the meeting.

**11. Update on Lancaster Library System (LSLC) and Lancaster District Library Center – Karla Trout and Dale Hanby (System board president)**

Library System of Lancaster County has had 2 months and 2 days serving in role as Lancaster District Center. OCL asked LSLC late last fall if they would do the district role. It was a fully transparent process as things were developed. They started by figuring out what the mission of a DLC was: Providing equity of access for all residents of Lancaster and providing library development. Started with data gathering. Looked at code/regs—wasn't a lot there. Allowed us to set up a process that worked for Lancaster County best. Talked with Lancaster Public Library to learn what information they had—there wasn't much there either—not uncommon in districts who have served for a long time in a lean funding situation. Spent time with district employees talking about how they do their jobs. Considered contracting back services but decided against it. All bits of district services are provided now by LSLC. Tight on space, but making it work. Karla gave up her office and moved into a conference room to make space. Put together a Task force, selecting library directors from different size and parts of the county to represent and eager to share ideas. Tested things with that group—shared draft plans for feedback and re-tooling. Kept the end in mind: decided to develop a logic model to look at inputs, outputs, data collection, indicators and mostly the outcomes. 3 outcomes: patrons would find the library is increasingly able to provide, libraries will grow in quality and relevance, libraries will welcome the opportunities to work with the district. This is a grand experiment. Trying some things—noticed that ILL clerk may not be needed as a full-time position. Will establish if it is PT or FT. Built in contingencies. Had \$384,000 to spend—live within the budget. No plan for services beyond what the district could afford. Tested the agreement. On signing day, 100% signed on and agreed to the arrangement. Through the process—there is additional cohesiveness built. Have developed a replicable model of the process, could be a good exercise for districts to go through with their member libraries.

Board's POV from Dale Hanby: On behalf of Board, good to work with GAC and OCL. Appreciate understanding and time to evaluate. Public commendation to Karla and Ed and entire staff of LSLC for their work. Some issues are on hold: review of bylaws, strategic

plans. Will have future space need considerations. Office, board room, etc.... Hope this work will inform the efforts for all.

Mary thanked the LSLC for their work so far. Sue seconded the kudos to Karla and Ed and the libraries.

Mary asked: How are you feeling about managing the system and district board? Are they the same? Yes they are the same. Will be starting up a District Advisory Council. The libraries wanted representation from everyone on the DAC and meet 3 times/year. At recommendation of county commissioner, developed a charter for the DAC that lays out the role of the DAC. Karla will share the logic model and charter with Mary. Being a District Library Center is seen as an opportunity, not an obligation.

## **12. COVID-19 Update – Susan Banks**

**See email from this morning.**

## **13. School Libraries Update – Corri Hines (written report by Laura Ward, PSLA President submitted)**

Corri shared Laura Ward's report from PSLA.

48 school districts do not have a school librarian; 60,000 students don't have a school librarian. Many school librarians act as substitute teachers. School Librarians and Public Librarians are working together. At August meeting they picked ways to leverage existing guidelines, documents, and resources to create a roadmap for understanding. Examined naturally occurring ecosystems. Talked about ways to showcase examples. The joint effort is important to the success of libraries.

Marsha asks: There are reports about school libraries being closed or not staffed. Is there an employment issue? Do we need to think about career paths? Corri answered: Establish many career paths and certification options. Sue suggested we activate at the practitioner level instead of going to the superintendent level and leaders only. Beth thanked Corri and Sue for talking to the practitioners.

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

Larry did not have a report to share and was unable to attend.

Sarah said: The RCL has been doing well during the renovation. Michael Lear and Jesse Noonan go in regularly to monitor the work during construction to ensure safety of rare materials.

## **15. Committee Reports**

**a. Bylaws** – No report.

**b. Communications** – Marsha Everton noted the committee is working with the Strategic Planning Committee on gathering information about how the website is used, genealogy is the biggest category so far. Marsha is working with Carrie on more about learning how the website is currently used.

**c. Education and Advocacy** – Beth Mellor

Within the GAC, conducted a focus group with half the members to drill down and figure out how to support the efforts.

**d. Guidelines and Policies** – David Belanger commented that the committee is reviewing information and will produce a report in a few months. Committee has been meeting and working on Continuing education guidelines and update. Have a draft out for feedback from district consultant librarians. Will look at updates and tweaks and hope to be ready to vote on it at November meeting.

**e. Strategic Planning** – Dr. Barbara Zaborowski is working with the committee on developing a statewide survey to collect input on GAC goals.

Planning committee has been meeting and hashing out how to gather data to make a plan. Did a focus group on August 11 with half the GAC. After Labor Day will have a next focus group and take that data and try to decide what to do as next steps. Use existing forums to reach out to general membership to get thoughts and feelings about what we should be focusing on. Possibly a statewide survey from people who didn't get to give input earlier. Hope to have a draft of a strategic plan early next year.

## **16. Public Comment**

Vince shared from HSLC: Outreach materials are being updated and sometime this fall, you will get a box delivered. Efforts on social media front have been changing. Erin and her team are growing the social media platforms, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram. Fall training will be happening this year. POWER contacts list updated the in-person format and virtual formats for POWER Library training. 4 locations for in person training: full day training of all topics. Virtual training will be short 90-minute sessions. Do in person OR do the online sessions. Theme for training is "Back to Basics": because there has been turnover, focus on the basics. Look at e-resources and share-it. Not just how, but when and why to use.

Christi Buker, Executive Director of Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA), noted that the big annual conference is virtual—already over 500 people registered. Lots of opportunities for engagement—morning coffees. Also having an in-person retreat... different format than PALA has ever done. It's conversation around themes related to conference content. What is the financial implication, staffing to implement ideas? What would you stop doing? Bernadette Lear will present after dinner at the retreat. Thank you to the conference committee chair. You don't have to be regional to serve on the conference committee. Conference will be in Harrisburg every other year from now on—so we can do more advocacy. Elections just finished. Local levels are also posting results. Come celebrate during awards presentations: Sept 22 Certificates of Merit, wed at noon. Oct 13: new librarian, trustee and elected official, Oct 26 at 1pm. Library of the year and distinguished services award. Theme is Welcome Neighbor. Order conference

t-shirts. PALS was all virtual this year—many new programs have been tried. Doing media training—comments and feedback have been great.

Carolyn Blatchley talked about the App suggested for Chat with a Librarian. Through Cumberland County Library System's own app, they can use that app to get to services.

Beth thanked Sue Banks and Heather Sharpe for doing the work while the GAC search to make the recommendation for Deputy Secretary continues.

Christi also shared she put out a message about Library Card Signup Month. Use it.

**17. Adjourn Motion made by Robert Lambert and seconded by Marsha Everton**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:01p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie Cleary, Executive Assistant with assistance/collaboration from Christopher Noble,  
Administrative Officer II, Office of Commonwealth Libraries.

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

September 29, 2021 – 9:00 a.m. Open Forum at PaLA Conference

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