

Illinois Library Association, Public Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 10/5/2020 Minutes Taken By: Sam Adams-Lanham

Voting Members Present:

Adams-Lanham, Sam - Barrington Area Library
Albers, Marian V. - Mascoutah Public Library
Danowski, Dennis - Macomb Public Library District
Matthews, Daniel (Chair) - Moraine Valley Community College

Parker, Kathy - kathyparker consulting
Phares, Dee Anna - Northern Illinois University Libraries
Pointon, Scott - White Oak Library District
Yanikoski, Catherine - Joliet Public Library

Ex Officio Members Present:

Molly Beestrum, ILA Past President, Galter Health Services, Northwestern University (arrived 10:15)
Blaida, Derek - ILA legislative consultant
Brennan, Deirdre - RAILS
Clarage, Elizabeth - CARLI
De Fazio, Veronica ILA President & Executive Board Liaison- Plainfield Public Library District
Diane Foote ILA Executive Director
Jeanne Hamilton, ILA VP/P-E

Jacobs, Lou Ann - AISLE
McCormick, Greg - Illinois State Library (arrived 10:25)
Popit, Ellen - Illinois Heartland Library System
Szwerek, Magan (ILA Advocacy Committee) - Schaumburg Township District Library
Todd, Alex (ILA Advocacy Committee) - Prospect Heights Public Library
Wilson, Leigh Ann (ILA Intellectual Freedom Committee) - Carol Stream Public Library

Introduction of Guests:

Monica Harris, RAILS
Tim Hubert, 6-Mile Library
Cyndi Robinson, ILA

Thomas Stagg, Alpha Park Library
Mary Witt, RAILS

Approval of Agenda

Motioned by Kathy Parker, seconded by Marian Albers, that agenda be approved; motion carried.

Approval of Minutes from September 2020 Meeting - [Minutes 08/31/20](#)

Motioned by DeeAnna Phares, seconded by Sam Adams-Lanham that September minutes be approved; motion carried.

Agenda

Public Comments: none offered at this time

State Legislative Priorities, Derek Blaida: deferred to Executive Board discussion of legislative priorities

Federal Legislative Priorities, Diane Foote: please see [Legislative Update in the 10/1/2020 ILA Alert](#)

State Library Updates, Greg McCormick: none at this time

ILA Executive Board Discussion of Legislative Priorities

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Summary of Exec Board Discussion

- Questions about Cards for Unserved Residents Under 18: Discussion re-surfaced due to concerns from committee member about possible costs to small-budget libraries.
Suggestion that unserved residents be referred to local community college.
Obstacles to this idea included
 - CC library collections are not family-friendly
 - If CC library is part of a catalog consortium, neighboring public libraries will end up bearing the cost anyway, creating a stress point
 - Currently, CC & university libraries are closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic
“Point taken but money is truly an issue” + related past challenges/experiences from out of district library users
 - Confirmed that each individual library board will have the option to vote on whether to participate in program and that boards may adopt policies that suit their situation, e.g., “unserved residents may borrow books but not video games”
 - Library board and director’s primary responsibility is to their residents/tax-payers; people who live outside of the district don’t have as much stake in library policies.
 - ILA board’s concern re: this measure is that it may be a disincentive for unserved regions to join library districts
 - Reminder that we are trying to support the axiom that “Libraries are for Everyone.” Our focus should be on staying as relevant and accessible as possible
 - Committee member Catherine shared their library’s success in developing a Memorandum of Understanding (will proceed to Inter-Governmental Agreement next year) with local school district to serve their students that live outside the library boundaries
 - Catherine and Lou Ann Jacobs, who is the ex officio representative from AISLE, the Association of Illinois School Library Educators, would meet offline to talk about how public libraries and school districts can collaborate on enabling unserved kids in a school district access public library resources.

Following the discussion, the committee declined to re-vote on the issue, allowing our recommendation in favor of this legislation to stand.

- Questions about Mergers:
Concerns from ILA executive board about contiguous/noncontiguous unserved areas
 - Response: The way the law is written inherently discourages overreach, since everyone in proposed district would get to vote on it.

Scenario of Lib A with 1,000 residents and Lib B with 100 residents; all Lib B residents could vote against it and still be incorporated into larger district.

 - Yes, but Lib B’s board would have had to come to the table in the first place.
 - Dee had asked if this would be a job for the JCAR, and Derek said no, for issues involving taxation, the actual statute will have to address it.

Further points raised include

- Will this bill make it easier for libraries to be consolidated against their will?
Hard to say

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- How will tax levies be handled in the newly-formed district?
Written into proposal
- Smaller libraries may be looking for opportunities to merge in a post-COVID world
- A reminder that we already have a mechanism in place to allow district libraries to merge; this bill would just make it a less onerous process for those of different types, e.g., district, municipal agencies, municipal departments.
- How likely is it that an amendment will be added to our bill that we don't like?
It depends. There are few lobbyists in Springfield in the time of COVID.
 - Diane will work with Ancel, Glink to address outstanding questions.

[Related Cards for Kids Act Language](#) helps to inform the interpretation of Unserved Residents proposal.

Fair Tax Referendum/Budgetary Concerns:

- Governor's office has asked state agencies to identify potential cuts should progressive tax referendum fail.
- On the other hand, if it fails, the flat tax rate may increase by a percentage point, from 4.95% to 5.95%, so there may not be an issue regardless.

PPC Outreach and Education:

- Several PPC members are working on an article about SCOER for the ILA Reporter
- A schools/public library connection has been formed between several interested parties regarding the Media Literacy Task Force, and there are already AISLE volunteers interested in serving.
- Members are encouraged to share news about PPC through their networks.
- Work on the SCOER Grant and State Databases Grant has been tabled until after the Nov 3 election.

Adjournment—Sam moved and Scott seconded that we adjourn; motion carried.