

ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

August 7, 2023

Minutes taken by Mike Driskell

Call to order at 10:01 AM

Attendance

Voting Members Present: Kyla Waltermire, Mike Driskell, Anna Karwowska, John Kokoris, Laura Long, Tana Petrov, Donna Schaal, Aaron Skog, Tom Stagg, and Nikeda Webb.

Voting Members Absent: Jamie Paicely

Ex Officio Members Present: Derek Blaida, Amy Byers, Anne Craig, Gail Graziani, Monica Harris, Lou Ann Jacobs, Heather Jagman, Ryan Johnson, Elizabeth Lynch, Greg McCormick, Ellen Popit, Cynthia Robinson

Ex Officio Members Absent: Amanda McKay

Guests included: Ryan Livergood (Warren-Newport Public Library), Betsy Adamowski (Wheaton Public Library), Paul Mills (Fountaindale Public Library District), Tina Hubert (Six Mile Regional Library District)

Review of Agenda: No changes or modifications to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the July 19, 2023 meeting were approved unanimously.

District Tax Cannabis Proposal: Tina Hubert introduced the proposal. This proposal reintroduces a bill that was originally proposed in 2020 and would allow district libraries to be able to tax dispensaries up to 1%. This would not add to the total tax of the dispensary but would reduce the amount other taxing bodies are receiving. Costs continue to rise for libraries at a rate that revenue streams cannot keep up with. Revenue from dispensaries would help to maintain status quo. Municipal libraries may already be receiving revenue for the dispensaries.

Comments - City libraries do not receive funds from dispensaries, or it is unlikely.

Illinois tax on cannabis is exceptionally high as compared to other states. There is no plan to lower the taxes in the near future, as it would have negative implications on the balance of the state budget. It may be easier to add a small tax to what is already being collected as opposed to pull funding from other units of government.

This link shows the number and location of dispensaries in Illinois:

<https://cannabis.illinois.gov/about/locations.html>

Competitive Bidding Raised: Derek Blaida introduced the proposal.

This proposal would amend the Illinois Local Library Act and the Public Library District Act of 1991, which currently requires competitive bidding for contracts in excess of \$25,000 for specified improvements and equipment purchases. The initial proposal is to raise the threshold to \$30,000. One unit of government has a threshold of \$35,000, so the recommendation would be to match that threshold rather than having to propose an increase again in the near future.

Comments – it is difficult to get competitive bids in small areas and this change would allow more flexibility in getting projects done.

The committee generally agreed that \$35,000 seemed reasonable.

ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Acquisition of Treasurer Bonds for Libraries in Illinois: Monica Harris introduced the proposal. This proposal came up in the content of the latest Libraries of Illinois Risk Agency (LIRA) meeting. Other units of government are only required to bond their treasures at 10% or 25% of their total annual budget, while libraries are required to bond at 50% of their annual budget. Included an example of a bill that came from a school district in 2023 to move from 25% to 10%.

This proposal looks at the possibility of reducing the library requirement from 50% to be in line with other government agencies. This would reduce the associated costs for libraries, freeing up money for other services that are important to libraries.

Equitable Access to Electronic Literacy Materials Act: Ryan Livergood introduced the proposal. The limits placed on usage and the high costs associated with electronic material is not sustainable with the current model. This is an issue for all libraries and has been looked at in the past. This bill takes a different approach than previous unsuccessful attempts, utilizing a different part of the state statute. This is a good time to do this with the new secretary of state.

Amend the Local Records Act to Streamline Disposal of Records: Monica Harris introduced the proposal. This proposal came through last year and was a result of looking at neighboring states. It strives to streamline and clarify the process of disposal of records. Instead of having to submit paperwork for records to be destroyed, the proposal allows libraries to destroy records based on time. The proposal does not remove control from the state but lessens the burden on the administrators of the records in not having to submit the paperwork. In addition to the paperwork, there is a lot of confusion still around electronic records.

Comments – The state already has a process for the destruction of records. Education and guidance may help resolve some of the issues brought up in the proposal. The state of Illinois only has 6 staff that are responsible for handling requests, which makes for a backlog. Greg McCormick will discuss with the State Archivist and bring them into the conversation. Transition to electronic submission would help with the efficiency of the process.

Derek suggested focusing on 3-5 areas that cause the most headaches for libraries and work together with the state to come up with a timeline and proposal to bring to a joint committee of administrative rules.

FAQ from last year with those areas of interest:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rSvP92bw5Fvsdnnr93u2XLupipcd5g59/edit>

General Fund Flexibility: Donna Schaal introduced the proposal. This was proposed a couple of years ago. Costs keep increasing but libraries are prohibited from going over general fund by more than .15% of the value of all taxable property in the city. Proposal requests an increase in the limit of the general fund to help accommodate the minimum wage and increasing costs without raising taxes or going above the 5% tax levy increase limit. This would provide additional flexibility in how the money is allocated.

ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Federal Update (Cyndi Robinson):

Right to Read Act - ALA has been promoting to pass this bill to support school libraries. Please encourage library advocate to support here:

https://oneclickpolitics.global.ssl.fastly.net/messages/edit?promo_id=20409

Freedom caucuses in many states are advocating to withdraw membership from ALA due to new president.

<https://www.ffmpegradio.com/2023/07/22/il-freedom-caucus-urges-illinois-public-libraries-to-withdraw-from-american-library-association/>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/nbc-out/out-news/montana-state-library-withdraws-national-library-group-president-marx-rcna94130>

No calls from media or members so far. We probably won't see much movement on this in Illinois. Montana State Library Commission was the first to withdraw membership from ALA. Many libraries in Montana proclaimed they will stay with ALA.

ALAs response:

<https://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2023/07/american-library-association-responds-montana-state-library-commission-s>

State update (Derek Blaida):

Summer recess – legislature is home. Back to session in late October or November. No agenda set yet. Petitions for reelection go out around Labor Day.

[SB 0851 Broadband Advisory Council Act to expand the Illinois Century Network](#)

Evaluating expansion of ICN to libraries, schools, recreational facilities and increasing access. A recommendation will come out later this year from the council.

[Public Act 103-0402 Requires ISBE Develops Comprehensive Literacy Plan](#)

Requires state board of education to develop a literacy plan. That includes an evidence based, cultural inclusive program, ancillary activities and associated items in that bill. Due to legislature at end of January 2024.

This year's budget is fully baked into any revenue estimate we project to collect over the next 12 months. Cuts and reductions will not happen but, depending on collections by Oct through 1st quarter of the fiscal year, will help determine if there is a supplemental appropriation in the veto session, now less than 50/50 chance. This will also help develop the governor's framework for fiscal year 2025.

Old Business

None

New Business

ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

None

Other

Aisle update (Lou Ann Jacobs) – The first board meeting will be this Saturday
Conference coming up – Oct 1-3 at the iHotel and Conference Center in Champaign:
<https://aisled.org/conference/>

Statewide Literacy Program – already had a session of public input, including school librarians and met with the State Board of Education on the role of school libraries.

Advocacy (Gail Graziani) – Will be at the Aisle Conference in October doing Ready, Set, Advocate for school librarians.

Will also be at ILA annual with two programs, Ready, Set, Advocate frontline edition and legislative panel. Have applied for PLA, but haven't heard back.

Legislative meetups – may send a survey to the membership to get feedback on what they would like to see as far as date, format, etc.

Adjournment at 11:16 AM

Next meeting is August 28, 2023