

West Virginia Library Commission

May 20, 2016

The West Virginia Library Commission met at Library Commission Headquarters in Charleston, West Virginia, at 10:00 AM on Friday, May 20, 2016. Members present were Betty Gunnoe, Mary Strickland, Dennis Taylor, Connie Shumate, David Dalzell, Charles Julian, Debra Sullivan and David Nalker. Also present were Karen Goff, Secretary and WVLC Chief Financial Officer Jennifer Johnson.

The agenda was:

1. Call to Order – Betty Gunnoe, Chairman
2. Approval of Minutes – November 13, 2015 Meeting
3. Public Comments
4. Financial Report – Jennifer Johnson
5. Secretary's Report – Karen Goff
6. Old Business
7. New Business
8. Election of Chairman (Effective July 1, 2016)
9. Announcements
10. Adjourn

Call to Order

Chairman Gunnoe called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. She welcomed the newest members of the commission - Charles Julian, Debra Sullivan and David Nalker, and asked each of the commission members to introduce themselves and describe their backgrounds.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Taylor moved to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2015, meeting. Commissioner Julian seconded. The motion was approved.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Financial Report

Ms. Johnson began her report with an update on the status of the 2016-17 state budget process. The legislature has not agreed on a budget for the upcoming fiscal year and is currently meeting in special session as ordered by the governor. For the current budget year, Ms. Johnson announced the commission is currently on track for 2015-16.

Ms. Johnson reported that 4th Quarter GIA Services to Libraries appropriations were sent to libraries on April 1st and are now complete. Grant dispersals to public libraries totaled \$9,338,721 for 2015-16, leaving a balance of \$100,851 due to MOE and match non-compliance. Most of these dollars were awarded to libraries as supplemental enhancement grants to service centers. In addition, there was a grant to Cabell County for their Milton Branch to establish a maker space. Currently, there is \$1,851 left in the GIA budget line.

Next, Ms. Johnson discussed the general fund and lottery budget line. She reported that there is approximately \$135,000 of personal service remaining in those lines, due to the vacancies the WVLC has experienced throughout the year. A transfer request is required to move those excess funds to other budget lines, and she plans on doing that to make sure the commission meets its maintenance of effort for federal funds. Although the commission has been able to do this in the past, she says she's doubtful the commission will receive approval this year due to the current fiscal climate.

Commissioner Taylor asked if this situation would put the commission below MOE federal requirements, and Ms. Johnson said that she doesn't believe it will, but she would like to move those dollars to assure that MOE is met. Commissioner Julian then asked if she expected any accounts would be swept at the end of the fiscal year. Ms. Johnson responded that the commission has not been notified of any plans to do that.

Next, Commissioner Taylor asked if the commission still has a large amount of money in what he called the old budget digest account. Ms. Johnson said yes, the commission has approximately \$900,000 in special projects, the legislature is currently discussing re-appropriating those funds.

Chairman Gunnoe asked if the commission would be penalized if the excess \$135,000 in personal service led to the commission failing to meet federal MOE, and what that penalty would be. Secretary Goff responded that the penalty would match the percentage missed. The WVLC receives approximately 1.5 million dollars per year from the federal government, and a percentage of that could be affected.

Commissioner Julian asked how supplemental enhancement grants were awarded. Secretary Goff explained that grants were awarded on a discretionary basis to service centers, since the dollars would affect more libraries rather than just one. Ms. Johnson added that the grants aided the service centers in providing services to their affiliates. Secretary Goff says her goal is use those excess dollars to provide the most benefit to the most libraries.

Commissioner Julian began a discussion on personnel and how they might be affected by the current budget climate. He asked if the commission would be able to fill current vacancies or if those positions would have to be given up. Ms. Johnson responded by saying she is unsure at this time. She said the commission has filled some vacancies in recent months and that the remaining vacancies are currently being advertised. Commissioner Julian then asked about the possibility of layoffs, and Ms. Johnson again responded that she was unsure about that. However, she said the legislature's current budget proposals do not include cuts for the library commission, and if those proposals stay in place, then there would be no layoffs.

Chairman Gunnoe entertained a motion to accept the Financial Report. Commissioner Julian so moved, Commissioner Sullivan seconded, and the motion was approved. Chairman Gunnoe then asked for a motion to approved P-card expenditures for November and December 2015, and for January through April 2016, Commissioner Julian so moved, Commissioner Dalzell seconded, and the motion was approved.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Goff began her report by asking WVLC department directors to introduce themselves. Heather Campbell-Shock, director of State Library Services, Donna Calvert, director of Special Services, and Harlan White, director of Network Services, all gave a brief introduction and description of their respective departments. Secretary Goff added to the Network Services description by announcing that as of May 16th all public libraries in the state are now on fiber.

Secretary Goff also introduced two guests at the meeting, auditors Noah Browning and Michael Midkiff from the West Virginia Legislature's Performance Evaluation and Research Division.

The Secretary began a discussion on the WVLC's financial concerns. The budget introduced in the special session contains level funding for the library commission, the same funding as last year. Secretary Goff said the commission does not know how to plan for 2017 due to the uncertainty surrounding the upcoming budget, and she has received calls from libraries across the state asking for advice in budgeting for Grants-In-Aid for the new fiscal year. She said her advice is to budget for the same levels as they budgeted for 2016. In addition, she advised the commission that there are reports from several libraries that local funding is being cut.

Because of this financial situation, Secretary Goff said she is anticipating more waiver requests from libraries this year. State grant dollars are calculated based on local funding, and with cuts in local dollars, the Secretary expects libraries to request waivers to allow for more state funds. Secretary Goff said waivers are generally granted if have a clear plan for recovering or replacing reduced funds.

Secretary Goff reported that there were 10 local library levies on May 10th primary ballots across the state. She said that most of the levies passed by substantial margins, except in Randolph County and Barbour County, where the levies failed. She said there are two more levies scheduled for the November general election. Commissioner Nalker mentioned that libraries in Greenbrier County are also considering placing a library levy on the ballot.

Secretary Goff announced that she is working with WVU libraries on a public value project for libraries. She said this is more than a return on investment report, but is designed to determine the true value a library brings to a community, such as economic development and children's education.

In terms of federal funding, Secretary Goff announced that the federal budget was fairly level with a slight decrease. She said she's concerned that IMLS decided to take the

cut primarily out of state programs, and she and other heads of state library agencies felt that the cut should have been more evenly spread. The WVLC generally receives between 1.3 and 1.5 million dollars per year in federal funding. Those dollars are used to run library development, state-wide programs, state-wide data bases, telecommunication connections, consulting services and summer reading programs.

In connection with federal funding, Commissioner Julian asked about the WVLC's 5 year plan, a requirement to receive federal dollars. The current 5 year plan is dated 2013 to 2017, and the commission is required to provide an evaluation of the plan by March of 2017 with a new plan in place by June of that year. A third party is required to handle the evaluation. Secretary Goff said that the WVLC is joining with other state library agencies in the northeast to evaluate the current 5 year plan.

Secretary Goff said that one of the key elements in creating a new 5 year plan is finding a replacement for the vacant Library Development Director's position. That position is responsible for administrating and implementing federal programs, such as the 5 year plan.

Secretary Goff next began a discussion on library issues and projects, starting with what she called the dismal funding condition of the War Public Library. She reported that she sent two letters to the director of the library, Frances Blankenship, and her board in November asking about the sustainability of the library. She received no response to either letter. Commissioner Julian posed a question asking when does a library cease to be a public library. Secretary Goff said the library commission has no authority to shut down a library, only the library board or the city of War can make that decision. Commissioner Nalker asked if the library qualifies for GIA. Goff said War receives what it matches and, so far, War has certified that it is meeting other requirements of receiving state aid.

Secretary Goff then addressed the financial situation with libraries in Nicholas County. The county has pulled its funding from the county's three libraries, leaving all three of county's libraries in financial difficulty. The Secretary informed the commission that the Nicholas County Commission will not consider a potential levy until 2018.

Secretary Goff addressed the situation of automation at the Piedmont Public Library, which is the only library in the state that has not been added to the WVLC's automation system. In November, the board authorized the use of \$14,200 in grants to automate the library, and the Secretary reported that the cataloging project is underway, spearheaded by retired librarian Jill Gardner and WVLC tech Tina Snyder along with significant help from the Keyser-Mineral Public Library.

Secretary Goff provided the commission an email from Pioneer Memorial Public Library Director Judy Bucher concerning library director hours. The WVLC requires libraries to have a full-time library director, but the number of hours that constitute full-time is not specified. Director Bucher asked if a library is open only 25 hours a week, how many hours must the library director work to be considered full-time. After a discussion among the commissioners, the commission reached a consensus that the library's board of directors should define the number of hours that constitute a full-time position.

Secretary Goff's final point under library issues centered on the situation with the Martinsburg-Berkeley County Public Library, which is a Service Center Library for five public libraries in the Eastern Panhandle. The Secretary said Pam Coyle resigned as library director in December and was replaced by current director Sheridan Montgomery. Since then, there seems to be a lack of communication among the library, its affiliates, the WVLC and the community, and Secretary Goff pointed out that the WVLC has been getting numerous calls from concerned citizens. These calls typically concern recent policy changes at the library, and the Secretary has urged callers to take their concerns to their local library board.

Secretary Goff said she has not only heard from concerned citizens, but from Martinsburg's affiliate libraries as well because the new policies are apparently affecting the library's affiliate relationships. The Secretary has recommended that the affiliates begin discussions with the Martinsburg Library staff and produce a written affiliate policy.

Commissioner Julian asked how much discretion a Service Center director has in establishing policy. Secretary Goff said the WVLC requires an annual agreement negotiated between the service center and each affiliate. She said she advised the new director that affiliate libraries are not branches, but are independent libraries with their own boards of directors, and agreements must be negotiated. Commissioner Julian pointed out that the WVLC has no authority to require changes from the service center unless there are clear violations of WVLC requirements. Secretary Goff added that the WVLC has never required copies of affiliate agreements, but in light of this situation, that could need to change.

Commissioner Nalker asked if a meeting should be held for service center directors to get together and swap ideas, and Secretary Goff said that is currently done on an annual basis. She said the Service Center concept is an extremely important part of the state library structure and how the WVLC operates, and needs to run in an efficient, cooperative manner.

Chairman Gunnoe pointed out one of the issues in the Martinsburg situation concerns inter-library loans. A new policy institutes charges after 2 inter-library loans in one year. Commissioner Julian pointed out that it appears as if the Martinsburg Library no longer wants to continue the inter-library loan arrangement with its affiliates.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if the WVLC could serve as a mediator in the disputes between the service center and its affiliates. Secretary Goff responded that this situation may need an outside facilitator, perhaps an outside party who can bring the parties together and reach an agreement. The Secretary said she wanted to make the commissioners aware of the situation in Martinsburg and would keep them posted.

Next, Secretary Goff unveiled the WVLC's latest poster, featuring the theme "Create Learners". She said this will be an on-going theme for the WVLC to help tie libraries into education. The Secretary said the WVLC's public information specialist, Pam McEvogue, has done a great job in getting promotional materials out and helping to explain what the WVLC does.

Secretary Goff announced that the WVLC Librarians Forum is currently working on two projects. One is a best practices strategy on the use of volunteers in a library, which is in response to a legislative initiative which would allow volunteer staff access to a library's

data base. The other project is a restructure of the portal to the statewide data base – WV Info Depot. The portal has been static for a number of years and is in need of a redesign.

Secretary Goff said a New Director's Academy was held in April prior to Spring Fling. Since then there have been retirements in Upshur County and Summers County, and one resignation in Raleigh County. There are currently 4 interim directors in the state, and the Secretary said she is uneasy with that situation. She said the WVLC is helping libraries in making national and regional searches to help fill those positions. Secretary Goff added that WVLC vacancies are listed on the state job search site, while library vacancies are listed on the WVLC web site, if libraries make the commission aware of any openings.

Secretary Goff said the WVLC has posted its vacancies, but will not move to fill them until the state's budget situation is clarified. She said the most critical opening is the position of Library Development Director, which is paid with general revenue fund money, not federal funds. In addition, two consultant positions are also vacant in Library Development and a Librarian II position is open in Special Services.

Secretary Goff brought a letter to the attention of the commissioners, which concerned an article in the Oct-Dec edition of Public Library Quarterly. The article confused the Oak Hill Public Library in Oak Hill, OH with the Fayette County Public Library in Oak Hill, WV, and expressed an adverse opinion of the library's audit. Secretary Goff said she caught the error and brought it to the attention of the author, Dennis Carrigan. In response, he wrote an apology and made a correction.

Before the Secretary closed her report, Commissioner Julian asked about recent efforts by some legislators to abolish the Department of Education and the Arts, and how that might affect the Library Commission, public libraries, Culture and History, and other entities that are currently part of the department. Secretary Goff said she doesn't know what would happen, but that it does add to the uncertainty surrounding the upcoming fiscal year.

Finally, Secretary Goff brought the recent death of Floyd Fullen, a long-time member of the library community, to the attention of the commissioners. She said the WVLC sent a memorial certificate to his widow and to the Lowe Public Library.

Old Business

Commissioner Julian mentioned that WVU is offering free inter-library loans to public libraries across the state.

New Business

None

Election of Chairman

Chairman Gunnoe announced that the floor was open for nominations for the position of Commission Chairman, effective July 1st, 2016. Commissioner Taylor asked Chairman Gunnoe if she would be willing to serve another term if he nominated her. Chairman Gunnoe said it would be her honor to do so, and Commissioner Taylor made the nomination.

Commissioner Julian then moved that nominations be closed and that Chairman Gunnoe be re-elected by acclamation. Commissioner Nalker seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Next Meeting

Chairman Gunnoe announced the next meeting is scheduled for 10:00 am, Friday, August 19th, 2016 at the West Virginia Library Commission. She also recommended that the commission's new members attend the West Virginia Library Association's annual conference at Glade Springs on October 5-7, 2016, sign up for the WVLA's Trustee membership, and take part in the annual Library Legislative Day on Capitol Hill in May. In closing, Secretary Goff mentioned the WVLC's annual Letters About Literature celebration which was held on May 19th at the Culture Center. She said it was a wonderful event with 200 students and parents on hand for the program, which highlights students who write letters to their favorite authors. The letters are judged and winners are awarded cash prizes.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Gunnoe.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Goff, Secretary

Betty Gunnoe, Chairman