

Minutes of the System and Resource Library Administrators Association of Wisconsin

August 23, 2002

Marathon County Public Library

Wausau, WI 54403

Meeting called to order by President Dimick. It was determined that a quorum was present.

Members present were: John Nichols, Oshkosh PL and Winnefox LS; Mark Merrifield, Nicolet LS; Mike Sheehan, Northwest LS; Jessica MacPhail, Racine PL; David Polodna, Winding River LS; Michael Tyree, West Bend PL; Bernie Bellin, Lakeshore LS; Walter Burkhalter, Mid-Wisconsin LS; David Weinhold, Eastern Shores LS; Heather Eldred, Wisconsin Valley LS; Barbara Dimick, Madison PL; Mary Bethke, Marathon County PL; Jim Zwadlo, Southwest Wisconsin LS; Alan Engelbert, Manitowoc PL and Manitowoc-Calumet LS; Sandra Robbers, Indianhead Federated LS; Tom Hennen, Waukesha County LS; Peter Hamon, South Central LS; Terry Dawson, Appleton PL; Douglas Baker, Kenosha PL and Kenosha County LS; Cal Potter, DLTCL; Larry Nix, DLTCL; Alan Zimmerman, DLTCL; Kathy Schneider, WILS.

Changes/Additions to the agenda – Library District Legislation added after Item #7 at the request of Hennen.

Motion to approve the minutes from the May 21, 2002 meeting – (M) Polodna (S) Bellin (Vote) unanimous.

The SRLAAW Treasurer's report was presented by Treasurer Dave Polodna. Motion to accept – (M) Baker (S) Hamon (Vote) unanimous.

The assemblage paused for "A Moment from Milt" (or a blast from the past with Milt Mitchell) – Milt passed around a farewell card for Joan Airoidi and solicited donations for a SUITABLE going away gift.

The assembled group moved to extend our appreciation to Joan for her valuable contributions to our dialogue over the years, and to wish her all the best in her new position. (M) Polodna (S) Eldred (Vote) unanimous.

Library District Legislation

Tom Hennen asked bill drafter to add point #9 re: crossing county boundaries. Item # 6 stolen from some Parks District legislation that involves a supplemental sales tax. Discussion of extending districts beyond county boundaries. Potter – it adds some complexity.

Report from Paul Nelson (given by Barb Dimick) – important time to work on local political contacts during primary and election season. Cal emphasized that it is a good time while they are home in the district, even if unopposed. Need to get LSTA funded and reauthorized.

DPI 2003-2005 State Budget Requests – Potter, et al.

System Aids – increase to 13%.

Delivery Committee has asked for separate appropriation from System Aids for delivery. Superintendent is pondering.

Badgerlink – distributed memo from Sally describing increases to current Badgerlink appropriation for additional resources. Many of those resources are school/student oriented. Superintendent is leaning toward requesting funds for all of the requested resources.

- Grolier Encyclopedias \$552,000/year
- Teaching Books 40,000/year
- Sirs Discoverer

State Contracts – cost to continue.

Nix – explained a draft proposal to provide justification for \$21,590,100 or a 52% increase for biennium. Money would go to Systems, but any money over 5% increase would go to one of four priorities:

- Delivery services
- Purchase of library materials and informational services for member libraries
- Partially reimburse public libraries for participation in shared automation systems
- Partially reimburse for non-resident use

Hamon – questioned whether it should be 5% of any increase. Should we also include internal System delivery? Robbers – agrees with including internal delivery. Hennen – don't need to say partially. Robbers – don't use 52% increase. Refer to 13% statutory requirement. Baker – are current mandates being adequately funded? Should we re-evaluate existing mandates? Prefers to see the above as mandates. These items seem more core to other mandates. Morse – what happened to BadgerCard? Nix – issue paper addressed BadgerCard. Would be helped by extension of 70% requirements for funding and other proposals. Task Force recommendations addressed this as County responsibility. Baker – we're already doing these things. Weinhold – a 5% increase doesn't restore funding cuts from flat funding and 3.75% cuts in 2003. What should the threshold be? Baker – rechanneling resources to the above items may be a good thing.

Morse – SRLAAW Vision addressed minimum standards. Where did the task force address that? Nix – no TF recommendation for additional funding for that. Engelbert – local library system is best source to decide how to apply fund allocations for individual system. Polodna – what happens to this proposal language if not funded? Nix – it dies if not funded, but it carries into legislature as part of DPI's budget proposal. Weinhold – good concept. Provides a good framework for explaining need for increase. Dimick – can we make a stronger political statement in terms of critical nature of these issues for public libraries. Hennen – agrees with David. This presents a fairly unified concept for funding justification with legislature. Thinks Badgercard should be funded with a state pool of money.

(M) Baker, (S) Hamon – SRLAAW support conceptually.

Engelbert – thinks 5% is too low for the threshold. Hennen – this is only a plan and budget. Not rock solid. Polodna – would changing the date for base from 2003 to 2002 help with 5%. **Accepted as friendly amendment.** Dawson – good job because it will provide incentive for member libraries since these items result in direct benefit for them.

Motion also includes other changes including internal delivery, etc. Remove word partially. Vote - Unanimous

State Superintendent's Task Force on Public Library Funding and Legislation Update –
Potter, et al

See info at <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dtcl/pld/liblegis.html>

Cal Potter – diverse group that worked well together. Recommendations have been organized into “packages” for presentation purposes. Envision two legislative packages. First will contain less controversial items and second with some more controversial items will be introduced after biennial budget is resolved.

Package 1, Item a. is new portrayal of 13% statutory requirement. Baker – did previous action already address #1 a & b? Nix – Task Force recommendations will go to Superintendent as is. SRLAAW could send comments/opinions to Superintendent. Hamon – Task Force library representatives were not entirely trusting of Systems and wanted assurances that some funds

would get to libraries as grants or direct services. So Nix proposal which funnels funds through Systems with 13% is a compromise.

Package #1 Motion to support (M) Baker, (S) Hennen. Hennen withdraws second. Engelbert replaces Hennen's second.

Weinhold – Delivery Committee saw separate funding as analogous to University. Engelbert – supports Larry's language more than Package 1a. Wants local administrative latitude to determine local priorities. Would not support 1a. Dawson – semantic problem? Endorsing package does not conflict with Larry's language, which is just a better way of implementing 1a. Bellin – Larry crafted language with a masterful compromise between conflicting Task Force opinions. Polodna – proposals are clearly different. A Task Force agenda was to remove funds from System control. Hennen – agrees that these are very different proposals. Nix – TF language would be much more difficult to implement in current biennium. Hamon – would have voted for Larry's proposal if it had been in front of Task Force.

Dawson – suggested he may be frequently oblivious? Didn't perceive TF libraries were trying to pull funding away from control of systems. Rather that it was more important to generate widespread support within library community for 13%. Bethke – agrees with Terry. Really feels impetus of libraries was to provide justification and support for more funding. Doesn't feel there is any conflict between two proposals. Hennen – don't give legislature opportunity to divide and conquer.

Vote – Unanimous.

Package #2 – described by Potter. Relates to size/reorganization of Systems and new conditions of System membership for member libraries relating to Director, materials spending and hours. Also includes change in some services requirements for online databases. Engelbert – MCFLS already on record opposing item c. Objects to County Board decision without agreement by municipalities and/or library board. Concerned about item g also. Morse – no mechanism to require payment for services member libraries are required to provide. Dawson – need to trust County Boards and System Boards. Since it is permissive and not mandatory, thinks it is a good idea. Engelbert – shouldn't cede decision-making about libraries and their future to System and/or County Board. Hennen – vehemently opposes both of these items.

Package 2 Motion to support (M) Morse, (S) Dawson)

Hennen – at this point publicly declared himself a democratic centralist? Baker – already imposition of outside demands and control through mandates. Engelbert – how much local control lost? Weinhold – question about c. What is rationale for taking away agreement by library boards? Polodna – make it easier to do. Potter – consensus within TF that there are too many systems. Engelbert – no evidence that larger units of service or government are better. MCFLS, one of the smallest systems, has all its member libraries meeting minimum standards. Eldred – doesn't believe that County Boards will act unilaterally without consulting with the library boards. The departure of their three counties provides evidence of that.

Vote – Aye (17) No (7)

Package #3 – County/Municipal libraries organization and funding reform. Controversial components will probably wait until Fall for introduction. Extends 70% requirement across county and/or system borders. Eldred – does h. require a certified librarian? Potter – was not considered by Task Force. Nix – DLTCL will look into it. Baker – do joint library provisions grandfather all existing joint libraries or do we want it to apply to all existing as of some date? Thinks we should. Weinhold – d. should also be phased in for existing joint libraries. Engelbert – explain i. Nix – designed to address disparity between current library boards and those county

library services where the current “board” does not perform many of the functions of a normal board. Baker – I’m not all negative...

Motion to Endorse: (M) Dawson, (S) Merrifield Vote – Unanimous

Package #4 – clean up provisions. Cal doesn’t see any as controversial. Base upon issue paper #14.

Motion to Endorse: (M) Hennen, (S) Burkhalter Vote – Unanimous.

Package #5 – Library Districts. SRLAAW previously on record in support. Morse – like a municipal library? Potter – Yes.

Package #6 – not statutory initiatives. Baker – why is 17 systems a problem? Potter – funding cuts opens question of economies of scale. There were a number of different agendas. Burkhalter – Illinois had same discussion in 1990’s. Worked at process that merged three systems and there were no economies of scale. No savings in money from 1992-2000. Decline in quality of services. May be other reasons, but no money savings. Merrifield – Rick and Mark have concerns about b & i. Zones of cooperation (i.e. shared automation) are better solutions. Hennen – have a “base closing commission?” Tyree – a lot of politicking in Tom’s suggestion. Polodna – are there systems that are too large? Agrees that no proof has ever been presented that larger units of service are better.

Motion to endorse Package #6 with exception of b & i. (M) Dawson, (S) Baker.

Bellin – this did not come from TF members at this meeting. Nix – when counties move between systems, services are affected. Obvious there are economies of scale. It’s not to improve the efficiency. The one that got the better resources is providing the better services. Hamon – having gained three counties, things have changed -dramatically. Service demands have grown. Shouldn’t we look at this issue.

Vote – Ayes (21) No (4)

Dawson – how to take b & i into being studied? Eldred – develop something similar to School/Public Library Merger guidelines? Useful for Division to develop. Weinhold – advantage of that publication was that it provided no direction but rather addresses issues and guidelines.

(M) Dawson, (S) Hamon – motion to use LSTA funds to prepare report/guidelines on system mergers and realignments. “Does Size Matter?”

Morse – supports because it would provide information to evaluate services. Merrifield – take the bull by the horns. Do it now or, like CESA’s, directive could come down from the top. Size and service issues are right sized? Should study. Bellin – feels TF members (other than systems) feel there are too many systems. Baker – original idea was to take strength of larger libraries and spread to rest of libraries. Extend strong services outward to other libraries.

Vote – Unanimous

Potter – suggest we use reconfigured TF to study formula and optimal systems. Hennen – how does formula change work when places like Milwaukee loses \$100,000 between 11 and 11.25% when state funding increases \$400,000. Zimmerman – this would happen at any point of change. Eldred – wants to thank Cal and the Task Force about openness and productivity. Round of applause.

DPI Reports

WISCAT - Let Sally know if we’re ready for Z39.50 configuration.

Gates Library Grants - Larry says things are going well. Every eligible library (51% of libraries eligible) applied and will get grants. Final letters of award will go out Aug. 30th. Getting 7 labs. Allowed aggregation of servers into fewer larger servers. Training will be underway. All the computers should be installed by March. DPI will get some training money for staff training. Worth about \$2.8 million to Wisconsin.

BadgerLink - Now doing redesign of website to make easier for handicapped accessibility.

Reference and Library Resource Services - QuestionPoint consortium will start by end of Sept/October. Nineteen libraries participating. Mix of public, UW, private colleges. Group has supported one consortium twice.

Digitizing Workshop - Explained handout of outline proposal for workshop for public library and public library system staff. This will be a 1.5 day workshop based upon experience of Great Lakes Maritime History Project to enable more libraries to undertake digitization projects. WILS is planning a digitization basics training module.

LSTA - Would like SRLAAW to write letter to Wisconsin Congressional delegation about reauthorization. Differences in funding authorization. Need to get it calendared. E-mail Peg is you want figures for your district.

November, 2002, SRLAAW meeting date? Dec. 6 was settled on, @ WLA offices.

Morse – state shared revenues for municipalities and counties? Status? Potter – could be cuts. Who is Governor makes a big difference. Senate is critical. Growth in suburban areas demographically, hurts shared revenue support because affluent suburbs don't need money as much.

Meeting adjourned by Barb Dimick.

Recorded by John Nichols.