

**MINUTES  
ALLEGHENY COUNTY LIBRARY ASSOCIATION**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
MARCH 21, 2011**

**BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Shannon Debes, Brad Fish, Albert Kamper, Leslie Britton-Dozier, Jo Ellen Kenney, Ronald Borczyk, Tom Herward, and via teleconference, Lafe Metz.

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Shawn Flaherty.

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Marilyn Jenkins, Connie Galbraith, John Smart, Tyrone Ward, Carolyn Marks, Russ Walker, Mike Romano, Paul Kelly, Kathy Robinson, and Kimberley Hrivnak.

**6:30 P.M.      Call to order – Shannon Debes**  
Determination of Quorum – Quorum established.

**Public Comments** – None.

**Consent Agenda** - MOTION made by Herward and seconded by Fish to accept the minutes from the February 21 Board meeting with amendment noted by Kenney. MOTION carried unanimously.

**Requests for Additions or Changes to the Agenda** – None.

**Reports and Communication**

A. President's Report – Debes noted on March 29 there will be a RAD meeting at which ACLA's Strategic Plan will be considered. Dan Griffin has been elected RAD Chair for 2011. She encouraged attendance at the dinners and workshops scheduled for May 24 and 25 and July 26 and 27. Ten proposals were received for facilitation of the strategic planning process. Debes, Kamper, and Fish will be reviewing the proposals along with Jenkins.

B. Executive Director's Report

1. Local Advocacy Work – Jenkins has been encouraging directors and trustees to meet with local legislators as many are newly elected and need to understand the implications of the State draft budget and to support the Governor's recommendation for level funding for the basic subsidy.
2. Strategic Plan Update – Jenkins has spoken to a number of vendors regarding the RFP process for a facilitator. She noted there is a

wide variety of diverse representation of proposals from both local and out-of-state firms. She asked that each library board assign a communications liaison to the strategic planning process for a second point of contact. This will lessen the responsibility for communication on the library director (all communication will be copied to library directors as well).

3. Closing the Hunger Gap Initiative – Jenkins noted there is a 10-county initiative in Southwest Pennsylvania to address the issue of hunger. She has been asked to participate in the partnership to represent libraries.

C. LAC Chair Report – At the last LAC meeting Ward noted a representative from One Communications, a local phone service provider, gave a presentation on potential cost-savings for local libraries. Janet Jai, a local author, gave a presentation about her ideas on sustainable funding for libraries. CLP will be providing a service outlet in the new Pittsburgh Market in the Strip District. Regarding the formula concerns, no regions were requesting major changes to the distribution formula, but it was requested that an annual review of the formula be scheduled each year. Ward noted concerns submitted by Helen Palascak, Upper St. Clair Library, and suggested outcomes submitted by Sharon Bruni, South Park Township Library, were submitted to the LAC and were distributed to Board members. Their concerns focus on the purpose of the RAD formula, whether the formula leverages that purpose, and how statistics are collected and compiled.

D. Regional Reports

1. Central – Galbraith reported that District Services held a free raffle for two scanners that were won by Wilkesburg and North Versailles Libraries.
2. North – No report.
3. South – Fish noted the South Region would be meeting this week to discuss the RAD formula.
4. East – Kamper noted Rebecca Serey spoke about the eiNetwork's upcoming replacement of network equipment at all County libraries. The East Region also discussed the RAD formula and Help Desk issues. They are putting together a checklist for 25 things every Board should know.
5. West – Kathy Robinson noted the West Region had a discussion with ACLA staff member, Kelley Beeson, about summer reading.

E. Board Committee Reports

1. Audit – Borczyk reported that Sisterson has completed their fieldwork on the audit and a draft report is anticipated in the next few weeks. A post-audit meeting with Sisterson is scheduled for April 21.
2. Finance – Kamper reported the Finance Committee will be meeting in April. The first of four payments for 2010 Table Gaming funds has been received from the State and distributed to libraries in March.

3. *Governance* – No report.
4. *Personnel* – Debes noted that personnel issues will be discussed in Executive Session.

### **Specific Topics for Discussion and Motions**

#### **A. Preliminary Questions for Consideration in the Strategic Plan Process –**

Three questions which have surfaced in the organization for a number of years have will be posed to libraries during the strategic planning process:

1. *What are the trends in Member Libraries' activity over the past five years? What has changed and why? What might be ahead?*
2. *What outcome(s) should result from the distribution of RAD or other funds at the County level? How can such outcomes be assessed?*
3. *What is the optimum organization structure going forward to provide the most effective and efficient library service countywide?*

She presented State Report data from 2006 through 2009 noting countywide trends. Cuts in State funds collectively have been offset by increases in local and RAD funds. However, with increased budgetary constraints and costs, it is anticipated that circulation, hours, staffing, collection expenditures, etc. will decrease over time. She noted that historically ACLA has not acknowledged size and total output of libraries and perhaps should consider whether consideration should be made for small, medium, and large libraries. As funds become increasingly tight perhaps this is an opportunity to re-think the current organizational structure and how we operate as a system and as individual libraries.

Fish noted one of the biggest challenges the organization and each library face is balancing the need to serve the local community as well as support the consortium. Kenney agreed. Herward added that in his years of involvement with the organization there has always been a “dynamic friction” between local interests and the countywide approach. He also noted there has never been an agreement on library measurement and standards. The Board agreed that it is important to decide what we want our libraries to look like, both individually and collectively, and then we can determine how to get there, securing funding to support that vision. Debes encouraged broad discussion of these questions.

Jenkins recommended preliminary conversation of these questions with the Membership be included on the agenda for the April 26 General Membership meeting.

For member review, Fish presented statistics regarding population, circulation, and income, and how small, medium, and large libraries compare.

**Public Comments** – Russ Walker, Whitehall Public Library, thanked Brad Fish for attending a recent Whitehall Library Board meeting to discuss ACLA and the Strategic Plan.

At 8:02 p.m. the Board convened to Executive Session to discuss personnel. The Board reconvened and the meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

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**Leslie Britton-Dozier, Secretary**