

Legislative Committee Minutes - December 2001

WYOMING LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
December 12, 2001
Conference call

I. Chairman Carol Thomas called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

II. Roll Call:

Present: Carol Thomas, Lynette Anderson, Alice Hild Farris, Frances Clymer, Vicki Roth, Jenny Ingram, Cynthia Twing, Lucie Osborn/ALA Councilor, Tom Jones/ex officio, Lesley Boughton/ex officio

III. Approval of minutes from September 28, 2001

A motion was made by Lynette Anderson to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded. Alice Hild Farris requested her name be spelled correctly. The motion carried.

IV. Urgent business

A. Legislative reception

1. A motion was made by Lynette Anderson to continue to have the Legislative Reception. The motion was seconded and approved.
2. Discussion-Lucie Osborn had talked to Paul Smith, owner of the Hitching Post and the Health Department in Cheyenne. Mr. Smith will no longer allow food to be brought into the facility in spite of Health Department's OK to bring food into a public dining room. The Health Department did voice a preference that food be prepared in a certified kitchen. Mr. Smith cited liability and monetary considerations for his refusal.
3. Lucie shared that Laramie County Library staff had brainstormed ideas for alternatives for the reception including changing the venue to a breakfast or lunch, changing the location to a church, Laramie County Library, Governor's Mansion or museum, but kept coming back to the fact that the Hitching Post is the logical place for the event since many legislators stay there for the session and they are used to the reception being there.
4. Frances Clymer made a motion to continue to hold the WLA Legislative Reception at the Hitching Post. The motion was seconded and approved.
5. Some ideas were introduced concerning ways in which WLA can continue to make the Legislative Reception unique and personal for the legislators-goodie bags, chamber music, a choir from one of the Cheyenne high schools. Committee members agreed that low key would be better. Carol Thomas will communicate our thoughts to Elizabeth Cuckow, chair of the planning committee. Essentially, they will be given a budget and freedom to plan the event.
6. Vicki Roth made a motion to have the Legislative Reception on Tuesday February 26, 2002. The motion was seconded and approved.

B. Reaction to the Governor's Budget December 1, 2001

1. Carol Thomas explained that the base budget for the Wyoming State Library submitted by Lesley Boughton was accepted. All items in the Exceptions Budget were denied. Governor Gehringer cited "revenue projections and continuing funding obligations" as his reasons for denying the Exceptions Budget. Two items in that budget will affect WLA.
 - a. Object Code 236 is regarding the licensing of additional databases that are evaluated and selected by Wyoming librarians. All Wyoming residents potentially benefit from free access to these databases. The budgeted amount is \$250,000 and would cover the cost of additional databases and increased costs associated with their licensure. Lesley explained that this money is not part of operating expenses for the State Library, but that philosophically and for continued library development it is important.
 - b. Frances Clymer made a motion that the Legislative Committee of WLA take on the lobbying effort for additional database funding (Object Code 236). The motion was seconded and approved.
 - c. Discussion-Variou committee members stressed the importance of having a lobbying fact sheet so that we can be intelligent about discussing these issues with our respective legislators. Lesley will put Jerry Krois and Desiree Saunders to work on putting together pertinent facts and figures. Some ideas included statistics for numbers of searches on WYLD, cost per search, document delivery, numbers of full text magazine articles accessed. Frances mentioned the importance of having librarians as contacts in every county, especially those counties whose legislators are on the Joint Appropriations Committee. Tom Jones said getting information to this committee is crucial. The time window to get information to this committee is between Christmas and New Years. The importance of informing school librarians and getting their support was mentioned by Lesley. They could play a key role in lobbying efforts because they can involve students and their parents.
 - d. Object Code 420, an E-Government initiative has a budget amount of \$495,000. It regards an initiative to bring connectivity to all Wyoming libraries and their branches. This amount would be in future biennium budgets. Because of this Tom Jones made it clear that other library directors will have to know about this and agree with the lobbying effort. He urged the committee to pursue the total \$495,000 package with details being worked out as needed.
 - e. Lucie Osborn made a motion to move forward on lobbying for Object Code 420 as it is written in the budget proposal. The motion was seconded.
 - f. Lynnette Anderson suggested that Carol Thomas poll all library directors to determine their support of lobbying for this budget item. All directors will need to know their cost for connecting branch libraries, what is currently being paid, savings that may be realized and upfront costs for equipment. Lesley explained that this will be opportune for libraries that have applied for Gates Foundation grants that would cover the cost of start up for libraries without connectivity.
 - g. The motion regarding Object Code 420 was approved.
 - h. Lucie asked Tom Jones how the Legislative Committee should proceed to achieve their lobbying goals. He suggested that we start by getting pertinent information to the Joint Appropriations Committee. This information will be generated by the Wyoming State Library, passed on to Carol Thomas who will then share it with all library directors. Tom agreed to put together a "how to lobby" sheet to help new committee members. He also stressed the importance of getting local support from outside the library community. Testimonies from our library patrons about

how Internet access at their local libraries has benefited them is valuable. Committee members were charged with the task of contacting other library personnel in their respective counties after fact sheets become available. We should then let Carol know that this has been done.

- i. Alice Hild Farris asked that this information be posted on the WYLA web site.

- C. Potential Issues-Lesley said that she was not aware of any surprises that might occur during the legislative session. Filtering and the reorganization of A&I are always in the background and the WSL is prepared to deal with those if they should occur. Tom concurred, said he had not heard anything so far that had him concerned on our behalf.

V. Old Business

- A. Carol will be in contact with Erin Kinney to enlist her help in formulating a fact sheet for distribution to all library personnel. This fact sheet will give information about the exceptions to the Wyoming State Library budget and how best to bring these to the attention of our respective legislators.
- B. Poor timing of a letter written by Vicki Roth to be sent to legislators regarding upcoming legislation that would impact libraries was the result of incomplete or inaccurate understanding of legislators' schedules. The letter should be sent in the spring before their informal meetings in the summer.
- C. Carol Thomas had been in contact with Marcia Wright, chair of the Intellectual Freedom Committee regarding tracking of CIPA information. Marcia said that issue was on the back burner for her committee and gladly passed responsibility to the Legislative Committee and Jenny Ingram.

VI. New Business

- A. Contract review-Tom Jones. Some concern was voiced by committee members regarding the increase in Mr. Jones' contract as WLA lobbyist. Clarification of his role, his understanding and support of library issues and philosophy and his expertise in general answered questions raised about the increase. Lucie Osborn moved to accept Tom Jones' contract with a base charge of \$4800, automobile mileage at 32 cents per mile, photocopies at 15 cents each and \$500 for each special session that involves WLA issues. The motion was seconded and accepted.
- B. National Legislative Day, Washington D.C. May 6-7, 2002. Committee Chair, Carol Thomas declined the opportunity to attend National Legislative Day and suggested Jenny Ingram, as Vice Chair of Federal Issues, would be a logical attendee. Lucie Osborn made a motion that Jenny Ingram go to National Legislative Day. The motion was seconded and approved.
- C. Kay Carlson has included Carol Thomas on her Program Council for WLA Convention in Casper in 2002. Carol expressed a desire to engage gubernatorial candidates as speakers for the Legislative luncheon at WLA.
- D. Two items of interest to the Legislative Committee occurred at the Executive Board Meeting held in Casper on December 7, 2001.

1. The WLA budget was amended at Lucie Osborn's suggestion to include a \$3000 dollar expenditure for the costs of the Legislative Reception. Income of \$1000 was projected to come in from librarians who had previously provided food and those who traditionally contributed money.
 2. A statement "In Defense of Freedom", written by Carol Thomas and Marcia Wright was approved by the Executive Board.
- E. Carol urged committee members to be thinking of prospective committee members and to pass those suggestions on to Trish Palluck. The Legislative Committee currently has eight members and would benefit from at least two more members.

VII. The next meeting of the Legislative Committee will take place on Monday February 25, 2002 in Cheyenne at 6:00 p.m. The Laramie County Library will host the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Twing