

**NJLA Public Policy Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Friday January 13, 2017**

1. Chair Eileen Palmer called the meeting to order at 10:08am at the Monroe Township Public Library.

In attendance: Pat Tumulty – NJLA; Eileen Palmer - LMxAC; Chris Carbone - South Brunswick Public Library; Bob Belvin - New Brunswick Public Library; Jennifer Podolsky - East Brunswick Public Library; Leah Wagner - Monroe Township Library; Janet Marler – Atlantic Cape Community College; John Wallace - Atlantic Cape Community College; Amy Babcock Landry - Livingston Public Library; Mary Romance; Jeanne Marie Ryan - Roselle Public Library; James Lonergan – New Jersey State Library; Susan Kaplan – Sayreville Public Library; Marie Coughlin – BCCLS; Kathy Schalk-Greene – LibraryLinkNJ; James Keehbler – Piscataway Public Library; Melissa Mitchell—guest from YA section; Kristen Matteucci, NJLA Intern.

1. Minutes of the November 4th Meeting: Moved by Bob Belvin and seconded by Leah Wagner. One abstention.
2. **Pat Tumulty’s Report/Legislative Update**
   1. **Good news re: School Library Media Specialists legislation** – a bill was introduced yesterday as **A4500** by Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly. Wimberly and Assemblywoman Shavonda Sumter are primary sponsors. The bill would require a certain number of SLMS per school, determined by a formula based on school size. Still trying for legislation on K-12 info literacy curriculum.
      1. James reported on a meeting with a school official, who noted that the decline in school librarians may be connected to the lack of a curriculum. Principals focus on *curriculum* that must be taught when making decisions. James continues to attend DOE meetings. ESSA implementation is difficult because of bureaucracy and differences due to district/region.
      2. Want to get better information on/from school “report cards.” Reports ask about which teachers have (school media) certificates, but may not indicate if the individuals who have those certificates are doing work related to that certification.
      3. Visited Chair of Assembly Education Committee, Assemblywoman Marlene Caride.
      4. Next, the workgroup will work on getting a Senate sponsor
      5. There are resolutions for public library boards to pass on the Unlock Student Potential website.

Amy noted that public libraries may want the support of school libraries first.

Mary suggested that school representatives do the outreach.

James Lonergan affirmed that we can get a list of school board representatives from The State Library.

* + 1. I Love School Librarians Campaign – help from NJPT. Kids, parents can fill out “valentine” for their librarian. NJLA can help promote this, as only about half of school librarians belong to NJASL
  1. **Visited** Assemblywoman Egan Jones, Senator Nilsa Cruz-Perez (who signed onto all our bills), and Senator Van Drew, who said he will sign onto the Johnson legislation.
  2. **Visited Assemblyman O’Scanlon’s staff re: grants to the library for workforce development.** While we know that every library does a piece of workforce development since the recession, legislators need stories to illustrate this work **– get stories to Pat quickly so we can get into the budget early.** Pat wants to write this up next week since the Governor’s budget will be introduced at end of Feb. and everyone is lining up right now to be included in the budget.
     1. It’s helpful to have names attached to stories, or provide number of workforce development workshops attended/given, etc.

1. **Public Policy Forum Recap**
   1. Thanks to all who provided content. Forum was well received – positive feedback.
   2. Committee discussed how to increase attendance (and whether we needed to do so). About 70 attended last year; about 50 attended this year. Suggestions:
      1. Can we do without charging so more people can attend?
         1. But people may not show up if there is no charge.
      2. Do a “brown bag” instead to save on cost of lunch?
      3. Timing may be bad, as budgets may have dwindled by the end of the year.
      4. Frame forum as opportunity for new members to draw more people than Directors
         1. Make forum a part of emerging leaders program.
         2. Invite interns from the other committees – John will follow up with Erica about integrating forum into internship program
      5. Was 201 daunting? Stick to 101 or not use a number in future.
      6. Could re-format with a joint session in AM and breakouts in PM that address different topics or levels of expertise
      7. Chris noted that the professional development committee is creating guidelines for event/program fees: Perhaps they could consider creating different fee schedules for different types of events; Policy forum could cover costs rather than make a profit
      8. Kathy noted that LLNJ may be able to make funds available to NJLA to co-sponsor/subsidize the forum. Advocacy is an area of LLNJ’s strategic plan.
      9. Mini public policy trainings could be inserted into adult/youth services forums that already exist
      10. We could create webinars or stream live so people don’t have to come to us
2. **Surplus Materials Disposition**

* James Longergan drafted some language for a technical amendment and is waiting to hear from Keith McCoy
* Chris, Pat, Keith McCoy, and James will touch base before next meeting to report back

1. **Current Projects**
   1. **Update on the Construction Bond Bill Strategy Breakfast**
      1. Jeanne and Pat spearheaded the event. Had a good mix of people (including architects), felt it was energizing. Trustees attended and excited about doing municipal resolutions.
      2. The only new sponsors are the one who Pat went out and got.
      3. James will look into getting a more permanent link under the Advocacy tab on NJLA website
      4. Current President of the League of Municipalities is in Senator Sweeney’s district. This is an economically challenged community; the library building is not ADA accessible.
         1. Strategy: Finding local politicians in newsmakers districts.
      5. Working with a **June 30th** deadline
      6. Susan Kaplan to check in with Assemblyman [John S. Wisniewski](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/members/BIO.asp?Leg=160)
   2. **2017 NJLA Conference Programs**
      1. All programs accepted
         1. Pre-Conference with Patrick Sweeney – Conference Committee asked for a new title, punchier description. Kathy presented a number of alternatives to consider. New title: One Talking Point at A Time: Library Sound Bites that Work. The group also chose the second of two options for a new program description.
         2. Public Policy Update
         3. Celebrating your library/Library Achievement Task Force
         4. School Library Media Specialists/Unlock Student Potential program
   3. **Advocacy Week** 
      1. The group discussed possible dates/lengths of time, as well as a name, for this year’s legislative visits.
      2. Training - Low attendance at last year’s training (10ppl), but people do use materials – videos, handouts.
         1. This year, we’ll be adding school librarians, however, and these visits are new to them
      3. Major messaging may be around the construction bond bill, but there’s enough on table to talk about to keep the “agenda” open for the visits
      4. Eileen, Pat, Jeanne Marie, James Keehbler, Chris, Amy, John, and Kristen will schedule a phone call over next two weeks to discuss further
   4. **NJLA Statement on Division, Inclusion, and Action**
      1. Chris and Eileen introduced a draft statement that was initiated by Executive Board Member(s) at large after seeing ALA statement, retraction, etc. The Board asked for input from the Public Policy and Intellectual Freedom Committees. The statement is on the agenda for the Board meeting next Tuesday.
      2. The policy committee had a rich, lengthy discussion about the draft statement. The comments and concerns of the committee members reflected a wide range of opinions and highlighted the complexity of the issues at hand.
         1. The committee agreed that it would have liked more direction from the Executive Board about the statement’s intent and purpose: Is it meant to be a reaction to the election (or election cycle), is it a (preliminary) statement of values, or both?
         2. Questions as to the fast-tracking of the statement were also raised
      3. After spending time making potential/recommended revisions to the language, the group decided to ask the Intellectual Freedom Committee to weigh in. See addendum with recommendations from Eileen and Amy (Chairs of PPC and IFC) to the Executive Board.
      4. NJLA currently lacks a statement of core values; it will be a priority to create a value statement going forward
   5. **ALA Legislative Day** -
      1. Dates are May 1st-2nd; Jeanne Marie will craft a message for Pat to send out in the NJLA update to alert/invite people to participate
      2. Executive Director of Washington Office, Emily Sheketoff, is retiring
      3. Issues to address:
         1. Net neutrality is in the crosshairs – 2 of 3 appointments to the FCC & President-elect Trump are against it
         2. LSTA, IMLS may be zeroed out (However, they were zeroed out under Reagan; this is not necessarily a death knell)
         3. Security and privacy – there have been efforts to move legislation to rollback protections regarding electronic data
         4. We will likely be re-fighting battles we won in last 8yrs
      4. Eileen will be attending Legislative Committee meetings at ALA
2. **Intellectual Freedom Committee Report**
   1. The PPC/IFC co-sponsored program was accepted for the NJLA Conference: Practical Conversations about Diversity, Inclusion, Intellectual Freedom, and Social Justice. The two-part panel will include book reviewers and local talent. Eileen and Sophie Brookover will facilitate the conversation.
3. **State Library Report Highlights**

**Library Support Services:**

* 1. The annual New Jersey Public Library Survey is now open through March 15th
     1. statistics are collected for the IMLS Public Libraries Survey and for determining eligibility for Per Capita State Aid
  2. A draft for the New Jersey LSTA Five-Year Plan 2013-2017 will be ready in February
  3. New Director orientation – Feb 15th at the State Library; see website for registration
  4. The Local Library Support Fund will be available on 2016 New Jersey State Income Tax forms as one of many options for charitable donations. For promotional materials, see NJSL website re: [Income Tax-Check-off](http://www.njstatelib.org/services_for_libraries/resources/local-library-support-fund-state-income-tax-check-off/)
  5. The Lieutenant Governor’s Office did not yet respond to the State Library’s proposal regarding regulations because the office was focusing on regulations that are set to expire in 2016; N.J.A.C. 15:21 and N.J.A.C. 15:22 expire on November 12, 2017.
     1. State Library will resubmit revised proposal by September

**Lifelong Learning**

* 1. The Division of Taxation has confirmed dates for Small Business Workshops
     1. see more info at NJSL website re: [Small Business Workshops](http://www.njstatelib.org/news/small-business-workshops-now-available-select-libraries-across-state/)
  2. 2017 Best Practices in Early Literacy Awards: The State Library is accepting applications for the annual Best Practices in Early Literacy Award. Deadline is Feb 20, 2017
  3. 2017 Summer Reading Manuals Distributed to all Public Libraries and 2017 Workshops Dates and Locations Have Been Determined:
     1. Monday, March 6th at Wayne Public Library; Gloucester County Library in Mullica Hill on Friday, March 10th; Franklin Township Public Library (Somerset) on Monday, March 20th; and Monroe Township Public Library on Monday, March 27th. Registration will open in February.
  4. Tutor Training: Following up on last year’s successful Literacy Boot Camp and feedback from the boot camp graduates, “Tutor Training for ESL Conversation Groups” will be offered in partnership with Literacy New Jersey.
  5. Mental Health Matters: NJSL and LLNJ are partnering on a series of workshops this spring on mental health first aid certification. This 2-part workshop is presented by Mental Health Association of NJ, and will be held March 2 & 9 at the Camden County Library, Winslow Township branch, and March 16 & 23 at the Hasbrouck Heights Library. Each session runs from 9:00-1:00. Cost: $35

1. **Other**
   1. Eileen reported that a resolution in honor/memory of Robert White, a stalwart former member of PPC, will be presented at ALA Midwinter in Atlanta.
      1. Eileen paraphrased what Robert once said to her after a long discussion: *We’re not going to agree, but isn’t the conversation fun?*

The meeting adjourned at 12:14pm on motion by Chris Carbone and seconded by Bob Belvin. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen Matteucci,

PPC Intern

**Addendum:**

On Jan 13, 2017, at 2:38 PM, Amy Babcock-Landry <[babcock-landry@livingston.bccls.org](mailto:babcock-landry@livingston.bccls.org)> wrote:

Eileen and I spent the morning with the Public Policy and Intellectual Freedom Committees. The conversations we had about the statement were powerful and enlightening. I will not be able to attend the meeting on Tuesday so I am sending our recommendation to you via email-

We agree that as a state chapter we have the ability and the obligation to reassure and advocate for our members and the libraries they serve.

Public Policy and Intellectual Freedom have reviewed the statement and strongly feel that while a commitment to inclusion is essential, this issue is deeply complex and deserves more care and conversation. It is preemptive (and perhaps dangerous) to put out a statement that assumes so many values when our core values have not yet been determined and may, in fact, be evolving.

We strongly feel it is essential for NJLA to move forward on creating organizational core values and we appreciate that the Executive Board has reached out to our committees for input and understands the importance of this issue. We are looking forward to the conversations that lay ahead with the knowledge that they will be difficult, scary, and personal. But they are necessary and we are confident they will be an essential tool to move our organization forward and uniting our membership.

Sincerely,

Amy and Eileen