

MINUTES

REGENTS PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 18, 2008
Athens, Georgia
Athens Regional Library System

ATTENDING: Kathy Ames, Nick Fogarty, Carolyn Fuller, Greg Heid, Donna Howell, Alan Kay, Richard Sanders, John Szabo, Susan Whittle

TELECONFERENCE: Barry Reese, Gary Swint

GPLS: Lamar Veatch, David Singleton, Julie Walker, Lyn Hopper

VISITOR: Joe Forsee

Lamar Veatch discussed the process of Policy approval by BOR which establishes Policies for GPLS and delegates approval of library matters to the Chancellor. The delegation of authority for GPLS to Chancellor, as distributed at the last RPLAC meeting, was approved by BOR.

Lamar presented the Governor's budget proposal that has been sent to the State Legislature. The budget included the funding of four library construction projects (taken from the GPLS proposed list of priorities but not selected in priority order) funding for PINES, funding for upgrading telecommunication lines, the funding of one million dollars for books for public libraries, and additional other operational funds for GPLS and GPLS staff. The Governor did not include any MR&R funds for public libraries.

Kathy Ames pointed out that the third and fourth construction projects that were included in the Governor's budget were not selected in priority order from the list – skipping over other worthy library projects that have local funds in place to match the state construction grant. She reminded the group that several of the libraries that had been skipped over do have their SPLOST funding in place and were relying on the state grant to move their projects toward construction. The Governor's decision to skip over these library projects may well endanger the SPLOST funds that the local governments had committed for construction of the local library facility.

Lamar Veatch reported on the several meetings that he and David Singleton have had with the different counties in the Northwest Regional Library System, directed by Joe Forsee. All of the counties have filed letters of intent to withdraw from the regional library system. Lamar and David shared policy statements, crafted by GPLS, which pointed out the benefits and deterrents to leaving a multi-county regional library system to become a single county library system. They also informed each county board that there would not be a guarantee of anticipated state funds for any new state paid positions or other state grant funding for the future single county library systems due to the

shortfall of state allocated funds. Each county has until June 30, 2008 to possibly withdraw their letters of intent.

Greg Heid explained that the minutes of the last RPLAC meeting were not available for review as the meeting did not record properly. As a consequence, he asked for the Committee members to review their notes to reconstruct the meeting.

Greg Heid next announced that he will be asking for a member to volunteer as recording secretary for each of the remaining RPLAC meetings until July 1, 2008. This will allow better tracking of motions and other aspects of the meeting that cannot be transcribed from a remote recording of the meeting. Donna Howell volunteered to record minutes for the remainder of the meeting. Carolyn Fuller recommended having a motion form with the action and who made and seconded motions on it for reference. Carolyn volunteered to provide the form.

Lamar Veatch gave an introduction to the Draft Requirements for State Aid. Greg Heid asked that the Committee take one last look at the Requirements that RPLAC has been working on for the last two years. He explained that this last review will constitute the first formal step to review the Requirements before they move on to Public Review. This is the new process for all documents and requirements to take under the new process of codification for BOR Policies.

The RPLAC Members and GPLS staff then proceeded to work through the Requirements for Public Library Grant Funds draft Policy to comment upon and edit the definitions portion of the document. Julie Walker took notes of changes and comments made to the document. Julie will make the suggested changes and edits to the document and email the edited changes to members, for review before the February RPLAC meeting. Julie also agreed to develop a definition for MOE in the document.

The Committee stopped before proceeding to the second half of the Requirements for Public Library Grant Funds (the actual requirements section) due to time remaining for the meeting. Greg Heid directed the group to review the second half of the draft Policy before the February RPLAC meeting so everyone can bring comments and edit suggestions to the next RPLAC meeting where the Committee will finish their review of the draft Policy.

Greg Heid then asked the members of the Committee and GPLS what purpose they thought that RPLAC served and what they wish for the Committee to work on for the remainder of the fiscal year. Issues that members brought forth are as follows:

- Complete the Requirements for Public Library Grant Funds Policy.
- Develop and recommend budget priorities for GPLS to promote in the FY2010 budget request (work with GPLS on developing the budget request.)
- Recommend to GPLS a funding formula for state grant funds.
- Discuss and recommend implementation of issues dealing with fundamental fairness in state grant formulas.
- Recommend Multi-County Regional Library System incentives for GPLS to implement in state funding formulas.
- Give Lamar Veatch and GPLS staff expectations on the subjects and processes in which members wish to have input.

- Support and recommend an increase in the number of state construction grants and the continued, yearly funding of MR&R grants for public libraries throughout Georgia.

RPLAC members also expressed the following sentiments to Lamar Veatch and staff:

- Members do not need to be surprised over issues or budget matters that GPLS has already decided upon and/or announce to public library directors (such as the GPLS budget request.)
- RPLAC members find that there is a need for clarification of lines of communication and expectations between RPLAC and GPLS.
- Lamar Veatch and GPLS should inform RPLAC of decisions or actions on issues and ask members to give comment or discussion on the topic.
- GPLS should act in more of a team manner with RPLAC.
- RPLAC members should know up front that they must commit to 12 meetings during the year.
- The two BOR Regent members of RPLAC should be encouraged to attend RPLAC meetings by our scheduling of meetings in each BOR member's hometown area.
- RPLAC members wish to raise the visibility of RPLAC and public libraries with the Board of Regents.
- The Constitution and By-Laws of RPLAC should be amended to allow a member going off the Committee to attend the first two meetings of their replacement in order to serve as a mentor for their replacement.

Lamar Veatch explained that he wishes that RPLAC would provide him with information and advice on issues that they and public library directors may have. These are issues that GPLS should know about. Lamar wishes to engage in more instances of philosophical consideration and brain storming of different concepts within RPLAC committee meetings.

Greg Heid handed out a document, supplied by Joe Forsee entitled "*Criteria for Approval of Applications for State Aid Funds From County and Regional Library Boards*" that served to be an official interpretation of past state regulations from the state library agency. Developed by the state library, the document has previously served to clarify state regulation for public library directors. Greg asked that Committee members look review the document and decide if such interpretation statements would help clarify the Requirements document currently under consideration. Joe Forsee gave further clarification as to what purpose the interpretations served and the use that updated interpretations may serve for current public library directors.

Committee members were told to be aware of the new Georgia State Code 20-5-5 which parallels Federal CIPA regulations. A current legislator has become concerned that public libraries are not following Georgia's 20-5-5 as we should. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Carolyn Fuller made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Kathy Ames seconded the motion. The motion passed by acclamation.

Next meeting will be on February 15th at the Newton County Library in Covington.