

Regents Public Library Advisory Committee  
September 29, 2008  
Minutes

**Welcome**

The committee was called to order by Kathy Ames at 10:10 am at the Newton County Library System, Covington, GA. She thanked all the members for coming and recognized Mr. Felton Jenkins, representing the Board of Regents. Those present: Kathy Ames, Julie Walker, Dusty Gres, Joe Forsee, Jon McDaniel, John Szabo, Lamar Veatch, Greg Heid, Carolyn Fuller, and visitor Charles Gee. Gary Swint, Alan Kaye, and Barry Reese were on teleconference.

**Minutes**

The minutes of the July 21, 2008 meeting were distributed. It was noted that Felton Jenkins was in attendance and that Dusty Gres and Jon McDaniel had teleconferenced into the meeting. A motion was made by Joe Forsee to accept the amended minutes and a second was made by Dusty Gres. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**Old Business**

*Maintenance of Effort*

It was the general feeling of the group that some form of statement about Maintenance of Effort should remain in place. The concept of Maintenance of Effort is the only leverage available to maintain a sustainable level of funding for libraries from local governments. If the local government must make cuts, the other county departments must be cut by the same amount. Senator Chip Rogers met with Dr. Veatch and Ms Walker regarding Maintenance of Effort. He wanted to be sure that there was a wavier procedure to address specific locals issues such as plant closings, etc.

Dr. Veatch wants to grant requests for wavier with an Ad Hoc committee. Before the waiver could be granted, the local government must open its books and show that it is dire straights and can not make it without help.

Kathy Ames asked if Dr. Veatch could craft a white paper that sets forth the basis of the waiver with a companion piece putting forth some value to the in-kind services that comes from the State services.

Joe Forsee moved that Maintenance of Effort requirement be held as is, but that library system boards be able to file an appeal for temporary relief from the requirement based upon local in other than those where the library is being cut more than other local services across the board. Carolyn Fuller seconded the motion.

After discussion, the motion and second were withdrawn. John Szabo made a motion that RPLAC reaffirm the current Maintenance of Effort policy with the understanding that, as with other state agencies, there are provisions for a waiver. Jon McDaniel seconded the motion. Motion passed.

#### *Audit Lite*

Tracy Arner, Carl Vinson Institute, is working Gary Swint, East Central Georgia Regional Library System with “Audit Lite” for his audit in October. A report will be made to the Directors when it is complete. Part of the discussion added that, in addition to the “Agreed Upon Procedures,” there should also be some local procedures to be added such as vacation accruals, etc.

#### *Construction Policies*

Kathy Ames commended GPLS and Nate Rall for the successful “Facilities Summit” held at the Directors’ meeting in September. However a question was raised about the Construction Policies that were distributed at the summit. Several members of the RPLAC Committee, who were also on the Construction Committee, remembered some differences in the document. Also, the members of the Construction Committee thought that, after the document went to BOR legal, it was to come back to the Committee for final approval. Dr. Veatch stated that he had sent the document with a \$2M cap due the poor economic condition. He said that the document had already gone to the BOR facilities planning for approval but that he could pull it back and make the change. Regent Jenkins advised that this not be done but the committee felt that it was necessary. A discussion of the cap of \$3M versus \$2M ensued. Several people felt that the \$3M cap should remain. Dr. Veatch suggested that a committee of RPLAC and Construction Committee meet and formulate an argument to document the need to raise the cap to \$3M as it was in the past.

#### *Budget Issues, OPB, further reductions*

Dr. Veatch stated that Rob Watts had no additional information about budget cuts. OPB is waiting for the report of the September revenues to determine the amount of the cuts but it could be as high as 12%. Ms Walker said that GPLS had effected cuts materials allocation to .35 per capita (minimum based on state law). If the economy improves some of the funds could be restored. If the economy continues to slide, funds could be cut from System Services Grant.

Dr. Veatch said that state paid positions could be filled but the need for the position must be documented.

There was also discussion about the possible breakup of some systems. GPLS was asked to consider putting a moratorium on the breakup of regional systems. It was indicated that this might be done.

#### *PINES Courier update*

Ms. Walker said that the second round of bids were received for the new courier contract were received last Tuesday. There were 9 bids but she doesn't know the dollar amounts. It was stated that these bids include non-PINES systems. There is still much interest in developing a courier system that would include colleges, universities and possibly technical schools. It is possible that combining all of these entities would be more cost effective than running 3 separate systems.

Dr. Veatch stated that GPLS hoped to hire a logistics specialist to plan and execute an in-house courier service but that it would probably take a year to develop this plan and that having a one year contract with a commercial courier would be necessary.

### **New Business**

*New "home" library for AV access for out of system patrons*

Kathy Ames asked if libraries were changing home library when patrons move from a county that does not have GADD to a county that does since authentication for GADD use is based on the library card number. Most stated that they did not issue new cards but some systems do because they have databases that also authenticate based on card number.

There needs to be a group of TBC library directors to discuss the reorganization of the program to meet budget constraints and also to help library directors plan space reorganization in the libraries.

*LSTA Budget Summer 2009*

There will be no VRP grants in 2009.

*Rep. Bob Smith's request for a BIG Idea*

Rep. Smith met with Ms Walker and Dr. Veatch asking for the library community to come up with a BIG Idea on the scale of PINES. Several ideas were mentioned such as homework helper, 24/7 reference, E-Government. Rep. Smith also urged each library director to invite their legislators to meet with them before the January session to talk about the important of libraries. He said most legislators feel that libraries are not used as much as they used to be. John Szabo mentioned an article that appeared in the September 2, 2008 edition of Wall Street Journal talking about the increased use of public libraries during difficult economic times. Directors should present information to their legislators that would show their own statistics of use.

### **Other Business**

*Focus Groups in SE and SW Georgia*

*Note this from the GPLS Strategic Plan*

- *GPLS and RPLAC will hold a series of at least 5 geographically distributed focus groups of library directors to discuss and recommend revisions to the state aid formula. (2 have already been held in North GA)—Possibly hold a focus group in Savannah in December.*

- *By Dec. 2008, RPLAC will recommend a revised and simplified funding formula for GA public libraries based on feedback from the focus groups.*
- *By April 2009, GPLS will obtain approval for the revised formula from the BOR, with approval and support from OPB.*

*Possible future meeting dates for RPLAC*

*November 18 at 10:00am at GPLS*

*December 11 at 1:00pm in Savannah*