



## **Regents Public Library Advisory Committee R-PLAC**

### **Introduction**

Public Libraries are keystones in our democratic society, providing reliable information and life-long learning opportunities for all. Over three hundred seventy (370) public libraries in all one hundred fifty nine (159) counties in Georgia are organized into fifty eight (58) single and multi-county library systems. Over \$200 million per year in local and state funding is used to provide a multiplicity of library services and programs.

Georgia's public libraries cooperate to an extraordinary degree, using collaborative programs, economies of scale, inter-loan practices and state-level services, to maximize the benefit of expenditures and insure that all Georgian's can easily utilize the combined resources of all of these libraries. PINES and GALILEO are just two examples of this unique collaboration that "levels the playing field" and "raises all the boats".

State support for public libraries is the vital ingredient of this collaborative, state-wide library service. This state support, in the form of grant funds and services through the state library agency, is intended to insure an adequate level of community library service in all parts of the state.

The Georgia Public Library Service also provides essential leadership and services that unify the locally based public libraries into a network that benefits all Georgians. However, this collaboration would be impossible without the active participation and enthusiastic support of the leadership of each of the public library systems.

In July 2000, the state library agency was officially transferred to the University System of Georgia (USG) from the Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE). It had been moved to DTAE in 1996, from the Department of Education. These moves have left the public library community feeling like foster children, being shuffled from home to home.

Since this latest transfer, great progress has been made in bringing GPLS and the public libraries into the Board of Regent family. Public libraries are included in the BOR's **Vision, Mission, and Goals**. The State Librarian, as the official spokesperson for public libraries at the state level, is significantly involved in USG activities. USG staff members proactively support state library services and operations. Examples come from BOR Business, Sponsored Programs, Legal, Technology (OIIT), and Facilities.

There is now another step that can be taken to further the participation of public libraries within the USG and increase their visibility at the Regents level. Similarly, there is interest in insuring that the expertise, talents, and experiences of the public library community are made available to the Regents. Therefore, this proposal to create a public library advisory committee is presented.

This would create a permanent committee, composed of representative public library directors that would advise and make recommendations to GPLS, senior USG staff, and the Board of Regents.

This committee would be named the **Regents Public Library Advisory Committee (R-PLAC)**

In order to facilitate intended communications, one or more members of the Board of Regents would serve as liaison to R-PLAC.

## **Membership**

For the past several years, GPLS has convened a representative committee of directors to assist in the reworking of the state grants formula (New Direction). Informally known as "The Sapelo Group", this State Grants Advisory Council (SGAC) would transition into R-PLAC.

Currently, the SGAC is composed of 10 directors, one each chosen from among the members of the 10 groups of library directors. These groups were initially established on the basis of library type and geography.

This proposal recommends streamlining these 10 groups into 4:

- Urban/Rural Multi-County Regional Library Systems
- Rural Multi-County Regional Library Systems
- Rural Single County Library Systems
- Urban Single County Library Systems

(The composition of these groups is detailed in the chart at the end of this document.)

Each of these groups would select 3 members to serve staggered terms of 3 years each.

Any director who had served one full term of three years would be eligible to serve a future three-year term after one year had elapsed from the completion of their latest term.

The assembled group of twelve (12) directors would elect a chair and vice-chair from among themselves.

In consultation with the present membership of the State Grants Advisory Council, the details for transforming the current structure of the SGAC to the R-PLAC would be developed.

The State Librarian will serve ex-officio as a member of R-PLAC.

## **Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the R-PLAC would be to review, discuss, and make recommendations in the following general areas:

- Strategy for public library services, including fiscal implication of strategic goals
- Major opportunities for GPLS to pursue
- Challenges facing public libraries and proposed solutions
- Programs, policies, and practices that insure effective and efficient use of public library resources
- Library legislation

In addition, this committee could serve in a liaison capacity with other BOR advisory groups (e.g., RACL) for the purpose of furthering mutual goals.

## **Committee Structure**

The 12 public library directors would constitute R-PLAC.

This committee would develop Bylaws under which it would function.

This committee would elect the following officers: Chair and Vice Chair/Chair-Elect. Terms of these offices shall be one year.

## **Meetings**

R-PLAC will meet at least twice per year, usually in conjunction with Directors Meetings called by the Georgia Public Library Service. Additional meetings may be scheduled during the year by the advisory committee chair or by the State Librarian.

## Liaisons

As noted above, one or more Regents should be appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Regents as liaisons to R-PLAC.

The Chancellor will designate senior USG personnel as staff liaisons to R-PLAC.

## Staff Support

Staff support for R-PLAC will be provided by the Georgia Public Library Service through the office of the State Librarian.

### Regents Public Library Advisory Committee

Membership Representation - Three Members Elected from each of these library system groups.

Urban/Rural Multi-County Regional Library Systems	Rural Multi-County Regional Library Systems	Rural Single County Library Systems	Urban Single County Library Systems
Athens Regional (Athens)	Bartram Trail (Washington)	Brooks Co.	Atlanta-Fulton Co.
Chattahoochee (Columbus)	Cherokee (Lafayette)	Chattooga Co.	Bartow Co.
Chestatee (Dawsonville)	Coastal Plain (Tifton)	Elbert Co.	Clayton Co.
East Central (Augusta)	DeSoto Trail (Camilla)	Fitzgerald Co.	Cobb Co.
Flint River (Griffin)	Kinchafoonee (Dawson)	Hart Co.	Conyers-Rockdale Co.
Live Oak (Savannah)	Lake Blackshear (Americus)	Jefferson Co.	DeKalb Co.
Middle Georgia (Macon)	Mountain (Young Harris)	Lee Co.	Dougherty Co.
Northwest (Dalton)	Northeast (Clarksville)	Moultrie-Colquit Co.	Forsyth Co.
Piedmont (Winder)	Ocmulgee (Eastman)	Peach Co.	Gwinnett Co.
Sara Hightower (Rome)	Oconee (Dublin)	Roddenbery (Grady Co.)	Hall Co.
Sequoyah (Canton)	Ohoopsee (Vidalia)	Thomas Co.	Henry Co.
South Georgia (Valdosta)	Okefenokee (Waycross)	Twin Lakes (Baldwin Co.)	Houston Co.
Statesboro	Pine Mountain (Manchester)		Newton Co.
Three Rivers (Brunswick)	Satilla (Douglas)		
Troup-Harris-Coweta	Screvin-Jenkins (Sylvania)		
Uncle Remus (Madison)	Southwest (Bainbridge)		
West Georgia (Carrollton)			

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