

**TRAVERSE DES SIOUX LIBRARY SYSTEM
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Minutes of Meeting – FINAL
September 19, 2024**

Board Members Present

Elizabeth (Bette) Traxler, Le Sueur County – President
John Roper, Faribault County—Secretary
Rev. Brian Schanil, Waseca County
Kathryn Guyer, Watonwan County
Patty O’Connor, Blue Earth County
Carl Zeidler, Brown County
Kristy Olson, Martin County (Virtual Attendance)
Kelly McBride, Public Libraries Representative (Virtual Attendance – Non-Voting)
Amy Lorenz, School Libraries Representative
Heather Biedermann, Academic Libraries Representative
Heather Harren, Special Libraries Representative
Jack Kolars, Nicollet County Alternate
April Ide, Public Libraries Alternate
Terri Schuette, Sibley County Alternate

Board Members Absent

Christian Lilienthal, Sibley County, Vice-President
Marie Dranttel, Nicollet County - Treasurer

TdS Staff Present

Stacey Lunsford, Executive Director
Seth Erickson, IT Systems Manager
Casie Reiner, Technical Services Manager
Connie Haugen, HR & Finance Administrator

- I. **Call to Order.** President Elizabeth (Bette) Traxler called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.
- II. **Approval of Agenda**
MOTION: Terri Schuette made a motion to approve the agenda. Heather Harren seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- III. **Approval of Minutes**
MOTION: Patty O’Connor made a motion, seconded by Carl Zeidler, to approve the minutes of the last meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.
- IV. **Correspondence.** None.

- V. Financial Report.** Stacey Lunsford, Executive Director, reported that our spending is under budget. There are some line items under Operating Costs that are over budget. Those are due to the move to our new offices for extra furniture and supplies needed for our new conference room, as well as some electrical work that was required. One of our CDs matured on 8/22/24, and we purchased a new CD for the same amount at 4.45%.

MOTION: Kathy Guyer made a motion, seconded by Brian Schanil, to approve the bills payable. The motion passed unanimously.

- VI. President's Report.** Bette Traxler reported that she had attended a meeting with Mark Goldberg who gave us the findings on the Classification and Compensation Study that they did for TdS. Bette also attended the ACHF meeting, and a meeting with Amanda Standerfer regarding strategic planning.

VII. Executive Director and Department Reports

A. Administration.

- Stacey Lunsford, Executive Director, reported that she visited Le Center Public Library, Henderson Public Library, Sibley County Historical Society, and Winthrop Public Libraries in the past month.
- Stacey met with Julie Trebelhorn, the Mayor of Winthrop, who wanted to talk about the changes of Sibley County going from a county to a city library and some of the things they weren't prepared for.
- Stacey included the Library Awareness and Usage Study in the board packets. The third bullet shows that TdS has the highest library usage in the past two years of all the areas in the state. Among Hispanic and Latinx users, they are aware and using libraries as much as anyone. That there is no usage difference based on ethnicity, means that we are reaching those communities.

B. Technical Services Department.

- Casie Reiner, Technical Services Manager, reported that during the summer reading time, our libraries don't have the time to send us quite as many books to catalog, but now we're getting more books again.
- We started monitoring the high-demand holds books and have ordered several of the books when there are at least 7 holds for every copy of the books that are in the system. This brings down the wait time for our patrons.

C. Technology Department.

- Seth Erickson, Director of IT Systems, reported that we are ready to launch the testing of our new mobile app. Library staff—not patrons--will be able to test the app, log in, and look at it, and offer feedback. He recently met with the vendor to take a look at the app, and he thinks it looks pretty good so far. Hopefully, he will be sending the staff an email to download it and start testing the app.

One of the cool things about the app is that if you have the app and you come to the desk to check out, you can show them your bar code, and staff can scan it instead of having to having your physical library card there. We will be purchasing new 2D scanners that can scan screens, as well as normal bar codes.

We will probably have a soft rollout of the app around January 1st. We'll work with the libraries to make sure that fits their schedule.

- Yesterday we met with staff from SELCO, the library system to the east of us. They're going to migrate to Evergreen and Aspen like we have, starting next year. We talked about our feedback on the migration, what went well, and what could have been better. It was a great meeting with some really good staff.

VIII. Library Directors' Reports

A. Special Libraries.

- Heather Harren, from Blue Earth County Historical Society, reported that October is Family History Month. They are doing a genealogy series every Tuesday in October to teach people how to conduct their own genealogy search and different resources available.
- Nicollet County Historical Society is doing their stories from the past event once again at the Treaty Center. Finding people from the past and bringing their stories back to life is a great way to use archival resources and make history fun.
- Blue Earth County Historical Society is trying something new by having flashlight tours of the Hubbard House. They are excited to use that space in a different way.
- The Deep Valley Book Festival is coming up October 5 at the County Inn and Suites here in Mankato. Great local authors from Minnesota come down to meet people. You can purchase their books and get them autographed. There are a couple of great keynote speakers during the day.
- Blue Earth County Historical Society is attending the New Ulm Genealogical Society genealogy workshop, which will be bringing local historical societies to the New Ulm Public Library later in the month.

B. School Libraries.

- Amy Lorenz, from Sibley East School District, reported that they had their first library media specialists meeting yesterday. It went well, and they had some great conversation.
- Sibley East is working with Arlington Public Library to bring in two authors in December for the middle school/high school--Theresa Peterson and Walter Labat. They do Dakota stories and Amy is hoping to tie that to the curriculum.
- The book fair is coming in November.
- New Ulm Public Library recently installed a book vending machine that is tied to the good behavior program in schools. Kids who have good behavior get to earn tickets to choose something from the book vending machine. They get to take the books home, and kids are very excited about that.

C. Academic Libraries.

- Heather Biedermann, from South Central College, reported that their president, Dr. Annette Parker, announced that she is going to retire at the end of this year. So they will be doing a national search for a new president.
- South Central College received a grant to investigate a Z degree, which is a zero-cost degree. This uses a lot more open education and library resources. This would allow students to come to the college, get a degree, and not pay any money. South Central College is already getting a lot of state and federal funding for bringing students that

have lower income to be able to attend college for free. MSU is investigating this option as well.

- The first week in October Heather will be attending the Open Education Resources Conference to learn more about that and find ways that they can help students and faculty develop these degrees.
- Heather will be attending the MLA Conference in Rochester. She will be meeting with the Intellectual Freedom Committee and talking more about book challenges.

D. Public Libraries.

- April Ide, from New Ulm Public Library, reported that the public library directors met last week and talked a lot about the new ban on book banning legislation, specifically the training requirement for library staff. The legislation requires library staff to have training on collection development. Libraries are having a lot of conversations figuring out which staff might be required to get training and what the training would look like. There is some training provided by the state, but the class size is pretty small right now; so that's not going to meet everyone's needs.
- The library directors are very excited about the new collectionHQ resource that will help them analyze their collections and make sure they are meeting the needs of their patrons. They are already doing a lot of weeding based on the information they have been receiving, such as which items are not being used and what needs to be refreshed in their collections.
- New Ulm Library is having their Family History Fair on October 17, which will offer insight on genealogy and the research resources that are available.

IX. Committee Reports.

A. ACHF Committee.

- The ACHF Committee recommended approval of 4 grant applications for \$3,407.54.
MOTION: Heather Biedermann made a motion, seconded by Terri Schuette, to approve the 4 ACHF grant applications for a total of \$3,407.54. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Old Business. None.

XI. New Business.

- A. Approval of the RLBSS FY24 Report of Results and Summary of Expenditures.** Stacey Lunsford explained that this is the annual report that we provide every year for funds received from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

MOTION: Patty O'Connor made a motion, seconded by Heather Harren, to approve the RLBSS FY24 Report of Results and Summary of Expenditures. The motion passed unanimously.

- B. Approval of the MCMT FY24 Report of Results and Summary of Expenditures.** Stacey Lunsford requested approval for this annual report.

MOTION: Carl Zeidler made a motion, seconded by Brian Schanil, to approve the MCMT FY24 Report of Results and Summary of Expenditures. The motion passed unanimously.

- C. Approval of One-Time Expenditures for Unspent FY24 RLBSS and MCMT Funds.** Stacey Lunsford reported that as she was preparing the two reports just approved, she and Connie Haugen kept going over them because they found that we had not spent all the money. We

kept thinking something was missing, but it wasn't. So Stacey contacted the state and explained the situation, including that the former director left in June, just as the new funds were starting to come in. They weren't sure what to do either, as this has never happened before. The state said that we need to spend all of that money before June 30, 2025, in addition to all the money for FY25. So Stacey and the staff sat down and discussed the possible things that we could do, as this had to be one-time expenditures. We came up with a list, figured out the cost of each, and came up with the proposal that was in the board packet.

After the meetings with the Personnel Committee and Finance and Budget Committee with the compensation study consultant, we had two big takeaways from that. We are still working on one of them and will bring that back at a later date. The other is that the estimated salary we had budgeted for the new Regional Librarian position was under the recommended salary by \$2,288 in wages and \$347 in benefits that we hadn't budgeted.

We had some staff development things and different equipment, which we have been making do with, but equipment is a great thing to do with one-time money. So there are some things we are going to replace, instead of just trying to keep making them work. Seth is going to be updating networking equipment for the TdS office for around \$14,000.

The short audit to change the fiscal year will cost an additional \$11,370, so we can use the money for that.

We can pay the strategic planning contract and the compensation study contract from that money.

We would like to have the carpet in this office cleaned twice a year, rather than just once.

Then last week Stacey talked to the library directors about things that would be of benefit to them. Stacey estimated the number of documents we might expect to translate per library in one year. That was about \$15,000.

Most of the other one-time things are pretty self-explanatory. We are going to contact someone who does readers' advisory training. This type of training will help staff do that work better, because one of the top things that people come in and ask for help on is reading recommendations.

We are also looking at doing some library advocacy training and advocacy for funding for every library. We have been told for years that the best way to advocate for funding is storytelling, and we're finding that that no longer works with the funding people. This particular speaker has a lot of experience, and Every Library is a nonprofit that helps libraries across the country get their referenda passed for library funding. They are very successful at it.

We also had a small 2024 ACHF funding gap that we were going to pay for from reserves, but we can use this one-time RLBSS money.

We also talked about the 2025 grants that we plan to offer to libraries. Stacey would like to add money to that for all of the different libraries. She'd like to get it started sooner rather than the beginning of the year, because we have to follow the fiscal year. We only have 10 months to spend it. It will also take people a while to come up with projects, get the applications in, get it done, and ask for reimbursement. Stacey made a note of what Amy Lorenz said about that project with Arlington, as that would be a good candidate for this program. And it's not until December, so we have time to get it done.

April talked about collectionHQ and how the libraries are getting to use that for really good analyses of their collections. One of the things that is really obvious so far, is that around 70% of the nonfiction collections are outdated, which is never good for nonfiction. It means that people haven't checked them out for quite a while. And the issue is, if you pull a lot of this nonfiction out and you don't have the money to replace them, what do you do? So we have proposed, and the library directors have enthusiastically agreed, that we could provide an incentive program. If they use collectionHQ and weed out items in their nonfiction, we will give them money to replace them. We will use the formula that we use for member fees, based on cataloging and on collection size. That means that bigger libraries will get a larger amount, and smaller libraries will get a smaller amount, because their collections are smaller. Again, it would just be for this year—a one-time expenditure. But it would really help them to revitalize their nonfiction collections for their patrons.

A question arose about whether the money could be used to pay subs so staff could do the weeding, but it doesn't appear that's something we can use the money for. We'll keep thinking on it.

MOTION: Patty O'Connor made a motion, seconded by Kristy Olson, to approve the list of one-time expenditures for the unspent FY24 RLBSS and MCMT funds. The motion passed unanimously.

- D. **MCMT \$1 million Appropriation Update.** Stacey Lunsford explained that our attorney is putting together a letter to Counting Opinions, the original company hired to do the school census project. The letter will terminate their contract and refuse to pay the last invoice. TdS is the fiscal agent for the MCMT funds, and we are one of only a couple of systems that have an attorney, so we just contacted our attorney. Wilder Research was hired to complete the project. There have been weekly meetings with them regarding data cleanup, revision of the executive summary, and the data portal.
- E. **Approval of the FY25 RLTA Application.** Stacey Lunsford explained that this is the annual application we complete each year to receive the Regional Library Telecommunications Aid and asked for board approval. A copy was in the board packet.
MOTION: April Ide made a motion, seconded by Kathy Guyer, to approve the FY25 RLTA Application. The motion passed unanimously.
- F. **Recommendation to Increase Salary and Benefits for the new Regional Librarian Position.** Stacey Lunsford explained that based on the results of the compensation study, the Personnel Committee and Finance and Budget Committee recommend to increase the salary and benefits by \$2,635 in the 2025 budget.
MOTION: Jack Kolars made a motion, seconded by Heather Biedermann, to approve increasing the salary and benefits of the new Regional Librarian position by \$2,635 in the 2025 budget. The motion passed unanimously.
- G. **MLA 2025 Legislative Priorities.** Stacey Lunsford stated that the list of legislative priorities came to us last week, and we were asked to bring them to our boards for endorsement. These will be the things that the library community in Minnesota will be looking to get support from the legislature in the next session. The Board agreed to endorse the list of 2025 Legislative Priorities.

XII. Board Member Exchange.

- A. Bette Traxler visited her daughter in Denver recently and was able to go to three different libraries while she was there. She said that several of them have some great permanent outdoor seating areas, decking, and lounge chairs; and that some of them overlooked the mountains.

President Elizabeth Traxler adjourned the meeting at 10:15 am.

John Roper, Secretary

Date

Minutes prepared by Connie Haugen,
HR & Finance Administrator