

# Board of Trustees

MINUTES OF THE April 11, 2001 MEETING

---



## TRUSTEES

**Present:** Erin Apostol, Gordon Batcheller, James Carr, Michael Esposito, Ed DeBerri, Charles Diamond, Philip Erlich, Melissa Palmer, Mary Ellen Schroder, Lynne Strnad, June Tyrrell, Hawley Zwahlen

**Excused:** John Quinan

UHLS STAFF: P. Ritter, Sara Dallas, Heidi Fuge

DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION LIAISON: Patricia Nonamaker

VISITORS: Jeff Cannell (Albany Public Library)

P. Erlich convened the meeting at 4:30 PM.

## I. NEW TRUSTEE

**MOTION:** E. DeBerri moved to accept the appointment of E. Apostol as the representative from the Albany Public Library. She will be nominated at the June Annual Meeting to fill W. Meredith's term which expires in 2002. M. Esposito second. Unanimous.

P. Erlich administered the Oath of Office to E. Apostol.

P. Erlich appointed E. Apostol to the Administration Committee.

## II. MINUTES

**MOTION:** J. Tyrrell moved to accept the March 2001 Minutes as presented. L. Strnad second. Unanimous.

## III. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

P. Ritter reported the following:

- ? a group of approximately fifteen people met with the Assemblymen and Senators on Library Legislative Day. He thanked S. Dallas for setting up the appointments and shepherding the group through the meetings.
- ? the members libraries encountered many difficulties in attempting to transmit their Annual Reports and the State changed the deadline in recognition of these software problems. There are still four libraries that haven't submitted reports. No monies for the member libraries will be released by the State until all of the reports have been submitted and approved.
- ? two automation vendors were chosen for further consideration - III and epixtech. Two hands-on sessions have been planned for each vendor at UHLS and East Greenbush. Site visits to organizations using these vendors have been scheduled for

May. On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, a III site will be visited and on May 18<sup>th</sup>, an epixitech site. P. Ritter encouraged the trustees to attend the hands-on sessions and site visits to familiarize themselves with the systems. He hopes to have a recommended vendor to present at the July 11<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

? the automation positions have been re-advertised. To-date there are nine applications for the technology position and three for the training position. May 14<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for applications. Interviews will be held the first week in June.

#### **IV. TREASURER'S REPORT**

L. Strnad presented the report for the period ending March 31, 2001. She noted that UHLS will be operating in a deficit situation until the receipt of the state aid. If expenses maintain their current rate (approx. \$100,000 per month) there is enough money in the operating reserves to carry through September. Report accepted for filing.

#### **V. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### Finance Committee

Report by L. Strnad, Chair. She reviewed the March Purchase Journal.

**MOTION:** L. Strnad moved that the President be authorized to sign the March Purchase Journal and Payroll totaling \$111,814.76. E. DeBerri second. Unanimous.

L. Strnad reported that the annual audit was concluded in three days. There were only two minor adjustments that couldn't be take care of in advance. The UHLAN bills were all paid by the end of 2000 and all of the first quarter 2001 bills were paid before the second quarter bills were issued.

**NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 PM at UHLS**

##### Administration Committee

Report by M. Palmer, Chair. She noted the April 16<sup>th</sup> deadline for nominations for Trustee, Program and Advocate of the Year Awards and June 13<sup>th</sup> is the Annual Dinner Meeting.

**NEXT MEETING: Monday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM at UHLS**

##### Services Committee

Report by G. Batcheller. He noted that the Committee had completely discussed the process undertaken to review the Outreach mini-grants and is satisfied with the procedure and satisfied with the Outreach Advisory Council's grant recommendations.

**MOTION:** G. Batcheller moved acceptance of the original Outreach Advisory Council's recommendation for funding the Outreach mini-grants totaling \$10,300. J. Tyrrell second.

Discussion. S. Dallas noted that the members of the Outreach Advisory Council are either members of the target populations or professionals who work with those populations. There is also a UHLS member library director. The Council members have rotating three-year terms and meet twice a year. The mini-grant applications are sent out to the libraries after the Board approves the new budget. The

applications are returned, photocopied and the Council members have 2-3 weeks to review the applications before meeting to make their recommendations on funding.

Ed DeBerri noted that Rensselaerville's grant application was one of the three not approved. He noted the following objections to the review process:

1. It is a subjective process. No written criteria are used by the reviewers and there is no objective criteria for ranking the applications.
2. The reasons given for approval and denial are inconsistent. He noted that one library was approved but was asked for a list of the community organizations with which they would be working. RVLL gave a complete list of the organizations and their grant was denied.
3. It is an ethically strained process. There is a library director who was allowed to participate even though his library had an application for consideration.
4. The process didn't take financial need into account.
5. The process is biased against rural libraries. All three libraries who were denied are rural libraries.
6. There is no appeals process.
7. There was no consideration given to approaching the Finance Committee for an increase in the amount of money available for the mini-grant. He suggested that additional funding could have come from the Outreach carryover or the supplemental Outreach Aid.
8. He recommends establishing a Task Force to review the Outreach mini-grant process and the Outreach funds.

S. Dallas explained that the amount for the mini-grants was increased to \$10,300 several years ago. The amount was determined as being the maximum that the categorical aid budget would allow. She noted that the grant application explains the review process and the application criteria. There are also suggestions for projects and suggestions for evaluating projects and establishing budgets.

L. Strnad expressed concern about a bias against rural libraries. She noted that these libraries are at a disadvantage because their resources are less. S. Dallas responded that the Outreach Advisory Council regularly rejected a grant from a large urban library because of insufficient information. One of the best grants came from a rural library.

J. Tyrrell asked if the Board should even be involved in establishing any criteria? She was satisfied with the reasonable explanations given for denying the three grants.

P. Ritter noted that a decision should be made and the work of the Advisory Council and the Services Committee recognized. Any further delay in releasing the grant money will delay the projects which are required to take place in the 2001 calendar year.

E. DeBerri offered an amendment to the original motion - that two of the projects that were not funded should also be accepted. There was no second. G. Batcheller and J. Tyrrell will not accept the amendment to their original motion. Amendment fails.

M. Palmer called the question on the original motion. Ayes: 8; Nay: 1 (DeBerri); Abstentions: 2 (Carr, Apostol) Motion passes.

Discussion regarding the \$500 incentive grant funds which are usually tied to submission of the state Annual Report. P. Ritter noted that there have been many problems with submitting the Annual Report and it wouldn't be fair to penalize the libraries for a situation beyond their control.

**MOTION:** G. Batcheller moved that due to the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the filing of the Annual Report, this year, the libraries should be held harmless and given their \$500 incentive grant. E. DeBerri second. Unanimous.

A draft of the *UHLS Plan of Service* was distributed to the Board members. P. Ritter noted that the Directors Association has tentatively approved this document. He pointed out that several documents from the Central Library have not been submitted but J. Cannell assured him that they are forthcoming. If the documents are received in time they will be included in the *Plan* sent to the State otherwise it will be submitted without them. The *Plan of Service* must be approved at the May meeting for submission to the State in June. M. Schroder questioned the wording in Section 4, Paragraph A 2 regarding the Central Library materials - does "should also include" mean that it is compulsory or just suggested? P. Ritter noted that he will submit whatever materials are available at the time and the State will let him know if it is sufficient. Any recommendations or suggestions for changes to the *Plan* must be submitted to P. Ritter within the next two weeks.

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, May 8<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 PM at UHLS**

*Automated Services Committee*

Nothing requiring Board action. P. Ritter encouraged the trustees to attend the hands-On automation demonstrations.

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, April 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM at UHLS**

*Nominating Committee*

P. Erlich appointed the following library trustees to the Committee (M. Schroder, Chair):  
 Rensselaer County: Tobi Freeborn (RENS) and Christina Blais (SCHG)  
 Albany County: Anne Linendoll (ALTM) and another member to be determined.

**VI. DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION**

Report by P. Nonamaker. At the April Directors Association, the following took place:

- ? the *UHLS Plan of Service* was discussed
- ? S. Dallas gave a presentation on the 886 public performance videos in the UHLS collection. She noted that within the last few years 75% of the collection circulated not at all or only once. Have they outlived their usefulness? The Directors voted to make the collection more accessible and asked S. Dallas to investigate the options and report at the May meeting. P. Nonamaker noted that if the videos were on the shelves in the member libraries where they could be browsed, they might circulate more frequently.
- ? Richard Naylor and Geoff Kirkpatrick gave a presentation on the scenarios and

questions to be used in the automation site visits and the hands-on demonstrations. The questions are designed to be used in a team situation.

- ? Standardization of policies was discussed. There was consensus on the type of identifying information needed for patron registration.
- ? the Albany Public Library is opening a new Branch in North Albany
- ? Discussion regarding the funding of the online databases. Since the State will be covering the cost originally expected to be taken from Central Library Aid, the Central Library is looking at additional databases.

## **VII. TRUSTEE REPORTS**

L. Strnad reported that the Altamont elementary school librarian has proposed consideration of the merging of the school library and the public library.

J. Tyrrell reported that on May 15<sup>th</sup>, the Brunswick library funds will be included on the school ballot for the first time. The library has started a campaign for public support which includes a library float in the Little League Parade and visits by trustees to various community groups.

G. Batcheller reported that construction has started on the Petersburg library's vestibule. This addition will greatly improve the library's heating level and comfort.

## **VIII. CORRESPONDENCE**

P. Erlich noted the email from the Altamont Library Board supporting L. Strnad's continued membership on the UHLS Board of Trustees even though her term on the Altamont Board has expired.

## **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

P. Erlich reported on a letter that he received from James Tuttle, the UHLS attorney, in reference to the situation at the March Board meeting regarding the vote on the Outreach mini-grants. J. Tuttle noted that according to *Robert's Rules of Order*, the Presiding Officer may vote when that vote will make a difference (i.e. to make or break a tie or to cause a motion to pass or fail). In addition, if the Chair rules that a motion carries or fails and no one calls a point of order to refute the ruling, that ruling stands even if incorrect.

P. Erlich will ask the Administration Committee to review and clarify the UHLS By-Laws regarding officer succession and the constitution of a quorum.

P. Ritter noted that J. Cannell had given him a copy of the 2001 Central Library grant just prior to the Board meeting. The grant needs to be approved by the Albany Library Board and the UHLS Board prior to submission to the State on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Normal procedure is that the grant is reviewed by the UHLS Services Committee and then brought to the Board of Trustees. The grant has not yet been approved by the Albany Library Board of Trustees because their meeting was re-scheduled and will not take place until April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Consensus that P. Ritter should contact the State requesting an extension of the deadline. The Services Committee will review the application at their May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, and it will be presented at the May 9<sup>th</sup> UHLS Board meeting.

J. Carr noted that since there is at least one Board member who believes that there should

be a review of the Outreach mini-grant process, he recommends that P. Ritter examine that process and make recommendations on who should conduct the review. The review should consist of the legal requirements of the programs and the obligations of the Board of Trustees. A rating system and an appeals process should be considered.

**MOTION:** At 6:04 PM L. Strnad moved to adjourn. M. Schroder second. Unanimous.

**NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 PM at UHLS**

Heidi A. Fuge  
4/12/01

CONTINUE DOWN FOR DIRECTOR'S REPORT

# UPPER HUDSON LIBRARY SYSTEM

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT For March 2001

April 11, 2001

**Library Legislative Day** – Over fifteen library staff and trustees from UHLS and its member libraries visited on March 20 with our two Senators and five Assemblymen and urged them to support the New Century Libraries initiative and the proposed \$95M in new funding for libraries in New York. It appears that some new funding may be forthcoming, but it is doubtful that the total requested amount would be approved.

**Annual Reports** – During the past month, there have been numerous problems and delays with the software that the DLD is using for the inputting of statistics and information for the required annual reports from all public libraries. However, to date there are only five of the UHLS libraries that have not completed the inputting process.

**Plan of Service** – A draft of the **UHLS Five-Year Plan of Service (2002-2006)** has been prepared, placed on the Intranet, and sent to all member library directors for review. It is expected that corrections and additions to the plan will be made during April, then approved by the Directors Association, and finally presented to the Services Committee and Board of Trustees for approval at the May meeting.

**Automation System Migration** – System demos by the five proposing companies were conducted at UHLS, and a large number of people attended and submitted evaluations. After a review of the evaluations, it was the consensus of those present at the March 27 ASC meeting that the contenders should be reduced to two companies: **Innovative Interfaces Inc.** and **epixtech inc.** We are planning to allow “hands-on” sessions at both UHLS and EGRN during April. We then plan to conduct site visits during May at NOBLE (III site) and Merrimack Valley Consortium (epixtech site), both in Massachusetts. It is anticipated that a final recommendation will be made by the ASC to the Board of Trustees at the July meeting.

**Visits and Meetings** - I was forced to postpone several visits and meetings this month, but I was able to meet with the Board of Trustees at **Grafton**.

(continued)

**UHLS - Director's Report - March 2001** **page 2**

**Technology Specialist** – The Search Committee was not satisfied with the applications and the interviews for this position. The job description has been rewritten, and a new job announcement and advertisement will be released.

**Training Specialist** – The Search Committee selected one individual to whom the job was offered, but it was not accepted. Since the Search Committee was not satisfied with the other applications and interviews for the position, a new job announcement and advertisement will be released.

**2002 PLA CONFERENCE** – At this national public library conference to be held March 12-16, 2002, in Phoenix, **Sara Dallas** will facilitate/present a program entitled **“Mobile EVEN START – Family Literacy Targeting Migrant Farm Workers”** and **Rachel Baum** will facilitate/present a program entitled **“Not for Academic Libraries Only: Digitizing Documents in Public Libraries.”**

---

**Philip W. Ritter, Director**