

LIBRARY BOARD OF RHODE ISLAND  
Monday, May 21, 2007  
MINUTES

**Members Present:** Chair, Mark McKenney, Alice Barrows, Peter Deekle, Donna Good, Leslie McDonough, Joan Ress Reeves, Rose Ellen Reynolds, and Ruth Sullivan

**Members Absent:** William Allen, Cristina Martins Amedeo, Deborah Barchi, Regina Connor, Mary Cummings, Jay Litman, Tovah Reis, and Joshua Teverow

**Present from the Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS):**  
Melody Allen, Howard Boksenbaum, Debbie Cullerton, Donna DiMichele, Karen Mellor, and Beth Perry

**Observers:** Phyllis Humphrey and Shirley Long

**Reporting:** Debbie Cullerton

**Materials Distributed:**

1. Draft Agenda
2. Newspaper Article (Beacon)
3. OSL Bookmarks
4. Frank Iancono Tribute
5. Draft 5-Year Plan
6. Press Release from Sen. Bates

The meeting convened at 4:20 p.m.

**I. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the April 23, 2007 meeting were accepted as submitted.

**II. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

In regards to the Providence Public Library, Mark McKenney remained hopeful that an agreement will be reached between the city and the library. The discussions are ongoing and the worst-case scenarios that had been considered don't appear to be panning out. It does seem as though there is a consensus at this point that there could be some common ground found and it is not that far removed from where we have been in the past. There will be a little more money coming from the city's side; there will probably also have to be some concessions made from the library's side.

Rose Ellen Reynolds asked if there had been any talk about the reopening of any of the branches that had been closed. Mr. McKenney said there has certainly been some discussion in regard to Washington Park. One of the strategies that is being discussed is that as the city goes through a review of school properties, it has indicated a willingness to take a look at incorporating various neighborhood libraries. As much as we would like to keep the status quo we can't keep the status quo. A brief discussion of other possibilities throughout the city that might house library locations followed.

An article from the *Beacon* regarding the Center for the Book, Reading Across RI breakfast on Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup> and including a photo of Mr. McKenney was passed out to the Board. Mr. McKenney found it to be fascinating and he had loved the book. Author, Ron McLarty was very interesting. Mr. McKenney requested that he send a copy of his remarks because they dealt with libraries generally as well as his book. Mr. McLarty sent Mr. McKenney an email including his remarks at the breakfast which Mr. McKenney subsequently forwarded to Louise Moulten at the Center for the Book.

Deb Smith & Matt Wojcik of the governor's Constituent Affairs Office have an appointment to speak with the governor tomorrow to talk about appointments to the Library Board. They will take up the Board's recommendations.

Mr. McKenney stated that he would forego commenting on the trip to Washington, D.C. for National Library Legislation Day because Howard Boksenbaum was covering it in his report but he wanted to go on record to say that he had a wonderful time.

### **III. CHIEF LIBRARY OFFICER'S REPORT**

#### Construction

Mr. Boksenbaum reported that at long last, the Bristol Public Library will begin construction. Karen Mellor stated that they have signed a construction agreement and on Friday they will be having a ground-breaking ceremony. They will be putting a 24,000 square foot addition onto the 6,000 square foot building they have now. They are looking at temporarily moving the library so they can let the contractors go at it and build quicker than they had originally planned. The original plan was for an 18 month build, by temporarily moving, the contractors can do it in a shorter time, perhaps as little as 12 months.

#### CLAN

Howard Boksenbaum announced that CLAN is now officially Ocean State Libraries. Mr. Boksenbaum noted that new bookmarks have been passed out with their new logo and new library cards will be issued. Ocean State Libraries is also leaving the Providence Public Library and is in the process of looking for a new location for their IT operations.

#### ALA Honor for Frank Iacono

One of the negatives that OLIS had this past year was the loss of Frank Iacono. Rhode Island is very proud that he is going to be honored at ALA. The Board was given a copy of the resolution that is going to be read at ALA's annual meeting in Washington DC in late June.

#### Budget

Mr. Boksenbaum reported that upon his arrival at OLIS he discovered that the budget situation was absolutely horrible somehow, approximately a quarter of a million dollars was scheduled to be overspent. He had to put the brakes on suddenly, and vowed to join Beth Perry and Donna DiMichele in getting to the bottom of an untenable situation. With help from the people within the Department of Administration's Central Business Office, OLIS has discovered that through some accounting mistakes a couple of people from other agencies were being charged invisibly to OLIS accounts. That error accounts for nearly \$165,000. It's not over yet.

## Legislation

Beth Perry reported on pending legislation. Updates are available at [www.olis.ri.gov](http://www.olis.ri.gov)

### National Library Legislation Day

Howard Boksenbaum stated that it was his first time going to NLD and he said it was incredible. ALA really knows how to do this event. We had wonderful support from back home, doing logistics, and making arrangements for us to see the legislators. ALA has photos posted on their website of the event.

Mr. Boksenbaum reported that several people on the Board had attended and wanted to get their feedback on the experience and do a show & tell. A packet with information that we prepared for the legislators was passed around. A packet that ALA gave the group to keep them informed with what was going on in the federal legislative effort was also circulated.

Mark McKenney stated that the group was fortunate that they were well prepared and wanted to thank Debbie Cullerton for her efforts in assisting the group. Mr. McKenney also stated that they were fortunate to have such a good group of people representing the State of Rhode Island. Mr. McKenney also wanted to acknowledge the exceptional congressional delegation. As we met with Senator Jack Reed and Elyse Walsh from his office, they anticipated our concerns before we raised them. We really have seen the contrast with some of the others in the delegations. Some of them are much newer and don't have that kind of experience. Rhode Island is blessed to have someone like Senator Reed supporting libraries.

Joan Ress Reeves stated that we are very lucky to have Elyse Walsh, who is Senator Reed's Chief of Staff. She is right on top of everything. She understands the realities of congress and the practicalities of getting something passed. A wonderful time was had by all and we accomplished our purpose for attending.

## **IV. LSTA Five-Year Plan - Draft**

Howard Boksenbaum acknowledged the work that Donna DiMichele has done in conjunction with getting the LSTA 5-Year Plan ready. Mr. Boksenbaum recapped the timeline for the plan, including a hard deadline of the end of next month. Voting for approval of the final plan will take place at the scheduled Library Board meeting in June.

Ms. DiMichele passed out the Draft 5-Year Plan to the Board, which is also available online at [www.olis.ri.gov](http://www.olis.ri.gov).

## **V. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### Planning & Budget Committee

None.

### Public Relations Committee

None.

Legislation Committee

None.

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**VIII. AGENDA FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 18, 2007 in Conference Room C in the DOA building.

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.