

## LIBRARY BOARD OF RHODE ISLAND

The regular meeting of the Library Board of Rhode Island was held on  
October 16, 2017  
at the Department of Administration,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Conference Room B,  
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908

**Members Attending:** Cristina Amedeo, John Bucci, Melody Drnach, Edward Garcia, Louise Herrington-Bright, Rosita Hopper, Monica Nazareth-Dzialo, Doug Norris, Joan Ress Reeves, Robert Sloan, Thomas Viall

**Members Absent:** Annette Feldman, Kenneth Findlay, Phyllis Humphrey, Alison Davis-Maxell, Phyllis Lynch, Rose Ellen Reynolds

**Present from the Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS):** Karen Andrews, Donna DiMichele, Karen Mellor

**Guests:** Dr. Dzialo

**Materials Distributed:**

None

### I. WELCOME

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

### II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES from the September 18, 2017 meeting

**Moved by:** Ms. Drnach

**Seconded by:** Dr. Hopper

The meeting minutes were approved with non-substantive changes.

### III. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

#### A. Cornucopia Meeting

Cornucopia, an organization that promotes diversity within libraries, will hold an event at the RI State House on November 2, at 5:30 pm.

#### B. Coalition of Library Advocates (COLA) Annual Meeting

The Coalition of Library Advocates will hold their annual meeting at the RI State House on April 10, 2018, at 5:30 pm.

#### C. United Way 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

On October 5, Mr. Viall attended the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting of United Way 2-1-1 with Ms. Mellor to celebrate United Way, and the services they provide. Libraries often partner with United Way on various projects, and other members of the library community were at the celebration. Ms. Mellor is a founding member of United Way 2-1-1 Advisory Board.

#### D. Futures Conference Panel Discussion

The Futures Conference was held in New Jersey in September, and four OLIS staff members attended. A panel discussion about the Futures Conference will be held at Narragansett's Maury Loontjens Memorial Library on October 25, from 9:30 am–12 pm. The panel will include seven library professionals awarded OLIS scholarships to attend the conference. A sign-up for the panel discussion is available on the OLIS website.

### IV. CHIEF OF LIBRARY SERVICES REPORT

#### A. Ongoing

##### i. OLIS Staffing

Lauren Plews, OLIS' State Data Coordinator, will be on leave until April 2018. Her duties will be reassigned as necessary to provide coverage of services during her absence.

##### ii. OLIS Budget

OLIS has submitted its Fiscal Year 2019 budget request to the Department of Administration (DOA). Based on the projected FY19 RI State Budget deficit of \$237 million, the DOA requested all state agencies to submit budgets with a 10% reduction. The DOA submits a budget to the Governor's office in October, and the Governor will submit her budget to the RI General Assembly in January 2018, per statute.

The state's semi-annual revenue estimating conference will take place in November to update the economic outlook for state budgeting purposes. Ms. Mellor will continue to update the LBRI on the status of OLIS' budget.

Ms. Herrington-Bright inquired whether OLIS' submitted budget, with a 10% decrease, will require further revision if the administration's proposed incentive-based retirement plan for qualified state employees does not return the anticipated revenue. Ms. Mellor reported that the state estimates 45% of retirement-qualified state employees will take advantage of the retirement proposal, and realize the projected revenue.

#### B. OLIS Strategic Plan

The new federal fiscal year began on October 1 and OLIS' new strategic plan went into effect on that date. OLIS' processes are being aligned with the plan, and staff are developing and implementing its various projects to support libraries across the state. Progress on the plan will be reported to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) annually through the State Program Report.

#### C. Studio Rhode Grants

##### i. Studio Rhode Launches

Ms. Mellor visited the Woonsocket Harris Public Library on September 28 for the opening of Studio Rhode, a digital creation space. Through a grant received from OLIS

and the RI Office of Innovation, the library received a substantial donation of equipment, software and educational resources from Apple, Inc., along with support from Apple in setting up the space and implementing new programs. Woonsocket's project, "My Woonsocket Life," is collecting oral histories about the city from residents, and commentary about their hopes for the future. The interviews are recorded on iPads and published on YouTube; the recordings have been closed-captioned for hearing-impaired individuals. The project has increased awareness of the library and resulted in the library becoming more deeply embedded in the community.

The Westerly Public Library also received a Studio Rhode grant, and their studio will launch in November. The grant to Westerly was funded by the Carnegie Foundation, and matched the grant from Apple. Westerly Public Library is using digital technology to help Westerly realize its vision of Westerly as a center for the arts by supporting artists in various media. The project is also using technology for digital storytelling to communicate the stories of artists to the communities.

ii. Additional Library Grants

The RI Office of Innovation and OLIS will be using a portion of the Carnegie Foundation grant to provide mini-grants to libraries to develop additional Studio Rhode digital creation labs. Funds will also be used to support a digital toolkit so that other libraries may benefit from the lessons learned in Woonsocket and Westerly.

iii. Local Futures Conference Planned

OLIS will partner with the RI Office of Innovation to develop a Futures Conference to be held in RI in late spring, 2018. The conference will be modeled after the Futures Conference held in Atlantic City, NJ in September, but on a smaller scale. The event will bring together futurists from inside and outside the library world to discuss how libraries can identify trends, and be relevant and responsive to the future needs of their communities. Additional partners will include the RI Library Association and the Coalition of Library Advocates.

D. Futures Conference, Atlantic City, NJ

In September, several OLIS staff attended the Futures Conference in Atlantic City, NJ. In addition, seven scholarships for RI librarians were provided by OLIS (4) and conference partners (3). Ms. Mellor and Ms. DiMichele presented an overview of the Futures Conference. Futurists from outside the library world presented on privacy, virtual reality, science, and new technologies while discussing trend spotting and predicting future needs.

## V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Federal & State Legislative Updates

No updates.

B. Federal Budget

Ms. Mellor sent a note of thanks to Senator Reed for his work on the bill that would increase funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services by \$4,000,000, which is earmarked for the Grants to States Program.

**VI. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

A. Ms. Amedeo

Ms. Amedeo reported that United Way and other state agencies have planned over 100 events statewide for the annual Medicare open enrollment period. If residents seek information from libraries on how to sign-up, they may be directed to contact United Way 2-1-1 for assistance. Some enrollment events and healthcare screenings will be held in libraries.

Ms. Amedeo thanked Ms. Mellor for her contributions to United Way 2-1-1, and her work on their advisory board. She also thanked Mr. Viall and Ms. Mellor for their attendance at the recent 10-year anniversary celebration for United Way 2-1-1.

B. Mr. Bucci

Mr. Bucci reported that the President of the Coalition of Library Advocates (COLA) sent a letter to the East Greenwich School Committee protesting the closure of the East Greenwich High School Library. The school committee responded with an acknowledgement of the situation, and advised that the situation is under review. Ms. Mellor reported that the RI Library Association sent a letter to the Superintendent of the East Greenwich school system about the closure, and received a prompt reply acknowledging the situation. Mr. Sloan reported that the High School Library is reopened with a proctor to monitor library users and circulate books, but noted that a professional librarian is not managing the library. Mr. Viall will post the letter sent by COLA to East Greenwich on the COLA website.

**VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

No unfinished business.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

A. School Library Support

Mr. Viall introduced the issue of school systems not filling school library positions, and referenced the current situation with the East Greenwich High School Library. He requested feedback from the board about proactive steps that could be taken in response to these types of situations.

The Board discussed possible factors driving this trend, including a lack of understanding of the value of libraries in an electronic world, and the common misperception that technology diminishes the need for libraries. It was determined that more information is needed on the status of school librarians and school libraries, and the Board should develop a strategy to approach the issue of school libraries not being adequately staffed or even closed in some schools. Forward actions include inviting a representative of the School Librarians of RI

(SLRI) to address the Board, and update them on the issues of school library staffing and closures statewide. The Board also discussed developing a strategy for raising awareness of the value of school libraries, especially with school administrators. Finally, the Chair noted that the RI Department of Education (RIDE), while represented on the Board, does not attend meetings. It was recommended that the Chair contact RIDE to encourage attendance.

#### **IX. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

#### **X. FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next LBRI meeting is scheduled for November 20, 2017, from 4:15 – 5:45 p.m. at the Department of Administration, Conference Room B, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI, 02908.

Mr. Garcia pointed out that February 19, 2018 is listed as a LBRI meeting date on the LBRI Meeting Schedule for the 2017-2018 session. February 19, 2018 is Presidents Day, and a federal holiday. Mr. Viall will review the month of February 2018 for a different meeting date for that month, and advise the board.

#### **XI. ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by:** Mr. Garcia

**Seconded by:** Ms. Nazareth-Dzialo

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.