

**VLA Board Retreat**  
Friday, July 14, 2006  
Sherburne Memorial Library, Killington

APPROVED MEETING NOTES

Present: Megan Allison, Daisy Benson, Peter Blodgett, David Clark, Selene Colburn, Barbara Doyle-Wilch, Teresa Faust (recording), Amy Grasmick, Deborah Kahn, Marianne Kotch, Pat Mardeusz, Hannah Peacock, Barbara Shatara, Lisa von Kann (presiding), Linda Wells, Nancy Wilson.

The following items were distributed: VLA Strategic Plan, May 2006-May 2009 [Attachment A], VLA Leadership Directory for 2006-2007 [Attachment B], list of dates of board meetings for the next year [Attachment C], budget report [Attachment D], The Economic Value of Vermont's Public Libraries [Attachment E], and a flyer announcing a program on the same topic [Attachment F].

**Strategic Plan**

Lisa took the group through the strategic plan document. The notes below are comments raised under each item.

▪ **Mission**

No disagreement with the mission as written.

▪ **Advocacy**

- Work on statewide funding is already under way.
- Trina Magi's survey results support strengthening the confidentiality statute.
- VLA did adopt a health care resolution and sent it to the governor. Perhaps it should be redone and sent to the new legislative committee.
- Since some sort of health legislation has been passed, we could say we will "monitor the impact of new health care legislation on librarians."
- The Public Relations Committee could be renamed the Advocacy Committee.
- We could change the wording to "advocate for better salaries and benefits," to include both health and retirement benefits. We could demonstrate how this affects real Vermont librarians.
- We could invite legislators to the annual conference to talk about what the new health care legislation means to us. This could be a goal for the Personnel Committee.
- Who is responsible for monitoring and responding to pending legislation? Government Relations and Intellectual Freedom Committees.
- We repeated some of the discussion from the last board meeting about the possibility of hiring a lobbyist. Legality is not really an issue, as long as we keep under a certain percentage of our income. Our budget could handle it. Our counterparts in Connecticut spend about \$4,000 a year.
- FLAN sends about 8 messages a year.
- The ALA Councilor keeps an eye on federal legislation.
- We could add "investigate hiring a lobbyist" to the Strategic Plan.
- There is an Editorial Committee listed in the bylaws.
- There was a brief discussion of external vs. internal communications.
- We should work to raise the profile of all libraries.
- We could come up with a communication plan, picking out a few issues to work on each year.
- Utilize web site, listserv, "push" technology.

- Government Relations Committee came up with a slogan: “Libraries : where Vermonters connect.”
- The group who gets to frame the debate has a head start towards public support.
- National Library Week is an opportunity already in place. ALA provides soundbites. Could use VPR’s Switchboard program.

▪ **Education**

- Lisa and Mara Siegel have already been discussing the certification program. The VLA president serves on the DOL certification board.
- Besides the certification program, we also need educational opportunities for those who have their MLSs, as well as support staff, and others. VLA can work with DOL on continuing education opportunities.
- There’s a Continuing Education Committee in the VLA bylaws.
- Although there isn’t currently such a committee, continuing education has been going on in other ways, such as section programming.
- There are 30 new public librarians per year in Vermont. A mentoring program would be useful for these folks. Perhaps those willing to mentor could check off a box on their VLA renewal forms.

▪ **Intellectual Freedom**

- Trina is chairing this committee and is working on having Judith Krug come to “train the trainers” on confidentiality issues.
- Librarians aren’t the only one needing training; we should include trustees and academic administrators. By librarians, we mean all library staff.
- Perhaps we could get the John Does in the Connecticut PATRIOT Act case to speak at the annual conference.
- Confidentiality is more than just circulation records.
- We could work with other organizations to sponsor the John Swan lecture, the ACLU, or the newspaper publishers group, for examples.

▪ **Membership**

- Pat has done a “fabulous” job. We have nearly 400 members.
- The names of those who indicated volunteer interest on their membership forms have been forwarded to the section chairs.
- How can we entice new library employees to become members?
- We could develop a core list of “meeters and greeters.”
- Can we get the membership lists of ALA and SLA in Vermont?
- The Vermont Library Directory has some of this information.
- Nancy will compile a list.

▪ **Partnerships**

- Add the ACLU as a possible partner, for John Swan lecture co-sponsor.
- David reviewed collaborations between VLA and other groups in the recent past.

▪ **Structure and Governance**

- The bylaws were last updated in 2001, need it again. The executive board will review the bylaws.
- We could plan to review the strategic plan each July during the board retreat.
- Some committee chairs do not have a vote on the board. For clarification, there is the Board, then there are the voting members of the Board, then there is the Executive Board.
- The sections as currently constituted insure that there are representatives from different types of libraries on the board.
- We could have a support staff section.
- We could restructure the board around issues.
- The July orientation meeting could include the handing off of material to the archivist. This started a review of Paul Carnahan’s report at the May meeting, for those who were not present then. Paul can decide how to sample the email traffic for the archives. Archival guidelines could be part of a comprehensive orientation packet for officers.
- File Maker Pro is the program currently housing the membership list.

**Lunch**

At this point, having gone through the Strategic Plan, we broke for lunch.

**Discussion groups**

The group then broke into three separate discussion groups, one dealing with advocacy and government relations, one dealing with public libraries, and one of the executive board to begin review of the bylaws.

**Odds and ends at the end**

Internal communication was declared by some to be a top priority this year.

A calendar of events of VLA interest was generated. This included:

Early September	Government Relations statewide meeting
October 22-24	NELA in Burlington
October 28	Economic Value of Public Libraries program for trustees
November 2 & 16	Law for libraries programs at Williston and Queechee
January 12	Library Day at the State House
Sometime in March	a discussion for library directors of a current leadership or management book

There was a brief discussion about reaching out to medical librarians, including a program at the annual conference.

Helen Linda, a library employee and current MLS student, is designing a Government Relations Committee web page for a class project.

Adjourned.