

Vermont Library Association  
Executive Board Meeting  
May 12, 2005  
Norwich University, Northfield  
Daisy Benson presiding

FINAL

In attendance: Maggie Drown, Marianne Kotch, Teresa Faust, Donna Edwards, Pat Mardeusz, Trina Magi, Daisy Benson, Gail Weymouth, Ellen Hall, Nancy Price Graff, Charlotte Maison, Stephanie Gagnon, Mary Kasamatsu

- 1. Meeting called to order** at 9:40.
- 2. Minutes of March 10, 2005 meeting:** approved with correction
- 3. Financial report:** Donna presented the budget statement. [Attachment A] She has had to rebuild the VLA files due to the recent loss of her work computer on which the files were stored. She will be meeting with the accountant later in the week.

Donna recently received a letter of thanks for VLA's sponsorship of scholarships for Vermont delegates to the New England Library Leadership Symposium.

- 4. Business --** President's Report from David Clark is appended. [Attachment B]
  - a. Board of Libraries meeting** – Daisy attended the Board of Libraries meeting on April 28 along with David Clark. Among the DOL activities reported on at the meeting was selection of the reading list for the Green Mountain Book Award. Daisy noted that VLA had not endorsed the Award and asked Marianne Kotch if it was too late to do so. (see b.)

Noting the announcement of an opening on the Board of Libraries in the President's Report, Gail Weymouth asked to go on record that she felt it was inappropriate for VLA to be seen to be soliciting candidates for the Board of Libraries. Discussion of the process by which people find out about Board vacancies followed Gail's comments. Several felt the timing of the notice, rather than its content, was sensitive, coming amid concerns about due process not being followed in setting up the public forums. All agreed VLA does not want to appear to be championing a particular candidate for the BOL. Nancy Price Graff, a member of the Board of Libraries, noted that other states have looked at constituent representation on their state boards, but Vermont representatives are chosen from geographical regions.

- b. Green Mountain Book Award – Action:** Moved, seconded and approved that VLA endorse the establishment of the Green Mountain Book Award.

- c. Conference issues** – Stephanie Gagnon reported conference registrations are down by about 80 participants from this time last year. Messages have gone out through the listservs to encourage registrations. Factors cited that might account for the drop in registrations included competition

from other spring and winter events, limited conference budgets, and the need for many librarians to choose which activities to attend.

The **extension of benefits** in the form of free conference registration and meals to members who present programs or participate on panels has been an issue of contention for conference organizers past and present. Some of those who have historically received these benefits feel strongly that they should continue, while conference organizers see free registrations as lost income and free food as a significant cost. One suggestion was to check NELA and ALA for their policies regarding conference benefits for members who do programs. **Recommended:** that VLA and VEMA agree on a joint policy for free registrations and meals and make the policy clear to people when they are asked to do programs. **Further recommended:** that conference co-chairs identify other issues of concern, provide background, and recommend policies to their respective boards to address these issues.

The Conference Coordinator's contract is coming up for renewal. Co-chairs feel the current Coordinator is doing a good job and recommend she be given a two-year contract. Stephanie will meet with the VEMA co-chair after the conference and report back to VLA Board in July.

**d. Public Forums** – Although the discussion of plans for the public meetings began by focusing on logistical issues, larger concerns about the purpose and structure of the public meetings surfaced.

**Logistical issues:**

- Who will be the recorder? (Nancy Graff volunteered to record for 1 meeting);
- There should be 2 recorders for each meeting plus having audio and/or video recording of each meeting;
- Timekeepers should be empowered to cut testimony short if necessary to manage dominant talkers;
- If meetings won't have same facilitator for each, then at least facilitators should have guidelines to give common ground to the meetings.
- Recorders should be given discretion to organize results in some categorization or executive summary.

**Core Concerns:**

- What information does VLA hope to get from the forums?
- We need to structure what we want to gather input about.
- Forums are likely to draw more librarians than general public.
- Agenda is too open ended to elicit usable information. The people who respond and attend an open agenda forum are likely to be people with pet peeves to air, or librarians who want to advance their libraries' issues.
- VLA should do strategic planning, determine what the organization wants/needs to gather input about, and structure the questions to elicit that information.
- Why the rush to do the public forums in June?
- Should focus be on information that we in the library world want to learn vs. what the general public is able to talk about or respond to?
- Could we better target the forums through invitations and using professional research methods?

- If the intent is to gather useful information from the forums (and not just to give the impression of wanting to hear people's concerns), VLA should construct a research project.
- Could we postpone meetings to further clarify/refine what we want to do?

At this point, non-voting members and guests were excused. Voting members continued discussion in a brief executive session, after which non-voting members and guests were asked to return to the meeting.

**Action:** It was moved by Ellen Hall and seconded by Donna Edwards that VLA postpone the public forums until the Association can clarify its goals and priorities, and further that VLA develop a research agenda and methodology that will support these objectives as they relate to improved information services throughout the state. 5 votes in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstained

**Action:** Ellen Hall moved, Teresa Faust seconded that the Board ask Daisy Benson to communicate its decision to the planning committee. 5 votes in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstained.

**e. July VLA Board meeting** – The July 14 meeting will be a full-day retreat for current and incoming Board members to be held at the Sherburne Library in Killington. Plans call for the retreat to cover procedural matters and expectations of section leaders and lay the groundwork for strategic planning. Anne Peyton (a consultant several board members remembered favorably from the VLTA conference of a few years ago) is available and interested in being facilitator for the planning part of the retreat. Her fee is \$1500 for her time, mileage, and paperwork produced during the retreat.

**Action:** Moved (Ellen) and seconded (Donna) and approved that Anne Peyton be hired as facilitator for a fee of \$1500 for the Board retreat on July 14 at Sherburne Memorial Library in Killington.

### **Section Reports**

*College and Special Libraries* – Teresa Faust introduced Maggie Drown who has been nominated to be the next section president, pending approval at the section meeting on May 25 at the Library Conference.

*CAYAL* – no representative present

*Public Libraries* – no representative present

*Organization Reports* – Charlotte Maison

NELA – Charlotte directed attention to papers from the last NELA conference on their website. The fall conference will be October 16-18 in Worcester, MA.

### **Committee Reports --**

*Awards Committee* – Trina Magi

The Awards Committee selected Cindy Karasinski for the Sarah C. Hagar award and Angie Chapple-Sokol as Vermont Library Trustee of the Year. Award decisions will be kept confidential until announced at the Library Conference.

*Intellectual Freedom Committee—Gail Weymouth*

Gail presented a very brief report on intellectual freedom issues and distributed a poster for the John Swan lecture on June 9 at the Brooks Memorial Library in Brattleboro.

*Membership – Pat Mardeusz*

Pat's written report is appended. [Attachment C]

**Meeting Adjourned** at 11:45 for lunch at Sarducci's in Montpelier.