

**Minutes of the
Nicolet Federated Library System Board of Trustees
Tuesday, April 14, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.**

Present via GoToMeeting: Julia Wallace, Miriam Erickson, Theresa Rosik, Becca Berger, Corrie Campbell, Kathy Pletcher, Ken Harter, Elizabeth Fernandez, Marsha Hoeffs, Paul Gustafson, Anthony Yaggie, Cheryl Maxwell, Rosemary Rueckert, Robert Entringer

Excused: Kathy Lefebvre, Jan Gehlhoff

Also Present via GoToMeeting: Tracy Vreeke (NFLS), Hannah Zima (NFLS), John Kronenburg (NFLS), Maria Escalante (Menominee), Laura Robinson (Menominee)

1. **Welcome & Introductions.** President Wallace called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.
2. **Agenda Revisions.** None.
3. **Open Forum.** None.
4. **Approval of February 18, 2020 minutes.**

Minutes should be revised to read that Remote Employee Agreement will be reviewed at the Personnel Committee then will be sent to the full board for approval. Member Erickson made a motion to approve the minutes as revised. Member Harter seconded.
Motion carried.

5. Member Library Report – Maria Escalante – S. Verna Fowler/Menominee Public Library

- Menominee Library is a joint merged library of the College and public library.
- Popular program: Community Reads where there is a book giveaway, the book club meets to discuss the book, and then the author comes for a visit. Last one was Garth Stein who wrote “Art of Racing in the Rain.”
- Received grant from Institute of Museum & Library Services which was used to provide support for an Artist in Residence. Local artists teach a craft to the community. Some of the artists taught how to harvest materials and then use the materials to create art.
- With merger of libraries, Maria was able to hire additional Children’s Librarian, Laura, who has created more programming opportunities. She has been very active even while closed.
- Laura – Thank you to Nicolet for I&I Grant which was used to create a family program “Let’s do things together” (In Menominee language) - Patrons share meal, read a book by native author or with native theme, have family time to discuss the book and how it relates to family traditions or memories, then do an activity. The

program is facilitated with the Language and Culture Commission. Also created an interactive mural by local artist featuring clan animals. Words in the Menominee language are recorded and played for children when they press a button on the wall. Words are changed out seasonally.

- During the closure, staff had to figure out how to continue to reach out to their community. They were able to adjust funding to get Zoom subscription to gather families online and to live stream programs on Facebook. First online family program was held on April 7 which was a test run for other programs as a way to gather people together.
- Tasty Tuesday this afternoon was held over Zoom and livestream on Facebook.
- Thanks to NFLS for Collection Development Grant which was used to build up the collection of early literacy items for very young children. Also, created new program called Wee Time for babies and toddlers. Created activity kits for parents and children to do together. Laura demonstrates the kits online during the library's closure.
- Recently submitted LSTA grant application in collaboration with local schools, which is a great partnership. Helped develop relationships to further build future collaboration. Grant funds will be used to create escape rooms based on relevant topics to the Menominee community. Escape Rooms will launch in June.

6. Reports:

6.1 President – Julia Wallace

6.2 Treasurer's Report – Kathy Pletcher

- NFLS is in good financial shape. Received state funding, so balance is healthy.
- Hartland Report shows statement of revenue and expenses of the first two months of the year. No unusual expenditures at this point.
- At the end of the year, if we have surplus what are thoughts on what will be done? Finance Committee will meet June 4 to discuss mid-year budget. Will be able to see how long closures will continue and would have a better picture of financial situation at that point.
- Since state revenue is down, there may be budget cuts in 2021 or down the line.
- Tracy – nothing right now that will reduce 2020 budget.
- Cutbacks in any member library as far as staffing? No cuts as of right now but if the stay at home order is extended, that may change. Currently, most of our member libraries are paying their staff. Libraries being very creative to keep staff working and busy either at the libraries or at home.

Member Campbell made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Member Maxwell seconded. **Motion carried.**

6.3 Finance Committee – Kathy Pletcher

- Finance Committee will meet June 4 to discuss mid-year budget. Expenditures will be down for April and May due to no delivery.

Member Erickson made a motion to accept the Finance Committee report. Member Campbell seconded. **Motion carried.**

6.4 Personnel Committee – Ken Harter

- Will meet in the third week of May. Working on Director's review.
- Will add review of the Remote Employee Policy to the May agenda. Will send recommendation to full board for June meeting.
- Will add survey of NFLS employees and trustees this summer. Surveys will be reviewed in September and reviewed with Director.
- May meeting will be held via Zoom if necessary.
- Disaster Preparedness Plan will also be added to the Personnel Committee's May agenda.

5.6 Director's Report – Tracy Vreeke

- Kay Rankel, Director of Gillett Public Library, retired on April 9, 2020.
- Finishing up Board Survey and compiling the results.
- Background CARLx training is beginning next Monday. Public library staff will be trained this summer.
- Audit happening right now remotely. Glen & Tracy working to submit required documentation. Audit should be done by the end of next week.
- PLSR – new project manager hired, Bruce Smith, from WiLS.
- DPI currently looking at delivery and the challenges for many in regard to access to broadband and lack of devices. Lots of collaboration. Trying to pull LSTA funding to meet those needs.
- Technology piece: NFLS has collaborated with the South Central System to create new statewide servers to allow libraries to back up their systems. This will be more secure for local libraries which currently may not have backup capabilities.

7. Discussion of Response to COVID-19 and State-Mandated Closures

- All employees are working from home. Office closed on 3/20.
- John set up laptops and remote desktop access for employees to have full access from their homes.
- It was a rapidly changing environment. Member libraries all operating under different conditions given their individual boards and municipalities in regard to closures or whether limited services would be provided prior to the Governor's Safer at Home order.
- So impressed by all the library directors that we have. All stayed in communication with NFLS, staff, patrons, boards, governments, etc., to manage the crisis.
- All libraries are now closed. Most have been deemed not essential. However, Brown County deemed their library staff essential. Most staff are working from home but a few libraries have one or two staff going in to check on the building or perform essential functions. Staff creating a lot of virtual programming and trying to serve communities in new and creative ways.
- In Marinette, the library is being set up as an Administrative Center for nurses to use to contact people who may have been exposed to the virus. John helped set up laptops and hotspots for Public Health Department to use right now.
- Our office has been deep cleaned and the delivery area was given special attention. NFLS staff is usually only in the office one person at a time.

- Connectivity: Most libraries have Wi-Fi which was opened up so patrons can use outside of the library building or are using hotspots to create access points in different locations in the area. DPI is conducting survey to identify where no access points exist to help address the need.
- Two biggest projects:
 - Reopening plan structured by service (ex: programming) and timeline to present to the Governor
 - Library Funding – using library stories to show value of libraries to legislators. Workforce Development is overwhelmed right now which highlights library necessity.

8. Adopt a Resolution in Support of the Wisconsin Library Association’s Letter Urging Libraries to Pay Librarians During Closures.

- Current letter looks like it is a blank check because it has no end date.
- Libraries have already budgeted for the employees for this year. There may be adjustment that have to be made in the future.
- Should NFLS be telling another board how to govern its library? Not sure this is NFLS’ place to do so.

Member Harter made a motion to adopt the resolution. Member Erickson seconded. **Motion failed** with a vote of seven no, five yes, and one abstention.

9. Discussion of Disaster Preparedness Plan.

- Please review and send comments/questions/revisions to Tracy.
- Will be reviewed by Personnel Committee in May.

10. Approval of Member Library Collection Development Grants.

- Grant applications submitted by the following libraries: Algoma, Brown, Door, Farnsworth, Kewaunee, Lakes Country, Marinette, Shawano & Suring

Member Berger made a motion to approve the Collection Development Grants for the above member libraries. Member Entringer seconded. **Motion carried.**

11. Approval for President to Create Grants Committee and Appoint Members; Approval of Grants Committee Scope and Meeting Schedule

- Scope: Grant Committee to establish a more standardized process for all grants and scholarships. Grant Committee would be created and would review the requirements, application process and applications for all grants and scholarships provided by NFLS Board, including Collection Development Grant, Youth Services Support Grants, Improvement and Innovation Grant, and WLA Leadership Development Institute Scholarship.
- 5 member committee, represented by both large and small libraries.
- If interested in being on the committee, please let Tracy know.

Member Berger made a motion to authorize the NFLS President to create a Grants Review Committee and appoint members. Member Pletcher seconded. **Motion carried.**

12. Review and Approve 2020 Improvement and Innovation Grant Process.

Member Erickson made a motion to approve the 2020 Improvement & Innovation Grant process and application. Member Pletcher seconded. **Motion carried.**

13. New Business. None.

- Any need for emergency funds for NFLS? At this point in time, no.

14. Adjourn. Member Hoeffs moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Member Fernandez. Motion carried. **Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted: Hannah Zima, Recording Secretary
April 14, 2020