



ADVOCACY & EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date: February 9, 2021

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Call to Order

Josh Short called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present: Janet Jenkins, Lupe Mejia, Zach Newell, Jill Shelton (entered 5:07 p.m.), Josh Short

Members absent: Stacey Carter, Tammy Krouse

Others present: Stacie Bushong, Ellen Popit

Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

Zach Newell motioned to approve the January 12, 2021 minutes. Lupe Mejia seconded. Motion carried.

Unfinished Business

Updates on School Library Advocacy Efforts

Ellen Popit reported on a meeting held with the Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS), the State Library, the Association of Illinois School Library Educators (AISLE), and Keith Curry Lance. Mr. Lance is a nationally recognized professional in the field of school library statistics and is currently conducting a nationwide study, titled *SLIDE: The School Librarian Investigation - Decline or Evolution?*, to investigate what is going on behind the data indicating a steady national decline in school librarian employment since the Great Recession. Unfortunately, the data Mr. Lance has received from Illinois is minimal and flawed at best. The meeting was called to determine if our agencies could provide some help in getting better information.

Unfortunately, that will not be possible within the timeframe of the study. However, there is hope that we can address this moving forward and there was a brief discussion of adding some questions for schools during the next certification to improve information and statistics on schools. The monthly meetings with AISLE and RAILS continue to be valuable.

Report on February 5, 2021 ILA Legislative Meet-Up (southern Illinois)

Ellen Popit reported staff attended the first legislative meet-up for Southern Illinois. There were 50 attendees and a lot of positive comments from representatives about their own experiences with libraries and how they may utilize libraries in the future. There were state and federal updates from Derek Blaida, lobbyist for the Illinois Library Association (ILA), and Diane Foote, ILA's executive director.

Updates from ILA February Public Policy Committee Meetings

Ellen Popit reported the meeting focused on preparations for the legislative meetups. There are two house bills that participants were told should not be a concern and are not expected to pass. House Bill 162 deals with local consolidation which would require a once every 10-year self-assessment to study effectiveness and efficiency. Also, House Bill 353 asks for a minimum wage up to \$20.00 per hour for essential workers during the COVID 19 epidemic. Federally, there is a lot of work being done for better broadband but no dedicated funding for libraries.

New Business

Report on the Illinois Library Association's work on Vaccination Eligibility for Staff

Ellen Popit reported ILA created template letters for libraries to use for advocacy. A good number of IHLS libraries have utilized the letters and have received a positive response. The ILA website has information on what response has been sent by various county health departments.

Public Comment

None

Announcements

None

Adjournment

Zach Newell motioned to adjourn. Janet Jenkins seconded. Motion carried. Adjourned at 5:36 p.m.