**VERMONT BOARD OF LIBRARIES**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**DRAFT**

**April 16, 2019**

**10:00 p.m.**

Department of Libraries

60 Washington Street

Community Room  
Barre, VT 05641

**Members present:** Bruce Post (Chair), Deborah Granquist (Vice Chair), Jason Broughton (Interim State Librarian, Secretary), Tom Frank, Josh Fitzhugh, Linda Saarnijoki, Maxie Ewins

**Others present:** Thomas McMurdo (Assistant State Librarian), Cindy Weber (VLA President), Josh Muse (VTLIB), Amy Olsen (VLA Vice-President)

**Call to Order:** Chair Bruce Post convened the Special Board of Libraries meeting at 10:01 p.m.

**Items not on Agenda**

Bruce asked if anyone in attendance wanted to speak on anything not on the agenda. Attendees had nothing to speak on.

Bruce welcomed new board member, Linda Saarnijoki, and asked her to introduce herself. The board and members of the public then introduced themselves to Linda.

Draft minutes of the January 8, 2019 and March 22, 2019 meetings were distributed to board members. Changes to the minutes for the January 8, 2019 and March 22, 2019 meeting minutes were noted by Bruce Post and others in attendance. Josh Fitzhugh stated, “Let the record show that we spend 20 minutes revising the minutes.”

Maxie Ewins arrived at the meeting, and review of the March 22, 2019 minutes continued.

Josh Fitzhugh made a motion to approve the January 8, 2019 and March 22, 2019 minutes. Deborah Granquist seconded. All members approved unanimously in favor to adopt the minutes of January 8, 2019 and March 22, 2019, with changes.

Maxie Ewins then introduced herself to Linda.

**Review of Himmel-Wilson Report and progress update**

Bruce gave a brief history of how the Himmel & Wilson report came about. Under Marty Reid the Board consulted with the State Librarians of Illinois, Oregon and Idaho who were also experiencing the same drastic reduction in funding and staff. These states shared with the board what they were doing to create new missions for their respective organizations. Bill Wilson, a consultant with Himmel-Wilson, was then brought in to consult with the Department to write a report on recommendations for the mission and vision of the Department moving forward. Bruce noted that Board of Libraries members and librarians from around the state were interviewed by Bill Wilson also.

Bruce asked Jason to give a reflection of how the department is currently running, what the Department has done based on the recommendations of the Himmel & Wilson report and what was done differently from the report. Jason started with a brief overview of the last IMLS site visit report of 2016. Jason also touched on the internal controls review that the Department is working on with the Agency of Administration Finance Unit, and how the Department has improved significantly with state and internal financial and inventory controls and policies, over the past 2 years. Jason stated that the department has accomplished approximately 90% of the changes mentioned in the Himmel-Wilson report. Jason also mentioned that up until a couple of years ago the Department was being closely watched by the Agency of Administration, due to poor oversight over fiscal protocols within the Department.

Josh Fitzhugh asked Jason of the remaining 10% of items from the report the department hasn’t done are still to be completed or are they partially completed? Jason stated that the final items are in partial completed status, as they are ongoing improvements we are currently working on.

A discussion was held on the green law books and how the department receives and distributes these books to other state and municipal entities.

Deborah Granquist asked about the internal control’s situation, and if Jason believes that once this is corrected and running smoothly will the Department then be able to focus more on the future. Jason agreed with this, and said we are currently playing catch up on old and new items at the same time, as we perform old items, we are placing new processes where needed.

Tom Frank asked about the recommendation from the Himmel & Wilson report concerning looking at outsourcing the ABLE library. Jason said that is not in our future at all, the ABLE library will stay within the Department.

**Department of Libraries**

Bruce asked Jason to update him on the status of the Vermont Public Library Foundation (VPLF). Jason mentioned that he reconnected with the Vermont Community Foundation, who used to work closely with the VPLF and had lost touch the past few years. The Vermont Community Foundation gave VPLF $17,000, which has been deposited in the VPLF account. Jason discussed the many different ways the VPLF could go forward, either as the same model or with a different board model. He also discussed the different ways the fund could be used for libraries doing capital construction or used for emergency management funding. Jason stated the current model doesn’t allow this fund to transition easily and changes to statute may be needed or a decision needs to be made to spend this fund down and the foundation closed.

The Department is helping out with the Google Grow Initiative that will be held in 2 Vermont libraries. Tom McMurdo said that the Department is looking at the Google Grow Initiative as a way to promote current job services at libraries.

Jason his confirmation hearing was that same afternoon, and he was told that some of the questions would center around the Dorothy Canfield Book Award.

**Reflections and Pathways Forward**

Bruce asked the Board to reflect on how the State Librarian position was currently selected. What were members thoughts on how AOA Secretary Susanne Young conducted the most recent search for the new State Librarian. Board talked about how everyone in this process had the same goal in mind, and that is how to make better and stronger libraries. Josh Fitzhugh shared his thoughts that going out for a national search depends on the circumstances at the time of looking for a state librarian, each case is different.

Bruce asked if Cindy Weber wanted to share her thoughts on the process of hiring the State Librarian. Cindy said that based on the feedback she was getting from library directors on the process being used to hire the State Librarian she felt it in the best interest of everyone that the process was an open application process.

A discussion was then held concerning whether the Department of Libraries and State Librarian should be a leader for libraries and librarians within the state, and how this leadership translates to the wider communities of state government and the role the Department has working with libraries and librarians. Jason also stated that communication will play a big role within the Department going forward. This will include communication equally to all groups, all libraries, all partners, and other government agencies.

Amy Olsen said that librarians really care about the Department of Libraries and what the Department can do for these libraries and librarians. She said having more trainings like the leadership summit and explaining the current role the department plays in state government is something that has never been explained or communicated to the wider library community. Jason agreed that this does need to be communicated out to librarians and that the discussion will be the key roles of the State Library, and how we can best serve all of our constituents.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 12:04 p.m.