

Oregon State Library  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**  
August 15, 2014  
Driftwood Public Library, Lincoln City

Board members present: Ebonee Bell, Aletha Bonebrake, Sam Hall, Susan Hathaway-Marxer, Ismoon Hunter-Morton.

Facilitators: Holly Valkama and Slater Swan, Coraggio Group.

Staff present: MaryKay Dahlgreen, Margie Harrison, Shawn Range, Jessica Rondema, Susan Westin, Darci Hanning.

Chair Aletha Bonebrake called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Hathaway-Marxer moved to approve the minutes from the June 20, 2014, Board meeting. Hall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **REPORTS OF BOARD CHAIR AND TRUSTEES**

#### **Introductions**

Dahlgreen began the meeting with an introduction. She is very excited to be embarking on this strategic planning process. It will help us identify where we are heading, and help us create the library we envision.

The Coraggio group is a small strategic and organizational change consulting firm based in Portland. There are about ten people in the firm, most of whom have spent time in leadership positions within organizations, before coming to consulting. Holly Valkama, principal consultant with Coraggio, has worked with Multnomah County Library, and has experience with strategic planning for a wide variety of organizations. Slater Swan is a business analyst who has been with the firm for eight months, and has a background in outdoor education.

Valkama stated that they understand the context and urgency of this work. Building a strategic plan means that there will be changes within our agency. Coraggio will be working with Dahlgreen and the managers to identify what change will mean to our organization and how to prepare us to be receptive to this change. The planning group, consisting of Valkama, Swan, Dahlgreen, Harrison, Range, and Westin, has had a few work sessions. They will be sharing their work today, for the Board to build from to aid development of a vision and mission. Coraggio will also be asking for additional work developing our “role of value” and reputation.

Both Bonebrake and Hall had concerns about the timeline. They felt it might be necessary for the Board to meet sooner than the end of October.

In preparation for this meeting, the managers looked back at the reorganization work that has been done to date in order to draw out common themes.

#### **Major Themes**

The State Library Board and Dahlgreen agreed that a formal strategic planning project was necessary to make changes that will modernize the State Library and make us more efficient and effective.

The managers identified the following themes throughout the previous work: leadership, stakeholder perception, willingness to change, government services, mission/role, and combining resources/partnerships.

Dahlgreen reported that one of the recurring themes was lack of leadership at the State Library. This issue has been addressed within the library community, from our customers, staff, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) survey, and from our discussions. There is a need for leadership to be influencing the support for change. Leadership can refer to the Board, Dahlgreen, the managers, or the Legislature. Communication is also a key piece of the theme of leadership. Our agency's communication has improved but is still a very important aspect.

Westin reported that there are perceptions among stakeholders that we provide valuable services in Talking Books, Library Development, and with Government Services. However, there is also not enough knowledge about our services. There seem to be conflicting views and wishes. We have multiple voices coming to us, including the Board, the Legislature, and our constituents, which can result in conflicting messages.

Range discussed the theme of willingness to change. There was a wide variety of responses regarding changes in our agency, with some people wondering why the process is taking so long, and others not wanting to change. Some of this perception is internal, with concerns about job loss. Clarifying and understanding expectations will be very useful. Receiving direction from the Board as to where we are going will allow Dahlgreen to work on the operational side. Many people seem willing to change, but are unsure what the change will look like. Working on changing the State Library's culture will be important.

Harrison reported on the government services theme, which was very prominent. There were subthemes, including the need to look at new delivery models for library services to state government. Some new models could involve acting as a broker for online subscriptions for state agencies. The Department of Administrative Services could develop a rule to require agencies to check with us before they purchase a subscription. This could possibly lead to enterprise-wide subscriptions, which would benefit many agencies. Our customers indicated the importance of full-text articles, databases, and peer-reviewed journal articles. Another subtheme involved the need for our staff to leave the building more frequently, to work with agencies onsite in addition to providing more consulting services virtually. And finally, we need to increase accessibility and utilization of digital resources.

Dahlgreen talked about the mission and the role of the State Library. There are discrepancies between the statute, the administrative rules, the mission, and our practice. Until our organization has a clear mission or role, it is difficult to move forward. It has been especially complicated with government publications and whether the State Archives and the State Library are duplicating services. The question of heritage collections is also very important. People have very deep, personal feelings about what a library is and what it should contain. A number of our constituents, who have had access to our collections over the years, do not understand why this needs to change. We also need clarification about our service to the public, as our general practice has been very different from our mission.

Westin and Harrison spoke about combining resources and partnerships. There has been talk about consolidating our state documents collection with the State Archives, and our historical materials with the Oregon Historical Society, as well as combining materials with executive agency libraries. The idea of a portal has also been discussed, to share access with the State of Oregon Law Library and the State Archives, and allow access to this information from one place. We are also making strides with early literacy, working with the Oregon Department of Education, the Early Learning Council, and working closely with libraries to provide them with leadership and guidance. Talking Books is working with the Oregon Textbook and Media Center, which is a valuable conduit to children with low vision or blindness.

Bonebrake wanted to acknowledge that we are a state agency. Hall stated that the Legislature is our major constituent. He wants to be ready with a strategic plan if the Legislative Work Group forms.

Hathaway Marxer stated the importance of a strong, integrated communications plan. She also believes this necessitates hiring additional staff.

Bonebrake reminded everyone that Senator Johnson recommended that we give updates on what we are doing on a regular basis. Bonebrake mentioned the vision plan that the Board created a few months ago, which was created in response to the Legislature.

Valkama took the Board through the strategic plan framework, starting with the vision. The question that the vision seeks to answer is, "What is possible because the State Library Exists?" The vision is very broad, and is not ours alone to fulfill. It should be so inspiring that others want to join in to be a part of creating that vision.

The mission is the work that will take us to our future state. We will also be reaffirming or establishing the values of the organization. This is how the work is done inside the organization. If the culture of an organization does not support the plan or mission, it will fail. Think about the values that we want living in the organization and the culture.

The strategic plan takes this vision and makes it more focused. As we think about what the State Library does and does not do, we think of our "role of value." This is what we do that no one else does. What part of the vision do we own?

A reputation is something that you can intend, but you cannot own. We need to be clear about the reputation we intend so that it can help us achieve our vision.

The values portion will be conducted with the State Library staff. They need to own and understand the plan as deeply as those who are constructing it.

Establishing the vision, mission, role of value, and reputation sets the anchors in the ground. The planning group then determines what must be accomplished in this three year planning horizon. They will look at the imperatives for us to focus on, and how we plan to measure our success. Finally, the details will be established in the operational plan.

## **Developing a Vision**

Swan led the Board members through a visioning exercise, where they wrote or drew something in response to this question: “What do you think is possible because the Oregon State Library exists?”

The Board then discussed the vision, tweaking the wording to include the most important aspects. For a vision to be a reality, one organization alone cannot make it happen. But the organization works toward it, with partners and stakeholders, to make it a reality. The vision is the inspirational stage-setting that tells people why they would want to support the State Library.

The Board agreed to the following draft wording:

*“All Oregonians have the information essential to be engaged citizens, strengthen our communities, and build a prosperous state.”*

The next exercise was to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) for the organization. This allows us to think about what questions must be answered in this process or in the plan itself. This exercise helps us focus on the key questions that arise.

The Board members received post-it notes to write down a variety of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Valkama read the notes aloud, noting themes and similarities.

### **Creating our Mission Statement**

The Board began to craft the mission, which answers these questions: What is our underlying role and whom are we serving by fulfilling this role? What is it that we exist to do for our state, stakeholders, and customers?

Dahlgreen said that it is difficult to write a single mission statement with three separate pieces. We are looking for an all-encompassing statement that shows our role as a leader, as well as reflecting our three main audiences. There have been significant changes to the State Library in the past, including no longer serving as the public library for the state of Oregon. We also began to fund government services with assessment funds. We still have a robust collection of Oregon materials and people who use these resources. But this is not in our current mission. Dahlgreen does not believe we can move forward until the Board and the Legislature tell us that this is our job. We need to make a decision about whether we are going to serve the public, and how to fund it.

Bonebrake said that if we support and help grow the libraries in Oregon, then we are serving the public, although not directly.

Hunter-Morton would like to see Legislators book a librarian to assist them with research, and to pay for it, understanding the value.

Hall says that we are assuming that we if are not open to the public, they can find the resources they need elsewhere. But he is not sure that this is true. He thinks the legislature ought to be willing to fund a place where people can get library service.

Hunter-Morton says we are akin to the administrative office for Multnomah County libraries, where we will help the public, by connecting them with the appropriate library staff, rather than serving them directly.

Dahlgreen said that we are currently serving a very small population. We have a collection that serves state agency staff, a robust genealogy collection, and a robust Oregon history collection. If we want to be the historical library for Oregon, we need to figure out how we are going to pay for it. Dahlgreen is wondering if we can combine services with another organization, which could provide better services to historical materials.

Bonebrake does not have an issue with the State Library collecting library-appropriate materials, but wants clarity on how people will access it. If we have a partnership, it should assist this issue. Collecting Oregoniana seems like the right thing to do.

Dahlgreen said that if we partner with the Oregon Historical Society, and they open a branch here, they cannot charge people to use this library. They will also need to help pay for this. We cannot use state agency assessment funds to pay for it.

Bonebrake said that we are discussing the idea of a partnership. We need to make a statement about whether or not we will collect Oregoniana for the Legislature and the people of Oregon.

Hall thinks it is our responsibility to see that all Oregonians have access to these materials, wherever it is housed. The Oregon Library Association is also concerned about access, rather than the physical location of these collections.

Dahlgreen does not believe we can continue to have duplicative materials. We have wonderful libraries in the state. The fact that certain materials are housed at the State Library does not mean that they are very accessible either, outside of Salem.

Hall sensed agreement among most of the Board that we take responsibility for access to these Oregoniana and historical materials, whether or not we provide the access.

Valkama asked if the Board wanted to develop a recommendation to take to the Legislature about our role with regard to heritage and cultural materials. Bonebrake said their recommendation is that we have the responsibility to ensure access.

Harrison said that we are not currently spending money on new Oregoniana. We no longer purchase as many copies of these materials as we did in the past. Certain materials are designated as State Agency use only, which means that the public can use it if they walk into the building, but cannot check it out. These materials are purchased with the thought that these may be of historical value for researchers.

Hall said that the statute says we need to meet the reference needs of legislative assembly and state government. He believes that the State Library is the library for the legislators, to get them the information they need to govern.

Hunter-Morton is concerned that it is not our responsibility to be sure these items are accessible. She feels that this should be left to archivists, the publishers of these items, university libraries, and historical societies.

Bonebrake posed the following questions: do we collect history-related items and Oregoniana so that the public can walk in and access them; do make sure, as an agency, that they are being collected by another entity; or do we walk away from any responsibility for these materials?

Dahlgreen said that it is the Legislature that should decide whether or not we collect these materials or are responsible for them. The Board can make a recommendation to the Legislature to continue to have a heritage collection for the state of Oregon.

Dahlgreen believes that we have the responsibility to continue to provide access to these materials until we receive direction and funding from the Legislature.

Bonebrake, Hall, and Hathaway-Marxer agreed that the State Library has a responsibility to fulfill the role of a cultural or heritage institution. Bell agreed and feels that it doesn't hurt to ask the Legislature. Hunter-Morton feels that because we are a state agency, we cannot be a cultural institution. We cannot currently pay for it. We need the Legislature to clarify the statutes and help us understand the breadth of our charge.

Dahlgreen's recommendation to the Board is that we continue to provide access to the public as we move through this process. Government Services needs to come up with a way to provide access to public and state agency staff, so we can redeploy the staff.

Hathaway-Marxer made a motion to follow Dahlgreen's recommendation to continue to provide access to the history-related and Oregoniana collections to the public, while we develop our recommendation to the Legislature to continue to serve as a heritage institution, and wait for their direction. Bell seconded the motion. Motion passed with opposition by Hunter-Morton.

Regarding our mission statement, the Board agreed to the following draft language:

*"The State Library provides leadership and resources to continue growing vibrant library services for print-disabled Oregonians, legislature and state government, and all Oregonians through local libraries."*

## **OPEN FORUM**

No one was present to comment.

## **Defining Our Desired Reputation**

Valkama asked the Board to answer the following questions: What does the State Library aspire to be known for? What is the enduring perception or emotion that describes the total Oregon State Library experience?

Valkama laid out cards with words written on them for the Board and Managers to choose from. They began by finding words that define the reputation of our current state. Then they identified words that describe the reputation we aspire to be known for. The words that the Board agreed upon were high-value, innovative, collaborative, efficient, and helpful.

The Board agreed upon the following draft statement:

*"We are known as a high-value state agency because we are innovative, collaborative, efficient, and helpful."*

## **Defining our Role of Value**

The Board was asked to answer the following questions: What unique value does the State Library deliver? What leadership role can we fill that no other organization can? Why do we exist?

The draft statement that the Board agreed upon is as follows:

*“We connect Oregonians to library services, print-disabled Oregonians to reading materials and state government to information that supports informed decision-making.”*

Bonebrake liked this statement because it is succinct, comprehensive, and helps us understand what we can and cannot do. Hunter-Morton feels good about this portion of the process.

### **Review Day and Close Session**

Bonebrake appreciates the work that the staff has done today and was pleased with the results.

Dahlgreen expressed her gratitude that the Board will make a recommendation to the Legislature. She commented on the phenomenal work from the managers and staff, as well as the Coraggio group. We have developed something very valuable.

The next steps involve working with the State Library staff to develop core values. These are our organization’s fundamental beliefs that shape how we work together and serve our mission. What type of culture are we committed to having?

The Board will approve the strategic plan at their next meeting. After the plan is approved, State Library staff can focus on the operating plans.

### **PLANS FOR NEXT MEETING**

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at the Oregon State Library in Salem. There may be a meeting at the end of September to approve the Oregon State Library Strategic Plan.

Remaining 2014 Board meetings:

- October 17<sup>th</sup> in the Oregon State Library in Salem
- December 5<sup>th</sup> at the Oregon State Library in Salem

The meeting adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- The Coraggio group and the managers will work to put together the draft strategic plan using today’s results.
- Valkama and Dahlgreen will work with Bonebrake to determine when the Board can meet to review the draft strategic plan.
- Valkama and Dahlgreen will work with the State Library staff to develop core values.