

Montana State Library (MSL) Commission Meeting

Wednesday, March 26, 2025, 9 a.m.

Best Western Grann Tree Inn, Bozeman and Zoom

Minutes

Recording can be found on YouTube: [2025, March 26: Montana State Library Commission Meeting](#)

Unedited closed captioning is available

Attendees:

Commissioners: Robyn Scribner, Peggy Taylor, Tom Burnett, Carmen Cuthbertson, Brian Rossman, Tammy Hall

Commissioners Absent: McKenna Gregg

MSL Staff: Jennie Stapp, Nikki Lepinski, Malissa Briggs, Rebekah Kamp, Ashley Kanduch, Sharon Hardwick, Bobbi deMontigny, Evan Hammer, Savannah Sill, Colet Bartow, Tracy Cook

Guests: Sam Walters, Anne Kish, Patrick HFL, Linda Grandy – Stillwater County Library, Carly – Harlem Public Library

Agenda: [March 26, 2025 Agenda](#)

(00:01:02) Call to order: Chair Scribner called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

(00:04:23) Changes or additions to the agenda: Stapp will update the commission about IMLS funding on the “other business” portion of the agenda.

Business Items

(00:04:52) Consent Agenda – Action

- [February 12, 2025 meeting minutes](#)
- [2nd quarter Fiscal Year 2025 financial report](#)

(00:05:19) Motion made by Burnett to accept the consent agenda as presented; seconded by Cuthbertson. Hall Appreciates the thoroughness of the minutes of February 12, 2025.

Roll Call Vote:

**Tom Burnett - aye
Carmen Cuthbertson - aye
Tammy Hall - aye
Robyn Scribner – aye
Peggy Taylor – aye
Brian Rossman – abstains**

Motion passes

(00:07:13) [Excellent Library Services Award recognition](#) – Cook - Action

Tracy Cook – While reading through the responses from librarians she noted many of them have expressed gratitude for being able to provide services to patrons who are homebound, require ADA access, and are struggling with health conditions such as Alzheimer’s. The resolution will be read on Friday evening at the awards dinner.

(00:08:57) Motion made by Cuthbertson to approve the winners of the 2025 ELSA awards resolution; seconded by Hall. Hall is impressed by the ELSA award applications and would like to have their names read out loud.

Roll Call Vote:

**Tom Burnett – aye
Carmen Cuthbertson – aye
Tammy Hall – aye
Brian Rossman – aye
Robyn Scribner -aye
Peggy Taylor – aye**

Motion passes

Discussion Items:

(00:12:45) [Certification program review](#) – Cook and Bartow

(00:13:27) Colet Bartow has been the Continuing Education (CE) Coordinator since 2022. She is seeing continued and increased engagement in this program. Tracy Cook put together the memo with links to the CE dashboard and course information. She would like to know what information the Commission wants to see, and Amy Marchwick will help her create the data set for them because some of the data is tricky to navigate.

(00:18:00) State funding for libraries is based on earning certification, according to Tracy. That is the only connection between the State and the libraries for funding.

(00:19:48) Discussion about the differences between accreditation and certification and the Commission's responsibility. Accreditation focuses on the institution as a whole and certification focuses on specific individuals. The statute says the commission sets the standards and is a certification body. Colet believes it is important to understand the differing needs between certification and accreditation. Hall realizes the librarians are the heart of the institution and believes accreditation is necessary to keep their credibility up. Stapp reads the State Statute regarding the Commission's responsibility to develop standards and rules for the certification process.

(00:31:45) Discussion regarding the benefits of certifying library directors rather than trying to accredit an entire library district. Cuthbertson states that focusing on the key person in the library makes this a great certification program. Colet emphasized the changes in certification over time and stressed that our library directors are the ones we focus on, but the needs vary based on the size of library that the director oversees. Hall believes our library directors should be required to be certified regardless of the size of their library and likens their job requirements to those of a plumber or realtor that require ongoing education. All 86 of our library directors are currently certified.

(00:53:23) [Baseline public library trustee training data review](#) – Cook and Bartow

(00:54:44) Discussion about CE training engagement and how to fine tune it for varying needs. The trustee certification track is not required. Cuthbertson asks if we have notes of how many total trustees are certified. Hall asks if trustees should be required to get certified and could they be? Stapp says yes, the statute could be changed, but should they be required to be certified is something for the Commission to consider and ask other trustees what they think. 94% of our libraries meet the CE standards. Colet emphasizes that the trustees are all volunteers and it can be a difficult thing to keep up with the CE standards. She asks the commission to consider if the requirements are attaining the goals.

(01:20:50) Hall asks to know which of the 4 categories each class falls into. She doesn't think we should be approving the ALA classes since we pulled out of that last year. Tracy indicates there is structure in the certification track and a CE manual that shows people which classes fall under which classification. Tracy showed what the track looks like for participants.

(01:34:36) Standing Reports:

(01:34:57) [Montana Hot Spot Program funding status](#)– This program received one-time only funding for this fiscal year. Unless something changes on the federal level, we anticipate the program will end in June 2025. Rossmann asked if the hardware is owned or if it will

have to be returned as well. Stapp says it is owned, and libraries can take it over but will have to pay monthly maintenance. The prices are \$30 -\$40 per month for each subscription and replacement devices are \$80 - \$90 each.

(01:39:52) - FY 25 Work Plan Dashboard

Removed broken links reports as discussed in January meeting.

Continuing Education and Certification dashboard.

Grants and contracts report will be at June Meeting.

(01:41:15) Commission Goals and Objectives:

Review meeting motions and directives to staff to confirm Commission intent

Annual business calendar

Suggested future agenda items

Spring Federation meeting dates

Stapp made notes of questions during CE presentation and will work to bring information back to the commission. Tracy and Colet would like more information regarding other metrics they would like to see.

Stapp made note of Burnett's request regarding the hot spot program.

(01:42:37) Discussion about nationwide certification programs and finding more detailed descriptions of the courses we offer. Rossmann suggests we invite at least one other state agency to hear how they determine what qualifies for CE. Stapp asks if it should be added to the June meeting and will work toward finding a speaker from the Department of Education.

Federation FY 26 plans of service as an action item on June meeting.

Tentative FY 26 budget if the legislative session is complete.

There will be elections at the June business meeting.

Cuthbertson would like to accept the recommendation of Mark Herring as a guest speaker in June. General agreement from Commissioners to hear from him at that meeting.

(01:52:46) Conversations with the Commission. Tracy's plan is to introduce the commissioners and open it up for the public to ask questions. If it is quiet, then it may be useful to utilize the discussion outline provided.

(01:54:52) Preliminary GIS training recommendations

Stapp explained there are several short training courses as well as links to information they have received at previous meetings, and the hope is they can look at it and be prepared to discuss in the August meeting.

(01:58:44) Hall would like to access Trails and is struggling with it. Stapp suggests a future training for the commission for that program. Rossmann says it's an incredible deal for the state government employees to have access to these resources for a really good price. By partnering with the universities, it is helping the state employees to have access to information they otherwise would not be able to afford. Anyone who gets a State Library card gains access to these research databases.

(02:04:25) IMLS Update from Jennie Stapp:

March 14, congress passed the budget resolution to approve budget through September 2025 and should approve our FY25 Grants to States award which funds our library development work. IMLS believes there is funding for the Grants to States award that will be good through September 2026 and will provide the same level of funding we currently have. We expect to receive our official award around April 21st and will be told if we are receiving full or partial funding at that time. IMLS is expecting some sort of staffing reduction due to the executive order signed by President Trump on March 14, 2025, but the Grants to States award should be protected under statute. The Museum and Services Act is up for reauthorization this year. This statute requires certain programs to be offered by IMLS. Stapp does not believe there is an immediate risk to our funding, but there are no guarantees.

(02:13:57) Cuthbertson made a book recommendation. The Anxious Generation by Jonathon Haidt. It discusses how social media affects children, especially from ages 9-14, and is contributing to mental illness and hospitalizations. Stapp thanked Cuthbertson for bringing that up and says a major focus of staff is to find ways to encourage kids to read.

(02:18:11) **Adjournment: Motion by Cuthbertson to adjourn; seconded by Rossmann at 11:30 a.m.**

Voice vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Minute document created by Nikki Lepinski, March 27, 2025