

Multi-County Library Cooperative Planning Meeting

May 15, 1996

Attendees: Jeri Canale, Highlands County Commissioner, and acting Chairman; Bonnie Dyga, Okeechobee Assistant County Administrator; Ed Kilroy, Okeechobee County Library Director; Mary Myers, Director, Highlands County Libraries; Walter B. Oliff, Jr., Hardee County Commissioner, Clois Harvey, Okeechobee County Commissioner; Don Obrakta, Hardee County Library Director; Gary Odum, Hardee County; J. R. Prestridge, Hardee County, Christina Pierce, DeSoto County Library; Merry V, Cresswell, Lake Placid Library (Highlands County); Marilyn Jacobs, Sebring Friends of the Library (Highlands County); Carl Cool, Highlands County Administrator; Charlie Parker, State Library Consultant; Sondra Taylor-Furbee, State Library Consultant; Carolyn Hesselink, Administrative Secretary for the Highlands County Library System.

Meeting Purpose: Begin the process of moving toward a multi-county library cooperative, discuss what is involved in an interlocal agreement, decide on the host county, move forward on long-range planning goals, gather further information to take back to respective county governing bodies and library boards.

General Discussion Summary:

1. Charlie Parker presented alternatives of a consolidated library system or a cooperative library system. General consensus was the cooperative system was the way the participants wished to go.
2. September 30, 1996 is the application deadline for the multi-county cooperative grant of \$250,000 for a 3 county cooperative. The State will match \$.10 for each local expenditure in a county coop, \$.15 for a 4 county cooperative. This doesn't affect state aid available to each county.
3. Mary Myers talked of our vision of the cooperative's goals, ranging from automated systems, courier systems, building collections, training on site or centrally, programming, toll-free reference line, to Freenet/Internet access.
4. The local libraries should work together on the interlocal agreement and the long range plan. There is no State Library consultant who could solve all the problems involved. Local people should work it out, because they will all be working together, anyway.
5. All four attorneys should look at the interlocal agreement, which should give specifics on withdrawal and dissolution, among other things.
6. All grant monies go to the cooperative, not the individual counties. The host county's needs will include handing the money, paying a salary which would include Workman's Comp and retirement, an annual audit. The long range plan would spell out how the counties would benefit from the use of the annual grant funding.
7. The State Library requires the cooperative to have a single administrative head with a M.S. in Librarianship and this must be stated in the interlocal agreement.

Action items:

1. Chairman Canale called for a commitment. Okeechobee and Hardee county representatives said they have an informal agreement to go ahead. DeSoto representative, Christina Pierce, says their county is close to an agreement.
2. Highlands Administrator Carl Cool offered the use of the county attorney to look over any agreement draft. Consensus given.
3. Highlands Administrator Carl Cool moved that the multi-county cooperative board consist of 1 county commissioner from each county and 2 people appointed by their county commissioners, for a total of 3 from each county. Seconded by Gary Odum, Hardee County. Bonnie Dyga, Okeechobee County, moved to amend the motion to state that librarians will be an ex-officio member of the governing board. Seconded by Ed Kilroy, Okeechobee. Carried by voice vote.
4. Bonnie Dyga, Okeechobee, moved the list of major multi-county library cooperative objectives include: resource sharing, automation, and collection development. Seconded by Clois Harvey, Okeechobee. Carried by voice vote.
5. Carol Cool, Highlands, moved the four libraries be charged to develop the long range plan. Seconded by Ed Kilroy, Okeechobee. Carried by voice vote.
6. Consensus given to have Highlands County be the host county for the multi-county library cooperative.
7. Librarians will monthly to draft long range plan.
8. The governing board will meet Wednesday, June 19, 1996, 10:00 a.m. Note place of meeting will be in the Conference Room of the Sebring Public Library, 319 W. Center Avenue, corner of West Center and Lakeview, 2 blocks off the Circle, Sebring.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carolyn Hesselink

Acting Secretary