

Meeting 45

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HEARTLAND LIBRARY COOPERATIVE

January 15, 2003

HLC Governing Board voting members present: DeSoto–Commissioner Felton Garner, Ann Ryals, Paul Erickson; Hardee–Elinor Batey; Highlands–Jeanne Renton, Perry Newport.

Others attending: Mike Carter of the NCT Group, Hardee Finance Director Kathy Crawford, Librarians Margo Taylor, Diane Hunt, E.M. Kenney, Mary Myers, and secretary Carolyn Hesselink.

The board met in Lake Placid Library’s meeting room at 10 a.m., with chairman Erickson calling the meeting to order. Commissioner Garner gave the invocation and we said the pledge of allegiance. The posted meeting notice was read.

Coordinator Myers asked for an agenda change so that Mike Carter, of NCT Group would be first on the agenda to present the audit report. The report was a positive one. Mike noted that the balance sheet is strong, with some \$94,000 in unrestricted revenue.

With the arrival of Perry Newport, a quorum was declared. Commissioner Garner moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Jeanne, and approved by voice vote. Anne moved to approve the minutes as printed, seconded by Elinor, and approved by voice vote.

COORDINATOR’S REPORT

Mrs. Myers announced that Highland’s Children’s Librarian, Marie “Ginger” McClure will be retiring this year. Because of the change in personnel and the difficulties some of the counties had in getting and keeping partners, the Born to Read project will be reduced in scope and will be mainly for Okeechobee and Highlands counties. This will be our sixth year and we are unsure of State Library funding in the future. Elizabeth commented that DeSoto would continue to have deposit collections. Mary stated that any donations for Born to Read would be shared with all the counties.

The librarians have talked about applying for a grant for a cooperative-wide book theft detection system. Since Highlands is putting in a system this year, it would be to our advantage to widen the scope of the system to all the libraries. Mrs. Myers noted that 3M, using a magnetic strip in its system, is on the state contract. Check Point uses a radio frequency system and there are others on the market. The cost for the Sebring Library will be about \$39,000 for some 60,000 items. Having a cooperative-wide system may lead to a future self-check out system, and we

may be given a better discount.

Each library was given its State Aid figures when they came in. The State Library has invested a considerable amount in database programs for every library to share in the coming year. The most valuable one for our libraries is called AncestryPlus. Perry moved to approve the report, Felton Garner seconded it, and approval was by voice vote.

OVERDUE FINES

The library directors looked at the subject of overdue fines and are now recommending that the cooperative libraries end our year of amnesty and go back to fines to best safeguard the taxpayer's investment. It was their general agreement that reinstating fines would help get items back sooner. All items would be the same fine of .10, and the \$2 processing fee would remain the same as is currently in place. Mrs. Myers noted that a civil citation ordinance that includes library fines, is currently being written for approval by the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners. March 1st would be the start-up date, with handouts being used to advise our patrons of the change. Okeechobee staff will be helping design a bookmark for this purpose. Jeanne Renton moved to approve the fine schedule as presented, seconded by Commissioner Garner, and approved by voice vote.

BOARD COMMENTS

Perry Newport was concerned about the future of e-rate as a large source of our undesignated funds. Diane Hunt noted that our State Library has a new director, Judith Ring, as long-time director Barrett Wilkins has resigned. January 30 a state meeting, concerning the funding for libraries, will be held. Mrs. Myers commented that while cooperative state aid comes off the top, individual county state aid might decline in funding. In the past several years matching funds have declined from .11 on the dollar to .08.

NEXT MEETING IS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19 at Lake Placid Memorial Library.