

HEARTLAND LIBRARY COOPERATIVE

March 17, 2004

HLC Governing Board members present: DeSoto—Commissioner Felton Garner, Paul Erickson; Hardee—Gloria Davis, Elinor Batey; Highlands—Perry Newport, Jeanne Renton; Okeechobee—Robbie Chartier, Marilyn Buxton. All others excused. Librarians present: Mary Myers, Margo Taylor, Fred Lohrer, and Diane Hunt. Representing NCT Group was Mike Carter.

The Board met at the Okeechobee County Library, with the meeting being called to order at 10:10 a.m. by Chairman Paul Erickson. Commissioner Garner gave the invocation, with the pledge to the flag following. Notice of meeting posting was verified.

Coordinator Myers asked for an addition to the agenda regarding discussion of an Internet filtering resolution; it was added under New Business. The agenda was then approved by a motion from Robbie, with a second from Perry, and carried by voice vote.

The meeting minutes were moved for approval by Robbie, seconded by Jeanne, and approved by voice vote.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Mrs. Myers presented to the board the efforts of all the librarians to have a new picture card with a smart chip for use at the public Internet access computers. At the time of sign-up for this card, the patron puts value on the card, with a probable minimum of \$2.00, making it like a debit card. The card is used in a card reader which manages the queue and eliminates circulation desk people handling money for printing. All new patrons and all those current patrons needing to use the Internet will be issued this smart card.

Of great interest to all counties in the cooperative was the pending REDI bill (House bill 0529 and Senate bill 1396) to revise the construction funding grant requirements. Using the minimum ALA standards for space per population, the libraries in Florida were ranked, putting DeSoto in the first year for construction money without a local match. All our libraries are ranked in the first 8 years of construction funding. It is estimated that the state can fund 2-3 libraries per year, however, this grant can be applied for no matter where you are on the list. The grant can be for new or remodeling construction at \$120 per square foot. Jeanne Renton moved to approve the report, Felton Garner seconded it, and it was passed by voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

NCT Group's Mike Carter presented the annual audit report, pronouncing that they had a "clean opinion" for the cooperative and that we had a "strong balance sheet." All good news for the board. Every board member received a copy of NCT's audit.

Board members discussed the hand-out of the Highlands County Bd. Of County Commissioners Resolution to oppose unfunded mandated Internet filtering in libraries.

Coordinator Myers spoke to the issue, telling board members that she believed this was a local issue and that we have already installed a filtering device for all cooperative computers. Our filtering policy is on our computers for every patron to agree to before using that machine. The proposed law would threaten us with loss of our State Aid if we are found non-compliant. One of the difficulties in the proposed legislation is the requirement to remove filtering from a specific computer, if requested by a patron. Since the filtering program we have works on a system-wide basis, a request would require technical skills beyond that of our library staff. Hiring a technician for each library would be beyond our budget abilities.

The smart card we are going to implement would allow different levels of filtering; that filtering already decided by the Heartland board. Robbie Chartier asked that this resolution be brought before the Highlands county library board. Okeechobee and DeSoto board members indicated that they were taking the resolution before their board of county commissioners.

Mrs. Myers noted that the proposed law does not cover text (so we could turn off the images part of our Internet pages), or we could only use the Florida Library purchased database research sites, for our public access computers.

Robbie moved the board support the Highlands BCC resolution to oppose government mandated Internet filtering, seconded by Perry Newport and Jeanne Renton, passed by voice vote. Ms. Chartier also asked Ms. Myers to check with other cooperatives to support us on this.

Board Member Comments:

Perry raised a question concerning the continuation of E-Rate funding. Ms. Myers informed the board that the reimbursements will continue as long as we comply with CIPA requirements and have a current technology plan, which she will be presenting at the May board meeting. The Federal government is looking at misuse of this money. Our cooperative budget does not use the money for salaries, overhead, or T1 line charges.

Fred Lohrer gave kudos to our cooperative courier Doug Henry.

NEXT MEETING IS MAY 19, 10 A.M., AT THE SEBRING PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Hesselink, Administrative Secretary