

**HEARTLAND LIBRARY COOPERATIVE
GOVERNING BOARD**

Lake Placid Public Library – Meeting Room
1069 US Hwy. 27 N., Lake Placid, FL

Minutes to the May 18, 2022 Meeting

CALL TO ORDER:

The Meeting was called to order at 10:40 a.m. Invocation was led by Margaret Dewey.

ROLL CALL:

Governing Board Members Present: Sue Rood Vice-Chair Highlands County; Brad Goodbread Treasurer Okeechobee County ; Ann Ryals Desoto County; Judy Schaefer Commissioner DeSoto County; Jeanette Peoples Glades County; Julie Perry Glades County; Margaret Dewey Highlands County; Denise Whitehead Okeechobee County; Lauri Benson DeSoto County; Sonya Chapa Assistant Coordinator Heartland; Vikki Brown Coordinator Heartland.

Also Present: Iris Perkins Librarian Glades County; Linda Waters Librarian DeSoto County; Dee Shackelford Librarian Hardee County;

Absent: Donna Storter-Long Chair Glades County; Fran Syfrett Okeechobee County; Judith George Commissioner Hardee County; Jeannie Palacios Hardee County; Nicole Drake Hardee County; Arlene Tuck Commissioner Highlands;

ROUTINE BUSINESS:

Notice of Public Meeting: Notice was properly given.

Additions to Agenda: Vikki Brown informed the Board that the financial statements had been added to the packet.

Approval of the Agenda: Judy Schaefer moved to accept the meeting agenda, Brad Goodbread seconded; unanimously passed.

Approval of Minutes of September and November Meetings: Judy Schaefer moved to accept the minutes of the previous meetings, Brad Goodbread seconded; unanimously passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Interlocals:

Vikki Brown informed the Board that the Interlocals, bylaws and policies are all available in the Board meeting packet for the perusal of the Board members. Vikki stated that these documents had not been sent to the individual Counties for approval yet. Vikki asked for any feedback or concerns by the Board members before moving forward to official approval by each County's

legal team. The documents will have been approved by the next meeting of the Heartland Library Cooperative Governing Board.

ByLaws:

Vikki Brown stated that there were minor revisions to both the interlocals and bylaws, mostly pertaining to grammar and spelling errors. Vikki informed the Board that there were additions to the documents to include the Assistant Coordinator position in the language, along with information on public records to more clearly delineate who maintains which records. Another change was in regards to the Library Advisory Council, the meetings of the Librarians, and wording to match the meeting schedule of four times a year. Vikki stated that there was no action necessary today, just feedback from the Board if needed, in order to revise the documents before moving forward to the next step in the approval process. Sue Rood stated that she had attempted to read the documents however there was a lot of verbiage, Vikki agreed stating that she did not attempt to change any of the legal verbiage required.

Policies & Procedures:

Vikki Brown stated that there was a lot of feedback from the Counties regarding updates to the Heartland policies and procedures. Vikki stated that many of the policies were changed to reflect current information and technology, and wording to prevent the policies from becoming outdated in the future. Vikki also stated that the addition for specialty cards was also included for educators and students Cooperative-wide. Another area for change was the Disruptive Patron Form, which was reworked to include all patrons not just children to avoid age discrimination. Sue Rood stated that she had read the Policies & Procedures and felt it was very comprehensive and thanked Vikki for doing a great job. Vikki stated that she was able to do make changes easily thanks to the Coordinator predecessors, and had made changes to reflect ideas that she and Sonya Chapa had discussed to update the Cooperative. Margaret Dewey asked if there was a statement of concern for Library sources and materials; Vikki informed the Board that since she and Sonya had been appointed there have been no challenges or concerns brought forth to the Cooperative. The statement found in the current Policies has been in place since the Cooperative's inception and has just been refined to reflect updates and in order to protect the Libraries, as we cannot censor materials or discriminate sources. Margaret asked if the form should include a signature of the individual who is submitting a statement of concern; Vikki stated she will look into adding this to the procedure.

Grant Updates:

I. IMLS ARPA "Outstretching Hands" Mobile Library:

Vikki Brown informed the Board that unfortunately after the last Board meeting, there were no cargo vans available through the state purchasing contracts as many of the vans were provided to the postal service. Vikki spent hours contacting multiple vendors and was able place the Cooperative on a waiting list to be notified of upcoming stock. Vikki informed the Board that the Institute of Museums and Library Services granted an extension for the grant so that the Cooperative could remain in compliance. The Cooperative will still be moving forward with the

program and all of the Librarians and Library staff have assisted in accommodating changes as best as they can as we await the new vehicles. Vikki stated that she was very grateful for the staff's work in launching the program despite setbacks. As of this meeting, Hardee and Desoto counties have already accomplished Mobile Library stops within their communities. Vikki informed the Board that the feedback for these initial programs is that it is a slow start but changes are already being made to improve the program moving forward. Linda Waters stated that she is very grateful for the program and that the Libraries' will learn as we go; a slow start is not discouraging as our communities largely rely on word of mouth and social media and consistency in programs allowing for word to spread; Dee Shackelford agreed.

II. LSTA ARPA Grant "Bridging the Gap" Agreement: \$50,000

Vikki Brown have a brief reminder on the elements required for this grant including pop-up storytimes, outreach tables, and distributing free books and welcome packets. Vikki stated that there has been a lot of work done for this grant by each County, with Hardee County almost done, along with a lot of effort to reach a wider community, for example in Lake Placid visiting the adult daycare; this grant has been a great learning experience for each of the Libraries and connect with the community. As of this meeting, 264 brochures have been distributed along with 502 books, 455 patrons attending the pop-up storytimes, and 308 patrons attending the outreach tables with the grant's beginning. Linda Waters stated that these events will help the Mobile Library and other programs as the more we are out in the community, the more people will be aware of the Libraries and our services. Vikki informed the Board that we are in the process of getting the second round of reimbursements and are on track for full reimbursement.

III. LSTA ARPA GRANT "Reading Across Desoto": \$59,700

Linda Waters informed the Board that she is one paper away from getting the second reimbursement, but the third, fourth, and fifth are all well underway. Linda stated that the grant is slower going than originally thought but it is to be expected. Linda stated that despite slight delays the grant is still moving along and we are looking at different pathways to get our students in the Cooperative Libraries along with getting more materials available for all students across the Cooperative; Linda stated these materials will be acquired by the end of the summer.

IV. LSTA: Reading Beyond Our Walls

Vikki Brown informed the Board that this video grant only has one or two reimbursements left and with the final gathering of statistics at the end of the summer the final reimbursement will be submitted as well. Vikki stated that most of the Cooperative Libraries were already providing videos for digital programming which allowed for this grant to be much easier to complete, however the grant was able to provide better equipment and digital tools to ensure quality videos and ADA compliancy.

V. Graphic Novel Grant

Vikki Brown informed the Board that unfortunately the Heartland Cooperative was not awarded the Graphic Novel Grant, however the awards committee informed her that they would retain the Cooperative's application on file for the next year.

Linda Waters informed the grant that she was very impressed with how organized the Coordinators have been able to manage the grants to keep the Cooperative on track. Linda stated it was amazing to be doing this with the same staff prior to grants; Linda stated it was amazing what is coming to the patrons of our Libraries because of their work. Sue Rood stated that they had done a marvelous job in getting the grants and executing them so well.

Merit Increase: Coordinator & Assistant Coordinator

I. Increase Information

Vikki Brown stated that it was decided at the last Governing Board meeting that the Heartland Librarians would evaluate both the Coordinator and the Assistant Coordinator positions for possible merit increase. Before moving forward with the presentation Vikki did want to note that the Board had approved a 5% increase for both positions, however this amount was incorrect and inconsistent with the documentation of both positions which limits to a 3%; Vikki did move forward with a 3% increase to stay within the guidelines. Linda Waters stated that 5% is not sustainable right now due to Cooperative funding. Linda will be presenting the Librarian's evaluation for this year; Linda first asked about going into executive session due to personal record. Denise Whitehead asked if the Coordinators cared about making the evaluation public record, both Coordinators were fine with making the presentation public record, the Board moved forward.

II. Evaluation for May 2021 to May 2022 Presentation

Linda Waters provided the overview packet to the Governing Board, and stated she could provide more information if needed; Linda put together a compilation of the results on a 5 point scale for ease of use. Linda stated that Vikki Brown's evaluation was outstanding; Linda also stated that Sonya Chapa's evaluation was not as strong but this is due to not knowing exactly what the Assistant Coordinator role requires, and that both the Coordinators have also had to figure this out within the Cooperative structure. Linda stated that the Board members and Librarians in attendance are more familiar with Sonya's work than other HLC staff. Linda stated that both evaluations were very positive and thanked the Coordinators for their work. Sue Rood called for a motion to approve the evaluations. Brad Goodbread moved to approve the Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator evaluations along with a 3% merit increase, Denise Whitehead seconded. Unanimously passed.

Chair Terms Expiring:

Vikki Brown informed the Board that the Chair terms are expiring and according to the Bylaws the voting for new Chairs should take place in August with the new term beginning in October. Vikki stated that the August Board meeting may have to change in September due to numerous schedule conflicts, and asked if the Board would like to vote in September or at this May meeting. Sue Rood moved that the voting for Chairs occur in September, Brad Goodbread seconded. Unanimously passed. Vikki stated she will send out a poll to find out the best date for the September meeting. Linda Waters stated that there does need to be a meeting in September due to the State Aid.

Special Presentation:

Vikki Brown informed the Board that this would be the last meeting for Dee Shackelford as she is retiring. As such there is a special presentation in honor of Dee and all of her great work for our both Hardee County and the Heartland Library Cooperative. Gifts were presented to Dee from the Cooperative Libraries along with a video from her Hardee County staff.

Vikki thanked Dee for her warm welcome of both the Coordinators in these positions and for always helping and supporting us and the Cooperative. Dee thanked both of the Coordinators for their work.

Sonya Chapa thanked Dee for being welcoming to all staff and for offering such great inspiration for all staff and Libraries with all of the amazing work she has accomplished in Hardee.

Linda Waters stated that Dee took a place that wasn't as welcoming and turned it into a wonderful, fantastical place, and has shown us that what a Librarian does really matters to the community.

Member Comments:

Linda Waters stated that Desoto was very excited for the summer and for having programs and meals and activities available for the kids and the community again. Linda stated it has been a lot of fun prepping and with all the anticipation after a long three years without full summer activities.

Lauri Benson congratulated Dee on her retirement.

Ann Ryals also congratulated Dee on her retirement and thanked everyone for doing a very good job. Anna said she is happy to see the Libraries so active.

Judy Schaefer stated she was glad that the Coordinators were approved for the raise they deserve and congratulated Dee on her retirement.

Dee Shackelford informed the Board that the Hardee staff has been hard at work decorating and any idea she has they are able to make happen so they are going to have a great summer. Dee informed the board that July 1st would be her last day.

Iris Perkins stated that Glades is busy prepping for the summer, also congratulated Dee on her retirement.

Julie Perry stated that Glades County is getting ready for the summer which everyone is looking forward too. Julie stated that Libraries are important for children and adults, we just have to get them there. Julie also congratulated Dee on her retirement.

Denise Whitehead congratulated Dee on her retirement. Denise informed the Board that Kresta King is on an Alaskan cruise and is sending photos. Denise also stated that Okeechobee County Community Services are all gearing up for the summer, having never full shut down, they are just increasing programs.

Brad Goodbread announced that July 23rd is the National Day of the Cowboy and Okeechobee County would be christening the new Cattle Drive sculpture park on that day. This project has been huge for the community with over half a million raised for the renovating of the park.

Vikki Brown stated she was very thankful for Sonya Chapa, and hopefully would be getting the duties she does out to the Cooperative as she is always willing to do anything that is asked and offer help. Sonya thanked her.

Sonya Chapa stated she was thankful to be a part of the Cooperative and the cohesive direction which is has been moving towards, with staff able to share ideas and programs with the grants and other services. Sonya stated she was very excited about the new services available for our communities through the grants and thanked Vikki for all of her hard work with these grants as her efforts have been amazing. Sonya also thanked all of the Heartland staff for their hard work.

Linda Waters asked Sonya to state how many Boards she currently sits on as many are unaware of the work Sonya does outside of the Cooperative at different levels to promote the Libraries. Sonya stated she is the current Region 2 Director with the Florida Library Association, the Florida Director for the Mid-Atlantic Library Alliance, Director at Large for the Tampa Bay Library Consortium, Board Member for the Okeechobee Education Foundation, and a member of the Leadership Okeechobee Class of 2022 along with Vikki who is a member of the Leadership Highlands Class. Sonya stated that she was happy to serve on these Boards in an effort to ensure that our Cooperative and rural Libraries are able to have a voice and be represented at all levels.

Sue Rood informed the Board she has been involved with the Heartland Cooperative since its inception and is amazed at how far it has come in this time. Sue stated that this success is due to everyone involved from Coordinators and staff to Board members, stating everyone has done a wonderful job.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, September 14, 2022.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonya Chapa