

*RHODE ISLAND COALITION OF LIBRARY ADVOCATES
BOARD MEETING*

*Tuesday, September 6, 2016, 5:30 P.M.
CRANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY, MAIN BRANCH, SEMINAR ROOM*

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:40, after a period of relieved entrances (tropical storm Hermine made modest contributions to traffic conditions) and cheerful introductions. Present were Lisa Ashe, Cheryl Banick, Emilie Benoit, Howard Boksenbaum (chair), Gale Eaton (secretary), Neeltje Henneman (treasurer), Hil Herbst, Valerie Karno (URI GSLIS), Ida McGhee (Cornucopia RI), Sarah Morenon (SLRI), Patricia Raskin, Tom Viall, and Sue Warthman (CRIARL).

Report from the chair: Howard reported that Congress heeded our instructions and duly appointed Carla Hayden as Librarian of Congress.

Special report from the Nominating Committee: As chair of the nominating committee (which also includes Emilie Benoit and Neeltje Henneman) Gale nominated Dr. Cheryl Ann McCarthy, newly retired from GLSIS, as Vice-chair/Chair-elect. The motion passed with universal enthusiasm.

Speakers' Bureau Committee: Because Patricia had to leave early, Howard moved this piece of old business forward in the agenda. The Speakers' Bureau Committee was authorized by the COLA Board in June with Howard, Marcus Mitchell, Sarah, Pnina Pressburger, and Patricia as members; Howard, Marcus, and Patricia met on June 22 to block out a charge and discuss procedures. Howard circulated the charge for Board comment (see attachment to these minutes) and Patricia outlined the committee's plans. The Speakers' Bureau will be an opportunity to network with people not already connected with library trustees, Friends groups, etc., and increasing general awareness of libraries; it will not be used for ax grinding or partisan messages. Marcus will provide Toastmasters material to help guide our policies, protocols, and procedures. Once established, the Committee will seek outside funding, especially for radio and social media support. Library-related topics that should attract audiences include health (arthritis, brain science, caregiving, depression, stress management), travel, gardening, writing, cooking (aphrodisiac, gluten free, and other), heritage and history, family conflict, music, theatre, and the arts. The Committee noted individual and organizational resources.

The Board discussed the Committee's proposal from the point of view of demand and logistics, and took copies of the charge as brainstorming fodder.

Secretary's Report: Minutes of the May 10 and June 7 minutes were approved, and will be made available at www.colari.org. (Look for archives under "About COLA.")

Treasurer's Report: Neeltje's report was accepted. As of September 6, COLA has \$8259.66 in our combined bank accounts; we have indeed been spending down. Our only real source of income (not counting bank interest, which amounted to 25 cents over three months) is membership.

Annual Meeting: The Board asked Howard to investigate the feasibility of again scheduling our State House meeting during American Library Week, which in 2017 will be April 9 – 15. April 12 and 13 would avoid Palm Sunday, the first two nights of Passover, and Good Friday. Suggested speakers included Carla Hayden (not Karla Harry – Gale's synapses crossed), Emily Sheketoff, and RI poet laureate Rick Benjamin. Howard undertook to discuss the matter with Joan Ress Reeves. (September 7 update: Rick Benjamin has resigned to accept a teaching position in California. Christopher Johnson, a candidate for RI poet laureate, recently published "Walking While Black": <http://motifri.com/walking-while-black/>.)

Sweetheart of the Year: Howard nominated an embarrassed Tom Viall as COLA's Sweetheart of 2017. The nomination was approved to great acclaim.

Committees: The Nominating Committee and Speakers' Bureau Committee having reported earlier, Gale reported for the Membership Committee (which did little over the summer) and the Newsletter Committee (which published a summer newsletter and should be putting together an October one). Emilie volunteered to work with Gale on the Membership Committee and Howard volunteered to check with Kieran Ayrton to see if COLA can benefit from the experience of RILA, which has recently shifted to rolling renewals. Sarah volunteered to contribute a newsletter article.

Updates from Organizational Representatives:

CRIARL (Consortium of RI Academic and Research Libraries): Susan Warthman reported changes on the CRIARL Executive Committee and Board, and noted that they have revised their Procedures for Admission of New Members, their Bylaws, and their Procedures Manual. The Steamship Historical Society of America has been voted in as the newest member and is located in the former NEIT library space at 2500 Post Road, Warwick. Their next meeting will be at Salve

University on October 7, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Special concerns: hospital libraries are suffering with decline of HELIN; adjustments remain to be made. Also, hospitals – like K-12 schools – seem to be dispensing with library positions.

Discussion: Valerie wondered why, if K-12 library positions are vanishing, GSLIS continues to get more requests than it can meet for graduates to fill them. The rumors and anecdotal evidence don't gibe and she would like to see research. Howard notes that COLA began in part as a forum in which all RI library organizations could pool concerns, research findings, and advocacy tools, so we could speak with one voice.

SLRI (School Librarians of RI): Sarah Morenon said response to SLRI's Survey Monkey questionnaire on RI school library jobs may explain the gap between current entry-level K-12 positions and supply of GSLIS students willing to meet the demand. These jobs are not secure; they may be lost, or incumbents may find themselves covering three or more schools instead of one. Anecdotal reports include Ron Heroux's advocacy work in Middletown and two emergency certifications (whom Sarah is trying to mentor) in Providence. SLRI policy initiatives to address the problems: more formal ties with AASL (American Association of School Librarians), NESLA (New England School Library Association), and other allied organizations; a web resource for school administrators featuring research; and one for school librarians themselves to share great lesson plans and other ideas. Because RINET (RI Network for Educational Technology) will be discontinuing its listservs, SLRI is looking for alternatives. Major concern is still the BEP (Basic Education Plan), which gives too vague a mandate for school library service.

GSLIS (Graduate School of Library and Information Studies): Director Valerie Karno reports that two more searches for tenure track faculty have been authorized – remarkable in comparison to other units on campus – and that the Graduate School has provided GSLIS with a GA position and \$20,000 in fellowships this year. New faculty member Melissa Villa-Nicholas is a member of REFORMA (the National Association to Promote Library Services to Latinos and the Spanish-speaking).

OLIS (Office of Library & Information Services): Howard reported on behalf of Karen Mellor that OLIS has begun its 5-yearly evaluation and strategic plan for LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act—under which OLIS serves as a conduit for federal funds to RI libraries). Down by two staff positions, OLIS will be largely consumed by this effort well into 2017. Because funding for the Statewide Reference Resource Center was by about \$355,000 this year, OLIS has had to discontinue Tutor.com and Heritage.com, two popular services. Otherwise OLIS is doing well, with full funding for LORI (Library of RI, including delivery service for interlibrary loans, etc.) and professional continuing education programs.

OLIS has suggested that the annual OLIS/COLA/RILA program be a workshop, “Community Building and Community Engagement: Partnerships at Work” by Deborah Hoadley, late of Massachusetts Library System and current president of the New England Library Assn. The primary target audience would be public library directors and trustees. Sometime in November after the election would be a good time, on a weekday evening or a Saturday. Howard suggests that COLA could fund refreshments and put together an emailing of public library trustees, perhaps by phoning trustee chairs and libraries to solicit emails.

The 2017–18 OLIS budget process has just begun. Our assistance may be required to support OLIS and the SRRC (Statewide Reference Resource Center). Director Karen Mellor and Tom Viall, in his role as chair of the Library Board of RI, will keep us posted as budget development proceeds.

SLA (Special Libraries Association): Cheryl Banick reported that the group’s last meeting was at the new Steamship Historical Society at Post Road.

ARIHSL (Association of RI Health Science Libraries): Cheryl reports that the group is working on solutions to fill the gap left by HELIN. Meanwhile, the VISN1 Knowledge Library (Knowledge Information Service of the New England Veterans Integrated Service Network 1) in Manchester, NH won the 2015 Federal Small Library of the Year award.

Adjournment was moved shortly after 7 p.m. Our next meeting is scheduled for September 27 at the Learn Lab on the East Greenwich campus of the New England Institute of Technology (NEIT). See www.neit.edu/About-Us/East-Greenwich-Campus/ for directions and parking.

Respectfully submitted,

Gale Eaton, Secretary