

*LSTA Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes*

*Wednesday, February 14, 2007  
Conference Call*

The meeting was called to order by Peg Branson at 1:40 pm, after clearing up a problem with the phone number that had been distributed.

**Present:** Rebecca Berger, Walter Burkhalter, Terrance Burton, Phyllis Davis, Terry Dawson, Fred Marini, Paul Onufrak, Jane Pearlmutter, Rhonda Puntney, Zora Sampson

**Absent:** Jim Gingery, Paula Kiely, Elizabeth Richmond, Veronica Thompson,

**Staff:** Bob Bocher, Peg Branson, Mary Clark, Mike Cross, John DeBacher, Sally Drew, Martha Farley, Rick Grobschmidt, Donna Steffan, Alan Zimmerman.

After getting everyone connected, Branson greeted the group and, after introductions, reviewed the items to be discussed: 1) survey results; 2) comments from meetings; and 3) draft evaluation.

**Survey Results** (dated February 9, 2007).

Josh Morrill helped develop the survey instrument that was distributed to selected public library system staff, the LSTA Advisory Committee, and was made available on the web for interested librarians and others in the state to provide input. There was an 89% response rate from the public library system staff and 12 of 14 (86%) LSTA Advisory Committee members responded to the survey. There were 403 responses to the general survey and those respondents were self selected.

Branson said she would go through the survey results question by question and ask for comments, observations, and questions from committee members.

*Technology Goal*

Tables 1-3: Berger said she noted that statewide resource sharing came in rated 8<sup>th</sup> in all three surveys. She is led to believe that respondents expect less money to be spent in those categories in the future. Marini questioned whether the general responders were grouped together or whether they were weighted. Branson said that the third survey summary reflected the responses of all of those who responded to the general survey online. Marini wondered whether the system survey had more weight. Branson said each survey was separate and the numbers and responses were noted in the introductory information. Sampson said it was clear that everyone focused on greater bandwidth and electronic resources. Onufrak echoed what previously was said, that bandwidth and electronic content were consistently at the top and statewide resource sharing near the bottom. Berger wondered if the survey was done before the BadgerNet conversion was completed. Bocher said that the survey was taken after the conversion was completed and bandwidth was perceived as a problem. Drew said the survey was taken when the old WISCAT was converting to the new.

Tables 4-6: Davis asked whether a statistical analysis was made to assess the differences. Branson wondered whether that could be done across surveys. (Branson corrected herself later to note that those on the LSTA committee who had responded previously as public library system staff, had been included in both of those surveys.) Onufrak noted that the same top five, not

necessarily in the same order, were on all three surveys. Marini asked whether dollar amounts spent previously had been listed on the surveys. Branson said the dollar amounts were included on the survey when they were available. Marini wondered if responses might have been colored by thoughts of available funding.

Tables 7-9: Burton said the top categories seemed consistent with the previous results in that telecommunications and bandwidth ranked high. Davis noted that statewide reference and digitization both seemed to be popular. Sampson said the results show an appreciation of BadgerLink. Pearlmutter said it is the first table that shows some negative response, whereas earlier rankings had all categories at least somewhat positive. Onufrak noted a parallel in the ranking of grants. Marini said the groupings of items in the negative are the high-cost items. Davis thought some of the low rankings indicated that the need has been addressed, such as for joining shared systems. It shows a cycle that has been completed.

Tables 10-12: Puntney said she is not necessarily surprised that the goals are consistent through the three survey groups. Branson wondered what people meant when they rated gateway for federated searching. Pearlmutter said she probably thought of it in terms of the campus interface and the “one-box” searching. Sampson concurred. Drew said staff wondered whether this would be considered statewide or system. Davis said that, at the system level, there is a perception that an improved and broader search at the system ILS level is valuable. Pearlmutter said that many libraries are running parallel systems and anything we can do to bring the searches together seems desirable. Davis said she thought people thought of it locally but wondered about the other systems. Onufrak did not recall, nor did Burkhalter. Davis wondered whether a pilot project would be worthwhile. Marini said part of the problem is that some did not understand what some of the terminology meant (e.g., RFID). Gateway is an example where different groups may have had different assumptions. Branson noted that distance learning ranked higher on some surveys and she wondered if there is interest. Marini said that schools have this equipment but perhaps we can look at what might be available in the future. Sampson said that her institution probably does more distance education than any in the state and it is one of the best things they do. Marini said that for schools it comes down to a money issue and many cannot afford the equipment. DeBacher suggested the “one-cart” option for distance learning may be more affordable, but wondered if bandwidth will be available. Marini said that computer-based distance learning is also becoming more popular. Davis agreed and said they are doing more CE delivery through OPAL. Pearlmutter said that UW-Madison School of Library and Information Studies Continuing Education has been doing more bulk registration for distance/online classes that they broker and distribute.

### *Special Needs Goals*

Tables, 13-15: Berger wondered what state-level leadership referred to. Zimmerman confirmed, after looking at the language in the survey, that it is staffing at the state level for special needs populations. Marini said that the shift in the general survey results may be that the schools do not see the older population but do see early learning. Branson noted there did not appear to be much differentiation from top to bottom in the surveys.

Tables 16-18: Sampson noted that accessibility in the general survey was higher than in the other two surveys. Puntney said that this category ranks well because there is no facility category anywhere else, but is perceived as important by the general respondents. Onufrak noted that “state institutions” is the only one that consistently ranked low.

Table 19-21: Onufrak noted that the general respondents didn't rank the state consultant services highly. Davis wondered whether it is because of competition for funding. Berger said that, because nothing ranks high, either we need new categories in special needs, or something other than special needs. Pearlmutter agreed with Berger's assessment. Marini said that, in terms of state consulting, respondents may not have contact with the state consulting services.

Table 22-24: Berger said there was interest in ESL. Dawson said it was interesting that ESL scores higher in this category than adult and family learning did in previous categories. Sampson said she didn't think people liked consultants, but that services for teens is seen as a need. Marini concurred that the need is there in the libraries. Grobschmidt wondered about the distinction between "detention facilities" and "state institution library coordination." Davis said that this reflected outreach grants for jails.

### *Library Improvement Goal*

Table 25-27: Onufrak spoke for the summer library program—it is seen and used by smaller libraries. Marini and Puntney concurred.

Table 28-30: Onufrak said the committee may be "off" from the general and system populations, noting the importance of the children's programs. Berger noted that library card sign-up would not be needed.

Table 31-33: Onufrak noted the consistency of the LSTA Advisory Committee. Cross had wondered if it was a mistake (all rated as .00), but it wasn't.

Table 34-36: Onufrak wondered what people were thinking in terms of training for new directors. Branson said it is probably geared toward recruitment and training of people new to that role. Berger wondered if it should be a higher priority or if a 2 on this scale compares well with other categories. Cross said one idea that has come up is a category for libraries to hire trainers for particular skills or projects. He asked for input. Davis said that system technology funds have been used for member libraries to bring in technology trainers. Marini said that the mini-grant concept might apply well here.

### **Comments on LSTA from Meetings**

Branson moved on to the comments on LSTA from various annual meetings. She asked the committee to look at page 2, future program suggestions. Berger noted the need for bandwidth was expressed here, too. Branson wondered if LSTA should have a role in increasing bandwidth since it is a state-funded program. Onufrak said that the way the BCN contracts are structured it is difficult to increase incrementally without going overboard. Guesses for bandwidth needs were requested over a year before the change was made, and thereafter, extra funds were required. Bocher confirmed Onufrak's assessment and noted the language in the budget that may help use left-over e-rate reimbursements for increased bandwidth. Davis noted that the block grants can be used to address pressing needs without establishing a new category.

Davis asked about new technology. Davis said they have used their block grants to address these categories. Marini said he likes the idea of adding databases to BadgerLink since the schools can use those resources. Branson suggested that it may be inappropriate to use federal LSTA funds where there are already state funds being used for a category. Marini said that the preference would be for the state to pay for them if possible. Perhaps the federal funds could be used for the resources but not for the support staff.

Berger asked about the statewide reference service and wondered if it truly is a three-year project. Drew said she is trying to put together a plan for phasing out the LSTA support with what is really a fairly new service.

Berger noted problem teen readers as a category that seemed popular for the literacy category.

Branson asked whether the governor's budget had included additional funding for the Wisconsin Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Grobschmidt confirmed that it is in the governor's budget.

Sampson wondered whether teens might be able to make suggestions on new technology issues. Grobschmidt wondered whether students might be able to participate in library board meetings, or whether libraries have teen advisory boards to solicit input. Perhaps some seed money to create pilot projects might help determine how the input might be solicited and used. Sampson wondered what funding might be used for perhaps blog space for input. Davis said she would support the concept. Marini said he has heard of some libraries that have used them, particularly in the South Central Library System area, with success. Grobschmidt said it might help bring more attention to the needs of that users group.

### **Draft Final Evaluation**

Branson turned the committee's attention to the preliminary draft of the five year evaluation. She said there are requirements from IMLS that must be incorporated in specific ways. Berger noted that there was a statement that support for the program had only been enough to support public library competitive projects but there is pressure to expand the program to schools. Drew noted the statement is on page 22 of the draft report. Branson discussed some of the background and history. Marini said that all libraries should be included. Branson noted that only a few categories previously had been extended beyond public libraries and that about 65% of the LSTA money is used for state-level projects so only about a third of the money is available for system and local projects. She questioned if there was enough money to open up categories to all libraries in the state and create unrealistic expectations. She stated that libraries of all types benefit from our state-level projects such as WISCAT, BadgerLink, Reference and Loan services, and some consultant services. Davis said it would be a major change to open up the grant categories. Sampson said we are not in this alone and wondered what goes on in other states. Branson noted that some states, such as Illinois, have extended grants to all types of libraries, but Illinois gets more LSTA money than Wisconsin and close to 100% of the LSTA money is used for local and regional projects. Pearlmuter mentioned that the systems in Illinois are multitype. Berger agreed with Davis that the committee needs to approach this issue very carefully and with the whole committee present. Marini said that the LSTA money should not be used exclusively for public libraries and that the best applications should be funded, saying that some of the applications funded in the past have been weak.

Marini said that one area that may be missing is one where small communities that want a public library may need extra help or resources. Perhaps a training session for new libraries would be helpful. Davis said that systems are charged with that duty and responsibility. She said that ongoing support from the system is most important. Marini noted that the level of support probably varies considerably.

Cross commended the work that Branson has done conducting the evaluation and planning process and said that many other states hire outside consultants to conduct this process. Pearlmuter said that anyone going to national library legislative day this spring should note how much has been done with so little—less than 1% of the total spent on public libraries here.

Branson noted that the next step is to “fill in the gaps” in the evaluation and prepare the new plan. She noted that the important part is the direction we take from the past five years – what have we learned and where to we go from here. The LSTA five year plan should be carefully considered by the committee. The new plan is not due until June, so the committee will review and shape the progress at the April meeting.

Branson thanked the committee members for attending the meeting and noted in particular those committee members who are going off the committee.

The meeting adjourned at 3:17 p.m.