

MINUTES

IOWA COMMISSION OF LIBRARIES

Date: October 15, 2025

Location: Ola Babcock Miller Building & Online via Zoom

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Commission Members Present: Bob Gast, Matthew Goddard, Fred Schuster, Brandon Denner (online), Melissa Kane (online), Mindy Reimer (online), Alison Ames-Galstad (online), Nathan Reckman (online, designee of the Director of Iowa Dept. of Administrative Services)

Staff: Brenda Hall, Emily Bainter, Janeé Jackson-Doering

1.0 Call to Order, Welcome & Introductions

F. Schuster called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2.0 Set Agenda

No objections to agenda. **B. Gast** made motion to approve proposed agenda. **M. Reimer** seconded. Agenda approved.

3.0 Action Items

3.1 Receive and Approve August 2025 Meeting Minutes

No objections to minutes. **M. Reimer** made a motion to approve the August Minutes. **M. Goddard** seconded. Minutes approved.

4.0 Commission Education

J. Jackson-Doering, Youth Services Consultant for the State Library, gave a presentation on the services and programs the State Library offers for Iowa youth librarians, including consulting services and support, training opportunities for continuing education, STEM To Go & Storytime Kits, the Summer Reading program, and All Iowa Reads.

5.0 Reports

- **State Librarian's Report**

B. Hall presented the following items in the State Librarian's Report:

- The Dept. of Administrative Services welcomed new director Mark Campbell.
- The 2026 **All Iowa Reads** announcement occurred Oct. 9 on Iowa Public Radio's *Talk of Iowa* program with Charity Nebbe. The three titles for 2026 are *The Quiet Librarian* by Allen Eskens (adults), *Strong Like You* by T.L. Simpson (teens), and *The Trouble with Heroes* by Kate Messner (kids).
- Additional bags and totes have been ordered for **IA Shares** deliveries and have been distributed to the AEA Hubs.
- The **Summer Library Program** survey was distributed to Iowa librarians through the month of September to receive feedback on the iREAD *Level Up At Your Library* theme. 167 librarians responded to the survey.
- **Bridges User Groups** met in September to discuss topics related to OverDrive and the Bridges consortium.
- State Library District Consultants host quarterly **New Director Meet-Ups**, most recently on Sept. 23. The virtual meetings give newer directors the chance to connect and ask questions.
- Upcoming continuing education event highlights include the **Learning Circuit** on Oct. 23 at six locations across the state; the **Iowa Libraries Online**

Conference on Jan. 29, 2026, an all-day conference for librarians with an evening session geared towards library trustees; and **Pop YS Con**, a virtual conference for youth service librarians next spring on April 16-17, 2026.

- Visits and travel included the Parks Library Centennial Celebration at Iowa State University on Sept. 24. The State Library also had a booth and several staff members were in attendance at the Iowa Library Association Conference on Oct. 1-3 in Sioux City. B. Hall will travel to the COSLA Fall Conference to connect with fellow state library agency chiefs in Wilmington, DE on Oct. 19-22.

- **Commission Reports**

- **M. Goddard:** The celebration for the Parks Library centennial was successful and it was nice to welcome Brenda, Emily and Fred. The Iowa Statesman, a men's choral group, gave a special performance in the Reading Room to commemorate the occasion. On campus, the semester is in full swing and students are preparing for midterms. The library will be hosting events for Open Access Week. Other programs at the library include a repair café and an event all about zines. Homecoming is also coming up; Special Collections and Archives will be offering an exhibit on previous Homecomings.
- **B. Gast:** The court navigator pilot program is winding up; the team is working on a final report and how to potentially expand the program, most likely in a virtual format.
- **M. Reimer:** The AEAs are already planning for next year and what offerings to provide school districts. Their current digital bundle is available for access by 400,000 Iowa students. These resources include Britannica, Scholastic, ProQuest, Gale and more. AEAs are able to give districts the benefit of consortium purchasing for these resources.
- **A. Galstad:** The Baker & Taylor closure is impacting public libraries; many are scrambling to find a replacement book distributor. It has not had a major impact at Coralville because they had also established an account with Ingram. She acknowledged that selectors will find losing reputable reviews that Baker & Taylor offered challenging, and she expects pricing will go up across the board. The Johnson County libraries joined together to purchase Libby access to provide digital media for residents. Each year in December, the Johnson County libraries hold an event inviting state and local legislators to hear about the importance of libraries and what they offer. This year, the focus will be on how libraries serve as a community center and a place people come to for resources.
- **M. Kane:** The Cascade Public Library Friends Group helped start a library of things collection to circulate to the community, including a telescope, microscope, and nail gun. Their library is weathering Baker & Taylor storm and is moving orders to Brodart. The library is keeping busy this October with a paranormal research program and a trick or treat event on the StoryWalk. The library is also now back to being fully staffed.
- **B. Denner:** The West Des Moines Friends Group has started their annual campaign and is in the planning process for their annual books and wine fundraising event to be held at the library in March.
- **N. Reckman:** Excited to have Mark Campbell on board as the new DAS Director; Director Campbell is traveling today but anticipates being able to attend the next Commission meeting. DAS administration is preparing for the upcoming legislative session that will start in January; DAS will not put forth any bill proposals that involve the State Library.

- **F. Schuster:** Expressed thanks to M. Goddard for welcoming him to the Parks Library Centennial Celebration. He has invited members of the Ankeny City Council to meet at the Kirkendall Library, where he shares data collected from the Public Library Annual Survey and compiled in the State Library “Big Stats Book” on how Ankeny compares to other libraries of similar size.

6.0 Commission Business & Discussion

- **Federal Government Shutdown:** **B. Hall** shared that the shutdown means the State Library is still waiting on a federal budget for FFY26 to find out what funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) will mean. The House and Senate have both put forth proposals for similar funding levels as FFY25, which is a positive sign. The State Library’s federally funded programs continue without interruption, even during the shutdown. The State Library has submitted one drawdown request from IMLS and anticipate that it will be approved and funds sent. IMLS is also due to be reauthorized by Congress this year, but can operate without reauthorization as long as funding is in place for FFY26.
- **5-Year LSTA Evaluation Process:** The IMLS Grants to States program requires a five-year strategic plan to receive funds. Annually, a State Program Report on five-year plan projects is completed and submitted to IMLS by the end of January. In addition, a site visit by IMLS occurs in year two of the plan. The next step is to complete an evaluation on the first three years of the strategic plan; for the State Library’s current plan an evaluation would cover FY23 - FY25. IMLS recently advised that state library agencies start thinking about the procurement process to contract with an evaluator. **B. Hall** anticipates the evaluation process will bring in stakeholders including librarians and Commission members, likely in fall 2026. The role for Commission members may include in-person or virtual meetings to talk about the plan’s projects and results. While this will not happen soon, she wanted to make members aware and will give updates on the process at upcoming meetings.
- **Meeting Locations & Next Meeting Date:** **F. Schuster** suggested holding Commission meetings at alternate locations in the future. **B. Hall** noted that alternate meeting locations must have good equipment to host the meeting, including an appropriate room with a projector and screen, as well as a strong WiFi connection. **B. Gast, A. Galstad, M. Kane, and M. Goddard** all offered to host a future Commission meeting and indicated their locations could meet the requirements. **B. Hall** suggested a mix of meetings at the Miller Building and other locations moving forward. At the previous Commission meeting, it was discussed to shift the next meeting date to coincide with the Iowa Library Association’s (ILA) Legislative Day to enable Commission members to attend if they choose. ILA is tentatively planning Legislative Day to occur on the first or second Tuesday in February, which would be the 3rd or 10th. An upcoming ILA board meeting will finalize the date and **B. Hall** will inform Commission members.
- **IPIB Chapter 21 & 22 Trainings:** The State Library has heard from the library community that Iowa Public Information Board (IPIB) virtual trainings on Chapters 21 & 22 for new board members must be attended live and fill up quickly. There is currently not a self-paced option for the course. IPIB started to approve additional entities as trainers, including the Iowa League of Cities, ISU Extension. State Library staff, understanding the large number of library trustees that will need the training, modified a previously recorded webinar with the former IPIB director and added content to meet all required elements to be included in the training. The course would be taken in Workday Learning and is specifically geared towards libraries. Library trustees would need to create individual accounts to take the course and receive a certificate. The State Library

submitted the course to IPIB for approval. The IPIB training committee wants to discuss further and it could be escalated to the board.

- **Baker & Taylor Shutdown:** The announced bankruptcy and shutdown of Baker & Taylor is a significant issue currently facing libraries. Today at 10:30 a.m., Becky Heil, State Library Southeast District Consultant, hosted an informational Zoom webinar for librarians to discuss alternative options for book distributors. The state of Iowa had a master agreement with Baker & Taylor, which allowed public libraries to purchase at the negotiated state rates. **B. Hall** met with DAS Procurement to review the previous proposal; she will work with them in determining next steps and if a new proposal makes sense. Baker & Taylor also owned Bibliostat Collect & Connect, the platform used by the State Library as a data collection tool for the Public Library Annual Survey, Accreditation applications, and Direct State Aid reports. This platform will also be winding down. The Public Library Survey is currently open with a deadline of Oct. 31. The State Library will inform directors that this is a firm deadline in order to allow program staff to pull down and process the data before it is submitted to IMLS. The next Accreditation application cycle is set to start Dec. 1. Last year, Accreditation was deferred for all libraries by one year due to staff changes. **B. Hall** reached out to WhoFi, a vendor for library management tools, to see if they could stand up an accreditation application platform for libraries under the umbrella of the services currently offered to the State Library. They indicated this could be possible and a meeting is scheduled in two weeks to see if WhoFi will have a viable solution. **B. Hall** emphasized that the goal is to continue with the coming cycle this year and not postpone Accreditation another year. However, if there is not a solution, what are Commission members' opinions on deferring Accreditation another year if necessary? **F. Schuster** asked for an informal show of hands; all Commission members unanimously agreed with deferring Accreditation for another year if a viable solution for an application platform is not available.

7.0 Public Comment

- No comments.

8.0 Adjournment

M. Goddard made a motion to adjourn. **A. Galstad** seconded. **F. Schuster** adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Submitted by: Emily Bainter, Information Specialist