M I N U T E S
IOWA COMMISSION OF LIBRARIES

Date: April 15, 2026
Location: Judicial Branch Building Room 165 & Online via Zoom
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Commission Members Present: Fred Schuster, Alison Ames-Galstad, Bob Gast, Matthew Goddard, Mindy Reimer, Brandon Denner (online), Melissa Kane (online), Teri Hubbard (online)

Staff: Brenda Hall, Emily Bainter, Samantha Bouwers

1.0 Call to Order, Welcome & Introductions

F. Schuster called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed new member Teri Hubbard to the Commission.

2.0 Set Agenda

No objections to agenda. **A. Galstad** made motion to approve proposed agenda. **M. Reimer** seconded. Agenda approved.

3.0 Action Items

3.1 Receive and Approve February 2026 Meeting Minutes

No objections to minutes. **B. Gast** made a motion to approve the February 2026 Minutes. **M. Goddard** seconded. Minutes approved.

4.0 Reports

- **State Librarian's Report**

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

  - The State Library is hiring two positions: a Library Program Director and a Library Consultant for the Southeast District.
  - Contracts for the State Library are in process, including an agreement with the Iowa AEAs for IA Shares delivery service; a data collection tool for the Public Library Survey and Enrich Iowa Direct State Aid report; a master agreement for discounts on library materials; and an evaluator for the Library Services and Technology Act 5-Year Plan, as required by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).
  - The Iowa Public Library Statistics "Big Stats Book" will be delayed due to the government shutdown last fall which affected the Public Library Survey. The publication should be available in June.
  - Bridges Letters of Agreements were due at the end of March; there were 496 libraries that renewed and four new members joined the digital consortium.
  - Accreditation applications were due Feb. 28 and are in the process of being reviewed by State Library staff. 194 libraries submitted applications in this cycle. Libraries will be notified in May of their status level achieved.
  - The CatExpress consortium is available for libraries to join to purchase smaller quantities of MARC records from OCLC.
  - Letters of Agreement for the Enrich Iowa program will become available to libraries following the adjournment of the legislative session.
  - The Dept. of Administrative Services (DAS) is transitioning from Google to Microsoft. State Library staff emails will change to @das.iowa.gov.

- Continuing Education Updates: The State Library will offer Director Roundtables led by District Consultants across the state in May, the theme is *Worth Celebrating*. The Pop YS Conference for youth librarians will take place this Thursday and Friday, April 16-17 in a virtual format at no cost to attendees. The conference will be in person next April at the Gateway Hotel and Conference Center in Ames. The State Library launched self-paced training for library board members on Iowa's open meetings and open records laws in February. Since then, 47 people have completed the course as of the end of March.
- B. Hall visited the Iowa Veterans Home in February with Commission Chair Fred Schuster. In early March, B. Hall traveled with Commission Vice Chair Alison Ames-Galstad to Washington D.C. for the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies Voices for Libraries event to share the impact of federal funding from IMLS.
- IMLS is holding regional convenings and inviting representatives from the surrounding states, including the State Librarian and selected librarians. Iowa will be invited to the convening in Cincinnati, Ohio in June. Six Freedom Trucks, sponsored by IMLS, are crossing the nation this year in celebration of America 250; some Iowa libraries will host a truck in the coming months.

- **Commission Reports**
  - **F. Schuster:** Invited city council members to the library for meetings to share information about the library from his perspective as a Board member. He intends to invite state legislators that represent Ankeny for meetings as well. Ankeny will host a professional development day for Polk County librarians this fall and has requested that a State Library staff member to do the training at the event.
  - **A. Galstad:** Coralville Public Library recently hosted "corridor" public libraries in Linn and Johnson Counties for a staff development day with keynote speakers and breakout sessions from the local librarians. They hope to do the training day on an annual basis; the six larger corridor libraries pool resources so smaller libraries in the region can also take part. She also serves on the Iowa Student Poet Ambassador selection committee; the new ambassador, Josie Nabhan-Warren from Iowa City High School, will be inaugurated in the Law Library in the Capitol Building next week.
  - **M. Reimer:** The Iowa AEAs offer three main services to schools: special education, professional learning for educators, and media library and technology. Professional learning and media library and technology services have transitioned to a fee for service model. School districts can now elect to pay for a newly revamped digital resources bundle. The AEAs are also working on WCAG accessibility requirements for their online resources.
  - **M. Kane:** Cascade Public Library rolled out Beanstack for their summer reading program to manage registration, tracking, and prizes. The library is working to get a tools library and makerspace up and running for the community. She is planning to work with a master gardener this fall to also offer a seed library around January.
  - **T. Hubbard:** The recent Sioux Center Public Library Board meeting discussed National Library Week; this year's theme is *Find Your Joy*. The library will put up a display to promote the summer reading program, which has a lot of community participation. The library has been promoting the use of a family card for parents to supervise their children's reading choices.

- **B. Denner:** The West Des Moines Friends Foundation recently held the 9th annual Wine, Beer, and Cheese Festival to raise funds to benefit the library. The Friends Foundation also recently heard a local 9th grader read poetry. Celebrations are being planned for the West Des Moines Public Library's upcoming 30th anniversary.
- **M. Goddard:** Iowa State University recently welcomed new president David Cook, an Ames native and ISU alum. He has been on a listening tour across campus and filmed introductory videos in the library. The Library's Dean is retiring and a search process is underway. The title will change from Dean to University Librarian to better reflect the role. The goal is for the position to be filled in August before the next school year. The library is also hiring an AI instruction librarian to help students think about AI tools critically and in an informed way.
- **B. Gast:** The Court Navigator program expansion is ongoing with undergrad students offering support. The program should receive some statistics and data in the near future to help understand the needs of the public and what they are seeking.

5.0 Commission Education: Accessibility Standards for Library Websites

- A new federal rule will require the websites and digital resources of state and local government (including public libraries) to comply with accessibility standards. Libraries that serve under 50,000 people must be compliant by April 2027. **S. Bouwers** gave an overview of recent State Library training offered to libraries about the accessibility standards and upcoming worktimes geared towards libraries that have PLOW websites provided by the State Library. **E. Bainter** presented a new resource for libraries on the State Library website titled "Accessibility Best Practices for Library Websites." The guide contains an overview of five key concepts for accessibility with tips, additional resources, and specific instructions for libraries with PLOW websites. Additional sections highlight training opportunities and outline a three-step action plan for library websites to become compliant.

6.0 Commission Updates and Discussion

- **Federal Funding Update:** FFY25 funding should be completely expended in the next month or so. The State Library has signed assurances for the FFY26 funding and will start drawing on that funding when needed. Congress is currently working on appropriations. The President's proposed budget includes $6 million to eliminate IMLS, which the administration also proposed in the last budget. The State Library will monitor progress. IMLS will also be celebrating their 30-year anniversary. B. Hall was also recently notified that the State Program Report for FFY24 has been accepted by IMLS.
- **Legislative Update:** The State Library is monitoring bills at the state level: HSB764 relates to federal grant funding and SF2432 applies to city health boards but currently has two amendments filed that relate to public libraries.
- **PLOW Website Accessibility Compliance Responsibilities:** Currently, 353 public libraries have PLOW websites from the State Library. Libraries can choose a full and robust website or a "lite" site, which includes basic information about the library and is mostly managed by Library Resource Technicians at the State Library. The State Library does not currently have agreements with these libraries in place. While the State Library provides the Concrete 5 platform for PLOW websites, libraries are responsible for the content and have liability over the accessibility of the website. **B. Hall** proposes a Letter of Agreement that spells out these responsibilities. **A. Galstad** thinks is a good idea and said it can be hard to do these things retroactively but it is important. It will be helpful to have the website worktimes offered and the resources available. It is a great step for the State Library and makes sense. **M. Goddard** said it makes perfect sense; the State

Library is not in a position to maintain the content or take on liability. He can see that the chance to clarify roles and expectations could be very important. **M. Reimer** stated this proposal couples accountability and care by providing education with the legal obligation and intent to offer access to all and thinks it's a good idea.

- **Bylaws: Chairperson Duties: F. Schuster** offered notice of a proposed amendment to the Commission Bylaws. The amendment would add language stating the agenda is developed by the State Librarian in collaboration with the Commission Chairperson. The specific language will be sent to Commission members for review and a vote will be held at the next meeting.
- **FY27 Commission Meetings:** The current schedule for quarterly standing meetings is the third Wednesday of July, October, January, and April. The January meeting may be moved to coincide with the Iowa Library Association's Legislative Day. The next meeting is set for July 15 at 10:00 a.m. and the proposed location is the ISU Parks Library hosted by M. Goddard. He is confirming meeting room availability before the location is finalized. Future meetings would be Oct. 21, 2026 potentially hosted by A. Galstad, and Jan. 20 or moving that meeting to ILA Legislative Day (date has not been announced). At the next meeting, an election will be held for a new Vice Chairperson, Commission members may reach out to F. Schuster if they are interested in serving.
- **Iowa Public Library Standards: B. Hall** reviewed discussion at the previous meeting regarding the Public Library Standards and asked for Commission members' thoughts about the current Standards and direction they should go. **A. Galstad** asked about the extent of revisions in 2024. **B. Hall** stated the revision removed the former state librarian's welcome letter and picture and changes also included updating Code references and links to the new State Library website. None involved substantive changes to the content. **T. Hubbard** read prepared remarks about the Sioux Center Public Library's proposal for a tiered library card system and spoke in support of a parent's authority over the upbringing of their children. She referenced recent Supreme Court rulings and other court decisions that reaffirm this principle. She asked the Commission to affirm that the Public Library Standards should not prohibit libraries from adopting a tiered library card system that respects the role of parents. The accreditation standards should allow local libraries to respond to their communities, and we can uphold intellectual freedom and parent choice at the same time. **F. Schuster** asked what changes T. Hubbard proposes. **T. Hubbard** said that the accreditation standards should not override the fundamental rights of parents and a local library's ability to put policies in place that their communities are asking for. **F. Schuster** asked how a library would do that. **T. Hubbard** stated the Sioux Center Public Library proposes a voluntary system for parents to opt in to that would only allow minors to access to certain parts of the library. Standard 7 states "Required: The library's adopted collection development policy is consistent with principles of intellectual freedom as found in such documents as the U.S. Constitution, the American Library Association Intellectual Freedom Manual, and the Iowa Library Association Intellectual Freedom Resource Guide." **A. Galstad** requested that a specific proposal be brought forth to discuss. **F. Shuster** said he is generally sympathetic to this issue. **B. Gast** asked if changing Standard 7 would keep the State Library from receiving federal funding. **B. Hall** responded that the Standards are set at the state level by the State Library and first went into effect in 1985. The Standards make a reference to IMLS because the State Library uses federal dollars to support staff to run the program. Standard 7 specifies that only the collection development policy must adhere to intellectual freedom principles. The standard mentions four library policies that need to be reviewed every three years in a library's Accreditation cycle. This language, in some form, has been in the Standards since 1985. There were a couple of bills this legislative session that proposed changes to prohibit the State Library from referencing an

outside association in the standards. Currently, Standard 7 and Standard 20 both mention outside associations. Any substantive updates to the Standards must be adopted by the Commission and then go through the administrative rules process to be updated. Both of these processes could take six to nine months each. Should the Commission seek a narrow change to the Standards, or does the group look at the Standards as a whole to update? **T. Hubbard** asked if Standard 7 and the collection development policy could be interpreted differently with the documents referenced being examples of intellectual freedom. **M. Goddard** is supportive of this issue and asked if the Commission could do both. He recognizes communities may need a quicker change to the Standards. The documents mentioned are examples of intellectual freedom and believes the language could be interpretated that way. **A. Galstad** stated she would like to seek an outside opinion and further guidance on this interpretation before moving forward with changes. **B. Gast** asked if the State Library has access to a liaison from the Attorney General who could give an opinion. **M. Reimer** said the key word here is interpretation and that we don't have clear, concise guidance. She believes there would be value in that interpretation and also thinks it is time to review the Standards wholistically. **B. Hall** said she would be willing to ask DAS administration about the process and if this is an appropriate situation to request an opinion from the Attorney General's office. **B. Gast** indicated we could ask if the Attorney General's office agrees with the interpretation that "such as" in Standard 7 means the documents are examples consistent with intellectual freedom. **F. Schuster** asked T. Hubbard to share her notes with B. Hall. **T. Hubbard** agreed to send her notes and mentioned another conflict in the standards is that internet filtering to meet CIPA requirements and not allowing minors to reserve meeting rooms also restrict based on age. **B. Hall** said Standard 7 is written so that there are only certain requirements on certain policies. A library's internet policy does not have an intellectual freedom requirement and the meeting room policy is only referenced in a later Standard in the document. This language is in one place and specific to one policy, which may open a question about referencing something outside that the State Library does not have control over. By referencing them in the Standards, they may be standing in the way of local control. **F. Schuster** made a motion for B. Hall to seek interpretation of Standard 7 from the Attorney General's office. Motion approved unanimously.

7.0 Public Comment: F. Schuster outlined the guidelines for public comment.

- **John Worden** commented on a question he posed to the State Library about whether a decision made by the Marshalltown Public Library Board was punitive in nature. He asked for a policy to allow patrons to challenge the accreditation of a public library. He said 180 seconds is not enough time for an individual comment and suggested allowing at least 5 minutes or open the comment period up for as long as people would like to talk.

8.0 Adjournment

A. Galstad made a motion to adjourn. **M. Goddard** seconded. **F. Schuster** adjourned the meeting at 12:06 p.m.

Submitted by: Emily Bainter, Information Specialist