

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
LEGISLATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR EDUCATION

January 18, 1979
8:15 a.m.
Room 104
State Capitol Building
Subject: Library Commission Budget
and Supplemental
Reel 2, Side 1, Track 1

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Carroll South, with the following members present:

Senator Larry Fasbender
Senator Harold Nelson
Representative Jack Moore
Representative Esther Bengtson

Representative Oscar Kvaalen was absent.

Also in attendance were Miral Gamradt, Legislative Fiscal Analyst; William Conklin, President of the State Library Commission; Mildred Sullivan, Montana Library Association; Phyllis Honka; George Mattson; Hal Stearns, State Library; Margaret Worden, Montana Advisory Council on Libraries; and Representative R. Budd Gould. (See attached Visitors' Register for others present.)

Mr. Conklin stated that the Library Commission would like an increase in general fund appropriation to the extent that the state library would be funded completely by the general fund, thus freeing the federal monies to be used to improve the library services in the state. They have asked for a general fund budget of \$676,808 for the first year and \$703,000 for the second year of the biennium. The budget contains a 6% salary increase. Mr. Conklin stated that there is concern on the part of the people of the state of Montana that they want increased support of the federation by the state. The released LSCA funds would go for the following purposes:

1. making grants to library federations
2. updating the Union List of Montana Serials
3. adding two positions

There was also a request for one percent of the coal tax severance funds; these funds would be used to provide basic services for all libraries in the federation areas and for membership in the

Washington Library Network. There is presently a bill requiring that basic library services be provided by the state library and additional funding is needed to do this. On page 531, there was a provision imposed on the library commission which states that any federal funds received in excess of the amount appropriated shall be passed through as grants to local libraries. The library commission would like this language not to be imposed again; some grants could not be applied for because of the restrictive language. In response to Senator Nelson's question, Mr. Conklin stated that there are 44 county libraries in the federation.

Representative Gould, a member of the Montana State Advisory Council, spoke in favor of general fund support; he supported Mr. Conklin's position that he does not believe that money appropriated by Congress is intended to support the state library. He supported the creation of a Volunteer Coordinator position and emphasized its importance to the blind and physically handicapped.

Mildred Sullivan and Phillis Honka testified on the importance of having the Volunteer Coordinator position. Mrs. Sullivan, representing the Montana Library Association, further testified in support of basic services provided by the libraries.

George Mattson distributed a report on the Montana Governor's Conference on Libraries held in October, 1978; he discussed the conference and stated that there is "grass roots" support for library programs by the people of Montana. Hal Stearns also testified in support of basic library services to the people of the state; he feels that \$1.00 per person is within reason.

Margaret Worden spoke on the White House Conference and difficulties in getting authority to spend federal monies for purposes that would be beneficial to the state.

Chairman South presented a letter written to the committee by Harold Patten stating that Warehouse Furniture Company would under no circumstances renew the present lease for the building occupied by the State Library Commission. Mr. Conklin stated there are planning funds for a new facility in the Governor's budget. They are presently occupying 25,000 square feet and the proposed facility would have 50,000 square feet.

Representative Moore inquired whether Mr. Conklin was aware that there was a proposal to reduce the coal tax monies from 10 million to 1 million dollars a year. Mr. Conklin said he was. Representative Moore stated that he felt every bit of the federal funds that are available should be used because of the financial position the state is presently in. The committee is committed to a minimum of \$317,000 a year for the library commission.


Representative Bengtson inquired whether there were guidelines for the grants given to the individual federations. Mr. Conklin stated that each federation must have a functioning federation library board with a member from each library in the federation. This board would approve each request. There was further discussion on how the monies were distributed and library programs available at the state institutions.

There was discussion of the Pacific Northwest Bibliographic Center and its value to the system. Montana is the second heaviest user of the center after Washington. Use of the Washington Library Network would enable books which are located within the state to be found more readily. The use of the PNBC is still necessary at the present time, Mr. Conklin stated, but its use will be gradually reduced with increased use of the Washington Library Network.

 4/6/79

CARROLL SOUTH, CHAIRMAN

Transcribed by Linda Berg



Vicki Lofthouse, Acting Secretary