

Draft Minutes from Midwinter 2009 meetings

From GODORT

GODORT Legislation Committee I

January 23, 2009, 4-6 pm

CCC Korbel 4B, Denver, Colorado

Chair: Kirsten Clark; Secretary: Jesse Silva Attendees: Ellen Simmons, Laura Horne, Jeff Bullington, Kay Cassell, Jesse Silva, Mary Mallory, Madeline Mundt

The first part of the meeting took place at the Legislative Assembly. The second part was the regular committee meeting.

- Kirsten gave an overview of the key issues from the Legislative Assembly. The committee discussed drafting a legislative agenda for steering. There were general questions about how this should proceed and what a legislative agenda would look like. Does it need to be approved by steering? Does GIS need to be involved? Should we do something similar to what we did for legislative day? This item was tabled to Legislation Committee Meeting 3.
- Leg Assembly asked that the LSTA resolution be brought to memberships of units to sign on to.
- Discussion and prep for tomorrow meeting with COL/GIS

Kirsten shared the background on this meeting: Several people talked at FDLP in October about the possibility of bringing together a meaningful conversation among all ALA units concerning government information. The goal is to bring everyone's views and positions together.

Since that discussion in October, there have been several phone conferences about how to have a joint meeting where this conversation can take place. How do ALA groups see government information: for instance, how does PLA see government information or the FDLP. To accomplish this, the group has developed a few questions for units to respond over the next few months. Once the information is gathered, everyone will have chance to see what others are thinking and this could be the basis for the discussion at Annual.

LegComm discussed that this should involve more than just FDLP. We need to bring more people in. How will the regional report and the discussion at DLC factor in? What will the final outcome be? what should happen?

- The Committee then worked on the draft resolution for Gil Baldwin.

GODORT Legislation Committee II (joint meeting with COL-GIS)

Saturday January 24, 2009, 1:30-3:30 pm

CCC 406, Denver, Colorado

Chair: Kirsten Clark, Secretary: Jesse Silva

GODORT Leg Comm members present: Jeff Bullington, Kirsten Clark, Kay Cassell, Ellen Simmons, Madeline Mundt, Jesse Silva, Laura Horne, Tanya Finchum

- Jessica McGilvray from the ALA Washington Office gave an update on the HR 35 (Presidential Records Act Amendment of 2009): The House passed HR 35. President Obama issued an executive order lifting restrictions on presidential records. Work is still needed to get HR35 into law and not just rely on executive orders. More information is at the ALA Washington Office District Dispatch: <http://www.wo.ala.org/districtdispatch/>
- GladysAnn Wells gave a brief overview on the current political and economic climate we are working in. There are many key figures who will need to be appointed in the near future: Chair of the Commission on Library and Museums; the next National Archivist; the possibility of Dr. Billington retiring from LC. Other issues affecting the current climate include changes in the FDLP, the reauthorization of LSTA and the continued access to broadband connectivity.
- Planning for the Meeting at the Annual conference

How does government information affect all librarians? The idea is to have a joint meeting where the various units in ALA come together and discuss how government information affects all librarians. The goal is to plan this meeting in a way that makes people want to go and have an outcome, not just a discussion.

A question was raised on how this meeting is different from last year. Last year's meeting was focused on FDLP; this year's meeting is more on all government information, federal, state, local and international. We need specific ways for people to articulate their unique viewpoints and bring them to the meeting. We need to have those opinions expressed and find where folks can work together. This should be focused on internal units of ALA, something we can take to other groups, give them time for discussion. We should include in the plan a way to work with other library associations in the future. The focus is on the end users need for any government information, and not just the FDLP.

A few months prior, OMB Watch held the "21st Century Right to Know" retreat. We could possibly replicate this event. OMB brought together groups from all sides of the political spectrum and the goal was to come to a common agreement. This group had 2 days, and we may only have one day, but the possibility of the survey and all the results shared could lend to having a one day event.

This meeting should focus not just what government can do, but what others can do. We need to know the government information needs of all groups. What do other groups think about government information?

Access and dissemination of government information are terms that need to be repeated. These could be the precepts of government information.

A question on ALA's bureaucracy came up. Maybe we should take this to Legislative Assembly and work that way, it would get the bureaucracy out of the way since all groups are represented in Legislative Assembly.

This could be an educational opportunity. Government information is now part of everyone's job, everyone will deal with it. There was an article in American Libraries a couple years ago that ended with everyone is a government information librarian now.

We need to get everyone's viewpoints.

The following questions for the initial survey were discussed:

- How do you or your members help your users find government information?

Comments: Questions should be framed to be more across the spectrum of government information, not just FDLP. This is not about the FDLP. Is this question targeted at specific individuals or everyone in various groups. What is the significance of government information to the various groups. We are trying to stop the rejection point.

Everyone uses government information but may not think about it as government information. What about e-gov services: how do these fit in?

- What training do your members have / need in government information?

Comments: The IMLS grant for government information that 5 western states participated in could be the model for this. We need to acknowledge tools that are now available and tools that are needed. This question should be restated so its not so focused on reference/public service. There should be a hook that would interest a wide range of folks. Changing the introductory paragraph could make the difference in how question is read.

- What ways do you provide / organize your government information?

Comments: We need to focus on access. What is meant by "your" government information—we need to move away from the possessive since its not "ours" but "everyones." How does this go with other ALA divisions? Change question order. How will their institutions deal with these three questions? What is their vision for government information? How does your ALA unit see the direction government information should take? Maybe this could lead to templates for users to find gov info.

- Other questions and comments:

Ask each of the organizations who uses government information; Who are the user communities?

There will be many varied interests. School librarians seem to marry their interests to other groups, how can we mirror this. How trusted is government information as a source of information to their users. How much do groups realize that information they use is government information: for instance, Rick Santorum wanted to get rid of the National Weather Service because the Weather Channel has the same information, but he did not realize that the Weather Channel gets its information from the NWS.

A question was brought up in comparison of scientific reports and who uses them. We do not all work the same. We need to force everyone to prioritize their needs. This could be a series of regional meetings. The questions could be answered before the meeting and provide the base for the discussion at the meeting.

Potential titles were briefly discussed.

Legislation Committee III

January 25, 2009, 8-10am

CCC112, Denver, Colorado

Chair: Kirsten Clark, Secretary: Jesse Silva

Attendees: Ellen Simmons, Mary Mallory, Jesse Silva, Tanya Finchum, Kay Cassell, Kirsten Clark, Madeline Mundt, Jeff Bullington, Laura Horne

- Minutes from Annual 2008 will be approved over email.
- Kirsten shared Robin's comments on Gil Baldwin's resolution and the committee continued working on it.
- Kirsten read the ALA LSTA Resolution—reauthorization of Museum and Library Services act of 2003, from Legislative Assembly. The committee agreed the resolution was needed and will bring it to GODORT membership
- The Committee continued the discussion on Government Information Meeting at Annual 2009.

Should the focus be basic government/civics information? What is government information to your community? The introductory paragraph for this survey should address the problem that non-government information librarians do not think of government information when they are using it. If the librarian is not thinking about government information, how would the constituents know. The paragraph should include some examples of government documents that may be relevant to them, such as the LC Subject headings for catalogers. Particular examples of concrete pubs are needed.

What information from the government do you need? A concern that the current questions are too direct at this point in time was raised. They would be useful later, for instance, people don't realize they need training until they need it. We need the questions to discover the common values and principles of government information. Once we have everyone answers we can sort through the details and find common principles and values.

A concern on the definition of government information was also raised. When the small group that initially started this tried to define it, it was nearly impossible. Maybe this meeting should focus on what the various ALA units think government information is. One we have a common understanding, we can build on the process.

- The Legislation Committee Wiki

A question was raised on ALA Connects(?) and how this will be used in conjunction with the wiki and the website. GODORT is primarily using the wiki. Everyone is encouraged to look at and contribute to the wiki. Possible things to add include: the resolutions (ALA hasn't updated the resolution page since 2007), future of FDLP resources. This will allow everyone to get everything in one spot. We should also think about making the site more interactive, with RSS feeds and other web2.0 tools.

- Monthly Meebo conversations

Everyone will send Kirsten their availability for monthly meebo discussions.

- Legislative Agenda

The committee agreed to take issues from the Legislative Day agenda and develop them. We could add on specifics. The Washington Office has some information and we can make it briefer. We need to focus on how particular issues will affect GODORT. As new the new Presidential administration works through issues, how will we respond.

There are many questions remaining on this legislative agenda: are we focusing on what we want to accomplish in a single session or a full congress? Many of our issues overlap with the Obama administration's goals. The administration indicates that it wants to listen, and we need to start early to make sure we are heard.

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