

GODORT Legislative Committee meeting, February 16, 2017

Present: Hallie Pritchett, Simon Healey, Marie Concannon, Bernadine Abbott Hoduski, Ambrogino Giusti.

Hallie proposes monthly meetings between now and June (including June). Hallie will set up Doodle polls. She would like the 5-yr plan set by the ALA Annual meeting. ALA has asked for scheduling info. Here's what we've got:

COL-GIS LEG 1 will be on Saturday
(conflicts with State and Local Docs TF)

LEG 2 will be on Sunday.
(conflicts with the GODORT Education Committee)

In 2018 there will be major changes to the scheduling to encourage more virtual participation.

FIVE YEAR PLAN

Hallie reviews highlights of the 2nd Legislative Committee meeting at Midwinter: *They had discussed the GINI document, which is aspirational in nature. We need to make sure that whatever we do goes through the proper channels whether it be GODORT or ALA's legislative assembly. We need to keep in mind the uncertain state of politics this year. We need more members on this committee. It should be a two-year commitment with half the members rotating on each year so that the Chair comes in as the second year of service. This would encourage continuity of multi-year projects. GODORT Steering and Legislative committees should attend each other's meetings. GPO wants to get the word out about their newest projects, perhaps the Legislative Committee could advocate for that. (We need a clear definition of the kind of advocacy our committee does.) Also, should our committee be focused on reaching certain goals? If we simply "raise awareness" have we fulfilled our responsibility? There is a difference between promoting awareness and actual advocacy. GODORT members may be too close to some problems to see them clearly, but having input from non GODORT can help a lot. As always, we should maintain 2-way communication with GPO and thinking how we can "advocate" for them.*

Hallie reiterated that getting more members for this committee is essential. Eight or ten people might be about right, especially if our intent is to have broad representation from a wide variety of library types. Some legislative advocacy is library-type-specific. In order to keep up on all emerging issues, we'd need to have committee membership that is not clustering around one library type.

Announcement: Jessica McGilvray is leaving the ALA Washington office. Hallie still wants someone from that office to talk to our committee at ALA annual.

BILL DISCUSSION

*S.103 - Local Zoning Decisions Protection Act of 2017
SEC. 3. Prohibition on use of Federal funds.*

“...Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal funds may be used to design, build, maintain, utilize, or provide access to a Federal database of geospatial information on community racial disparities or disparities in access to affordable housing.”

This was put in place during Obama administration. It was to result in an online interactive mapping tool in order to facilitate better decision making. Yet, Section 3 of the bill above makes it so broad that *no* federal agency would ever be able to gather data on race or racial disparities – not even the Census Bureau. FEMA might need such a tool for disaster relief analysis, and the USDA might use it in reporting on food deserts. GODORT and MAGIRT cannot write a letter on ALA’s behalf, but we can provide examples to ALA’s Washington office of what effect we think this bill would have. MAGIRT has already issued a call for examples from among their own members, with deadline of March 1 or 3. After consulting with GODORT Steering, Hallie will put out a similar call on GOVDOC-L. Jessica McGilvray mentioned that ALA’s Washington office is aware of bill.

On a similar topic, it is rumored that the Census might start asking questions about people’s immigration status. Any legislation of this sort would be in our committee’s purview, so keep your eyes and ears open.

PRESERVATION RESOLUTION

Text:

...Therefore be it resolved that:

The American Library Association urges the U. S. Congress to fund preservation of Federal government publications housed in federal depository libraries; and

The American Library Association urges the U. S. Congress to authorize the U. S. Government Publishing Office to provide funds directly to libraries for the preservation of the federal government publications (paper, microform, and digital) housed in their libraries....

Bernadine Abbott Hoduski comments: “The working group report did give options including asking congress for money as well as other groups and we are simply following through. We will be working on other funding suggestions at our next meeting. Several groups in states are writing letters to their senators asking for funding as well as Montana.... Montana wants a state wide cooperative preservation project since we are such a small state with few libraries. Susanne Caro [MT regional coordinator] says the regional does not even have money for compact shelving. Montana does not want to discard their regional collection. They want to preserve it. GPO cannot give them money and money is what they need. They can ask for grants from IMLS but IMLS will probably be cut in funding to pay for the wall and military.”

Hallie says maybe this is a more appropriate discussion for Depository Library Council. She reminds us that FDLP libraries have an agreement to keep materials in exchange for getting them at no charge. Most regionals don’t have a complete collection and can’t really be preservation stewards.

Bernadine Abbott Hoduski comments: "One change could be to ask for pilot projects rather than a complete program we did that with the electronic projects that led to GPO Access Act. Libraries would have to submit proposals for projects as they do for all grants. We are having the programs at annual to educate librarians about the issue and how to do. GPO said they do not want to receive gifts, the GPO deputy director says they are capable of providing grants. They handle millions of dollars of contracts for all kinds of services, printing, editing, graphics, etc. There is a history of giving libraries money for cataloging, etc. to all kinds of libraries. That is what LSTA does. Laurie Hall doesn't want us to get in to this but the deputy director does. As you can see by the disappearing of data from web sites already that digital is not permanent, therefore we need to protect the back up of paper in order to re-digitize if the digital is destroyed. I have spoken with the GPO Chief of Staff and the Deputy. They want to help libraries provide permanent public access - the purpose of the program. GPO expects the library community to ask for what librarians want. Librarians asked for microforms and digital and we got both. GPO did not advocate for it."

Hallie says they could talk about this in REGIL, and notes that preservation implies permanent retention. Also, what would be the expectations if GPO provides financial assistance? If GPO wants us to pursue this they can approach us.

Bernadine Abbott Hoduski: "They say that the librarians should ask for what they want and if congress authorizes it they can do the job."