

BRAILLE AND TALKING BOOK LIBRARY USER ADVISORY COUNCIL
Draft Provisional Minutes (slated to be voted on at meeting on Dec. 5, 2015)
August 29, 2015

Attendees:

Members Present: Alan Smith, Mary Willows, Kathleen Berman, Karen Parsegian, Roslyn McCoy, Elena Thomason (via phone), and Rio Popper.

Members absent: Debee Armstrong, Margie Donovan, Claire LeDonne

Staff: Mike Marlin, BTBL Director: Mary Jane Kayes, Librarian, Donna Scales, Readers Advisory Supervisor

Note taker: Mary Willows

Introductions and Welcome:

The fifth meeting (third of 2015) of the Braille and Talking Book Library User Advisory Council was called to order at 10:15 a.m. by President Alan Smith. All members and staff introduced themselves.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of May 29, 2015 were approved unanimously.

BTBL Library Director's Report

Online catalog (btbl.library.ca.gov): the new version of BTBL's OPAC (online public access catalog) that was premiered in May 2015 has now permanently replaced the older online catalog interface. The layout is visually different from the old one. Low vision readers may find it to be a challenge. As patrons have learned how to navigate the new system we have received fewer and fewer complaints. Although there are features that still need improvement, staff is aware of this and working with the Keystone Library Automation System (KLAS) vendor to add improvements in subsequent software updates. The online catalog is where patrons can search for books on cartridge, older cassettes, or braille and order them to be sent through the mail. The online catalog also allows patrons to link to the BARD download site for "Download only" titles. BTBL encourages patrons to explore the online catalog and provide feedback.

Recording Studio Software Upgrade: Books that are local to California or California authors that are not being recorded elsewhere are the focus of the BTBL Narration Studio. BTBL is in the process of updating software and equipment. The new NLS developed and supported recording/editing software is

called Hindenburg, or HABC (Hindenburg Audio Book Creator). Mary Jane Kayes, Robert Freitas, and Sarah Anderson will be going to NLS headquarters in September and November in Washington, D.C. for training on the new software. BTBL is ordering new computers, sound cards, and HABC software and hopes to have it all installed by the end of 2015. In Spring 2016, after staff and current studio volunteers have learned and are comfortable using HABC, BTBL hopes to begin recruiting new Narrators and Monitors.

DOD: In the near future BTBL will be implementing DOD or “duplication on demand.” Some of the older titles on cassette are no longer useable or desirable. With DOD download-only retrospectively converted analog to digital titles will be burned on to blank cartridges for circulation to patrons and ultimately placed in the permanent collection. Additionally, BTBL is evaluating the idea of “patron-centric” cartridges where multiple requests could be loaded on a single cartridge for a specific patron and circulated monthly, bimonthly, quarterly, etc.

Mike explained the challenges with the state budget. State Librarian Greg Lucas is trying hard to get BTBL library services back to the state general fund; right now 90% of BTBL’s budget is funded through IMLS (federal) funds. Alan said that although IMLS had been on the cutting block, it was funded at the same amount as last year. There is nothing in jeopardy right now.

Mike and Donna shared a summary of the Summer 2015 survey results which had been printed in the Summer 2015 BTBL News. For more information see: <http://www.library.ca.gov/publications/btblnews/>

Mike also discussed some highlights of the NLS Futures Committee Report which is provided as an attachment to BUAC members.:

Guest appearance by NLS Braille Officer Tamara Rory. Tamara talked about the UEB (Unified English Braille) code roll out and how it will impact Braille production at NLS. The UEB got rid of nine Braille contractions. Braille readers will be able to figure out what the changes are by using the context. Transcribers will have more of a challenge because punctuation and Braille signs are mostly affected.

The purpose of UEB is to be more uniform among English speaking countries and to simplify the code so that there are not multiple uses for contractions. Beginning in January, 2016 producers of Braille will start using the UEB code. Readers may see updated books or documents in February or March. Elaina Thomason expressed her concern as a Braille transcriber that the new code will cost more due to the amount of paper necessary and the run time for a book. Tamara responded that she really did not think over all that it was going to make that big a difference. Although some pages may be longer, others will prove to be shorter.

Alan Smith asked for clarification on whether or not the new code will be retroactive. In particular, will public places have to reproduce Braille signage. Tamara said that they will not have to change signage unless the signs are new or being changed anyway. Also, teachers will not have to get rid of textbooks written the old way. People will get used to the new code over time. Elaina asked when the Braille certification will be offered. Tamara said that it is already being offered. If you are already certified, you will only need a Braille Proficiency Test to update your certification. The NFB is administering that test. The transcription course has been converted to UEB.

Legislative Tour – Chair Alan Smith

Alan asked for suggested dates for an open house for the legislators. Best dates look like January 26 and 27, 2016. We will invite all legislators to come over and see what is available to citizens who are not print readers. Mary Jane will check with the capitol staff to make sure that there is nothing else scheduled at the capitol for those dates.

Selection Committee – Chair Kathleen Berman

The Selection Committee (Kathey) needs a new member. Rio Popper offered to be a member. Margie Donovan remains as an alternate. Mike reminded everyone to ask around for more applicants to the BTBL User Advisory Council. He has put out announcements but we only have one application as of August 29. Please get the word out. There is a budget for travel and hotel for members. The territory covers the forty-three northern California counties. Mike will send an announcement template to use.

A motion was made and passed for the process to renew membership on the council. It should be kept simple for current members. An email message to Mike, and/or the council president or vice president is sufficient. The consumer organizations are representatives. Members whose term expires on December 31, 2015 can use the above process to reapply.

Outreach Committee – Chair Karen Parsegian

Karen Parsegian reported on the results of the patron survey. She wanted to establish a baseline for knowledge of technology and computers, identify outreach events for which we should participate. Only three BUAC members responded to the survey. The purpose was also to create a comprehensive list of conventions and conferences and how patrons travel. Roslyn has been attending events to educate the public about BTBL and disability awareness. Outreach should include families and potential readers. There was a suggestion that a video be created for public awareness of BTBL. Outreach is a multi-pronged project. Alan will try to get on the agenda in Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors and the city council of Concord to raise awareness.

Recognition Committee – Chair Roslyn McCoy

The Recognition Committee needs more people. Rio and Mary are the only two left.

Mike reported that over 25 libraries have responded to Greg's letter by including a link to BTBL on their library's website. Mike will provide Alan with a list. Alan will add that information to an excel spread sheet he has of all 184 library jurisdictions. Subsequently a follow-up letter can be developed to send out to the libraries which did not respond.

Announcements

The next meeting will be held on December 5, 2015.

Mike reminded the members that reimbursement for transportation is to be sent to him and that the more information given on the itemized statement the better. Mike MUST sign the requests.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Willows