

Ad Hoc Committee
On Relations with Rolling Prairie Libraries
Meeting, March 16, 1983

Minutes

Present were Reba Jackson, David Marshall, Shirley Moore, and Marshall Susler, Chair. Also present were Sharon Alpi, ex officio, and Robert Dumas, City Librarian

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. in the Administration Office. On the agenda was a discussion of the proposed revised Rules of the State Librarian for the implementation of the amended Library Systems Act permitting public library systems to convert to multitype library systems.

The draft Rules having been previously distributed to the Committee and the Committee acknowledging familiarity with them, a detailed recapitulation was omitted and comments were solicited from Mr. Susler. Mr. Dumas noted that while the occasion for the revision was the amended Act the revisions included changes unrelated to conversion to multitype libraries, for example, a provision for uniform system non-resident fee that would permit non-residents of one library to borrow from all libraries in a system.

Mr. Susler noted that he had been appointed to a Rolling Prairie Library Committee some time ago to explore such a policy at which time he raised a question with respect to its legality and the matter was tabled pending resolution of the question. As far as he knew, the question had not been resolved.

Other questions raised regarding the Rules included the matters of reciprocal borrowing and why in a multitype system this should be restricted to public libraries; why conditions of access not imposed on their own constituency could be imposed by non-public libraries upon patrons of public libraries; the appeals process against decisions of the State Librarian provide for a panel selected by the State Librarian and this panel's findings are merely recommendations not binding upon the State Librarian. The Committee further noted and took exception to the rule that requires member libraries to conform to all rules imposed by the State Librarian or the system plan of service which makes local boards subservient to the State Librarian and the regional system board in any area in which they promulgate an interest; that mandate the expenditure of local funds to buy materials in accordance with principles or objections imposed by state or regional authority; that allow the system to establish local non-residence fees and that provide system-wide recognition of a local library's non-resident borrower's card so that other libraries can sell memberships in the Decatur Public Library; that provide for only 15 days in advance of the system board consideration for the distribution to and deliberation by local libraries of the draft by-laws and plan of service for conversion to a multi-type system while allowing 90 days for action on the proposal by the System Board; that prohibit provision for alternate Directors on system Boards of Directors.

After considerable discussion of these provisions in the proposed Rules, the hour being late, it was agreed to recess and reconvene on another day to formulate a response to the draft Rules and that Mr. Susler would represent the Library at the Hearing on the Rules to be held in Springfield on March 27.

Mr. Susler then recessed the meeting until 4:30 p.m. on March 22.

Mr. Susler called the reconvened meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. on March 22 in the Administration Office. Present were Mr. Marshall, Mrs. Moore, and Mr. Susler, Chair. Also present were Mrs. Alpi, and Mr. Dumas.

Mr. Susler informed that during the recess he had met with Mr. Dumas to discuss the issues again and to get more information. He had made some notes regarding the presentation he would make at the hearing. He indicated that he thought that he would make a brief introduction regarding system libraries and the purposes they were intended to serve in improving local library service and then, in accordance with Mr. Marshall's suggested strategy he would focus upon those six or seven primary concerns this Library has which more or less relate to the question of local autonomy.

The Committee then returned to those areas identified during the session prior to recess and their deliberations concerned the exact recommendations to be made that could serve as alternate proposals in the Rules for those proposals objected to.

Among the proposals discussed and accepted were (1) a rule to insure equity, to wit, that no library be required by the State Librarian, System policy or plan of service to provide services that were not required of all member libraries; (2) a rule to prohibit infringement on local autonomy, to wit, that no local library be required to support or provide a service which in the opinion of the local library board the taxpayers of that locality should not be required to provide or support; (3) the elimination of the proposed rule requiring participation in cooperative collection development that would impose on local libraries non-local control over expenditures for books; (4) the elimination of the rule mandating a system-wide fee and reciprocal borrowing for non-residents which would encourage smaller or poorly supported libraries to sell borrowing privileges in larger better-supported libraries; (5) the substitution for the rule prohibiting alternate directors in the system board by a rule to promote better participation by a member library in the system board, to wit, that directors of a member library having representation on a system board may elect a representative to the system board and one alternate to serve in the event of the resignation, illness, or other cause for absence of the first representative.

The Committee adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

