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**Alabama Virtual Library Council
Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2021
10:30 AM**

The January 20, 2021 meeting of the Alabama Virtual Library Council was called to order virtually at 10:30 AM by Chair, Cristin Dillard.

Minutes were prepared by Amy Henderson, Secretary.

Members in Attendance

Phill Johnson (ACHE)
Ron Leonard (ACHE)
Cristin Dillard (ALSDE)
Renee Marty (ACCS)
Brad Fricks (ACCS)
Bill Paine (ASA)

A.P. Hoffman (ACCS)
Amy E. Henderson (APLS)
Annie Payton (ACHE)
Cody Easley (ASA)
Susan Zana (ALSDE)
Jessica Everingham (APLS Guest)

Approval of November 18, 2020 Minutes: Brad Fricks motioned approve the minutes from the November 18 meeting. Phill Johnson seconded the motion. A roll call vote unanimously passed the motion.

Financial Report: Ron Leonard stated that AVL has a healthy reserve in the budget; over \$450,000. He encouraged the Council to start looking at some big-ticket items because the Database Review Committee may need two (or more) months to look at different products, and then the recommendations must be presented to the Council at the next meeting, followed by price negotiation and licensing. Using the Visible Body purchase as an example, it took us weeks to negotiate a price and then spent months with licensing this product.

Also, Ron pointed out some line items that have money designated but not yet paid: a consultant/publicist and training. If those funds are not spent, Ron would like for the Council to look for alternative uses of those funds.

Cristin Dillard agreed with Ron and suggested that the Database Committee review any databases we may be interested in purchasing before the next (May) meeting. Also, Cristin mentioned that we had previously discussed purchasing a web platform for meeting and/or training that is solely dedicated to AVL.

Phill Johnson agreed with both statements above; we need to have all of this done by July.

Ron also suggested that the Council consider a one-time purchase, such as e-books, of \$50,000-\$100,000, which could give us a little reserve in case vendors increase their prices. This past year, we were very lucky in that all vendors agreed to flat pricing; we can't expect that year after year. We should plan for 3-4% increases each year.

Amy Henderson said that she was going to suggest the same thing; we cannot always guarantee a continued subscription to a service; but a one-time purchase of a simultaneous-use e-book product, such as Capstone, would allow continued use even in the midst of future budget cuts. Phill agreed; we could end up having to cut something next year versus something that we have continuously.

Unfinished Business: There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

Usage Statistics: Bill Paine reported that December-February's report is in the Google Drive folder for this meeting and was emailed out to Council members. Usage is down from this time last year, but he believes that is because of COVID.

FY22 Education Trust Fund Budget Request: Cristin stated that she attached Nancy's name to this group because APLS is the fiscal agent for the AVL. Cristin saved the information that Nancy sent to the Council on February 25 so that we all have the most up-to-date budget request. It will be flat funding. The AVL budget request will remain \$3,397,627.

Renee Marty added that she spoke to Garlan Gudger (Senator, District 4), and she told him that we were not asking for an increase, but that next year we will touch base with them again, K12 especially.

AVL Presentation Proposals at Conferences: Cristin said that Ron has previously mentioned AVL presentations at conferences (specifically AETC in June). Anyone who would like to present at conferences, you are welcome to do so. If you would like information, Cristin will be happy to send it or find you individuals to collaborate with for the presentations.

Ron said that he would like to present about Visible Body or a broader topic like "What's New at the AVL." If anyone else is interested, please reach out to Ron.

Cristin said that this could be a good way for the Training Committee to reach out to other librarians, that have trained in the past or maybe whose job it is to create training in libraries, to make that connection with the AVL.

Conversation with Kyle Ginley at EBSCO regarding copying EBSCO Resource URLs: Bill Paine stated that this conversation has to do with the frequent request of other institutions wanting to get AVL vendor URLs and put them on their websites. Bill spoke with Kyle Ginley last Wednesday (March 10) about Bevell State's email (and also Drake State sent from Annie). In those situations, the colleges were trying to copy the URL from EBSCO resources and put on their website. They opened up an EBSCO resource and tried to copy that URL; of course, that is not going to work. Kyle said that, like Gale, EBSCO will be willing to help AVL with this; if the Council decides that we don't mind that others link directly to a vendor website as long as correct attribution to AVL is made, EBSCO will give them a URL to put on their website. He suggested that if we do go that route, the user has to note that the resource was provided by the AVL. Bill just wanted to make the Council aware of this phone call and that EBSCO is more than willing to work with the Council on this, whatever the Council decides.

Susan Zana stated she believes that AVL's mission is access. She understands the arguments against these things, but our ultimate goal is to get these resources to students and residents of Alabama. I know we value those stats, but who has ever asked for them?

Ron confirmed that the stats are important when working with our legislators because those numbers resonate with them.

Bill said that he can see the argument from both standpoints. He also noted that the URL is tied to the AVL account; as long as they are using the provided URL, AVL will get the credit and the stats.

Ron and Cristin both commented that librarians may not know how to successfully copy the URL in this way, and Cristin said that this could be a PR standpoint for the AVL.

Ron suggested that we put information and examples on our website that could help people who are struggling.

Bill said that we have that EZ Proxy statement on the website that we added a few months ago. We could modify that statement if needed.

Phill added that this is going to keep being a problem, so we need to figure out a good solution.

Brad asked how much of this would be solved with appropriate training versus really wanting a URL.

Ron asked Phill and Annie to jump into this conversation because they are on the front-end of working with their IT departments to make these resources accessible.

Annie said that the best strategy for them is to register students into their ILS. They get to create their own four-digit code to access any of their subscription databases and what is available through AVL.

Phill added that they used to show all of their resources on their website, and then if a student wanted to access the resource, they would be required to do something—for example, log in using their student account. Now, they are requiring everyone to log in through their portal first. This is primarily for our security purposes, but also, it just looks like they are sitting on our campus, so it solved this problem. To use an example of a proposed problem, if a student is on a sports team and they are traveling out of state, they would no longer be able to geoauthenticate; logging in to the university portal, however, makes it appear that they are still on campus so AVL will authenticate.

Bill added that if someone is traveling, they also have the option of getting a card with a username and password at any public library.

Phill said that the portal is easier for the university, too, because when they put up a URL, it's done.

AVL Collectively Drafts a Statement as to Why We're Not Providing Our Direct URLs and Post It On the Website: Cristin asked the Council if we want to draft a new statement regarding EZ Proxy or if we want to have a separate statement.

Ron said that it would be great if we could ask Phill and Annie to create videos that the AVL could post saying what they just said above. If people saw and heard them, they might not have as many questions. Annie and Phill both said that they are both open to that. Phill added that they should get with Bill and reach out to those who have had a problem and find out what they are doing to see if they can find a common thread.

Bill reiterated that we know that Gale and EBSCO are willing to work with us on this. We would have to talk to other vendors, but that is a start.

Renee asked Bill if they go through a college portal, would there be a way to collect statistics? Bill replied that based on the conversations he has had with EBSCO and Gale, as long as they are using the URL that is associated with the AVL account, AVL will get the credit for the search history. It will show on the monthly stat report.

Cristin recapped that we are going to add a statement on the website, supplemented with a video with Annie and Phill. The bottom line for all of us is "Why are we here?" Access is very important. Stats are very important, but access is the point.

Ron said that he agrees; the other reason he brought up the stats before is because if we ever have to look at dropping a product, the stats are invaluable in making that decision. He said that he is more interested in getting testimonials from people rather than the stats.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Reminder: Please send committee reports to Amy Henderson or place them in the Google Drive folder.

- **Finance Committee** – Ron Leonard – Nothing additional.
- **Database Review** – Brad Fricks – We will review the Weiss Financial Literacy Database. The Financial Ratings part (with credit cards and stocks and bonds) might not be that useful for the AVL, but the Financial Literacy Booklets could be beneficial. We will also look at Big Universe, Alexander Street, Capstone and/or Gale ebooks. Susan said that she is in contact with David Burrows (Capstone) and will be talking with him this week, so she can ask him to come up with a proposal. Jessica Everingham asked if we have looked at Gale Legal Forms? Phill said that he thinks that is a fabulous idea.
Bill added that he has had some requests about what legal resources we have, and we don't have any.
Jessica and Phill said that there could be other legal databases that might be available, as well. APLS has NOLO books, but Jessica is unsure if there is a database available from NOLO.
Brad said that this conversation is the type of suggestions he needs—names of resources to check. Please feel free to send Brad an email with more suggestions.
- **Selection and Licensing** – Ron Leonard – Nothing new to report
- **Bylaws** – Nancy Pack – The committee is being assembled.
- **Legislative Committee** – Phill Johnson – Things are working their way through the Legislature now. There is another reading of Senate Bill 387 and House Bill 189 this week.
Renee reiterated that she talked with Garlan Gudger. She told him that she is not requesting any new meetings this year and the AVL will request level funding this year, but that next year, we will potentially ask for more funding next year for K12 resources. Also, Phill thanked Bill for putting the advocacy link on the front page of the website.
Renee added that she liked what Cristin said earlier, and maybe we should make the Why front-and-center in conversations with our legislators.
Cristin and Phill both said that numbers are great and very important, but the Why is the reason for the AVL. Phill said that the legislators wanted to hear more about the impact in recent discussions. For example, how is the AVL impacting our kids or jobs?
Jessica suggested to look at the stats and information on Learning Express on APLS's website.
- **OER Commons** – Phill Johnson – The Committee is progressing as planned. We are ready to contact the two- and four-year institutions to update our information about what they are doing with OER projects, who are the key people involved, do they have OER repositories set up, are they using OER commons, etc. We will then compile that information, we will have a list of OER Champions on campuses and we can start hosting some Zoom sessions to improve the OER Commons. One of the recent ideas is that we can potentially get a SLIS intern to help with various needs – Publicity, organization, metadata, ADA compliance, compiling projects, etc. They can do it from anywhere.
Cristin said that she will send Phill the application for internship.
- **Publicity Committee** – Amy Henderson – Cristin said that we are collaborating with the Training Committee. We are still looking at soliciting intern applications.
- **Training Committee** – Susan Zana – We have a mission and made some decisions of where we want to go. Some inspiration has been drawn from GALILEO. They have marketing materials, tools and training, and presentations. These are separated by agency. We have three people from ALSDE and Amy. We need representation from other agencies so that each agency can develop their training materials. Some things can cross agencies, but honestly, people with

higher ed or public libraries know what their constituents need and can tailor their training a little more. We would like to solicit submissions for content from all of the different librarians from the different agencies. Then we would evaluate those, and we will accept those that meet the criteria. We need good audio and video, accurate information about AVL, and a consistent purpose throughout the presentation. We are going to develop an introductory graphic or slide where, at the beginning, the person needs to say who they are, what they are training about, what is the type of presentation, what is the length of presentation, what is the purpose of the presentation.

That is plan A. Should we fall short with few submissions, we would like to move to Plan B, which might involve paying a small stipend to content creators.

Jessica added that she finds it very impressive that the Council is all volunteers and all of this work is being done by volunteers. GALILEO has a paid staff of between 9 and 20 people and a massive budget.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cristin announced that we are registered to be a vendor at the AETC conference in June. That is free of charge.

Phill thanked Bill for putting the contact forms on the website. This helps our personal emails from getting spammed.

ADJOURNMENT

Ron Leonard motioned to adjourn. Susan Zana seconded the motion. The motion was carried and the March 17, 2021 AVL Council meeting was adjourned at 11:45 PM CST.