

MINUTES
LAS VEGAS-CLARK COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES' AD-HOC TRUSTEE TRAVEL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA
AUGUST 12, 2010
(approved September 16, 2010)

The Board of Trustees' Ad-Hoc Trustee Travel Policy Committee of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District met in the West Las Vegas Library, Las Vegas, Nevada, at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, August 12, 2010.

Present: Committee: F. Barron, Chair
V. Davis-Hoggard
A. Aguirre, ex-officio
K. Benavidez
C. Reese

Board: K. Crear
R. Kirsh
M. Saunders
R. Ence

Counsel: G. Welt

Absent: None

Staff: Jeanne Goodrich, Executive Director
Jerilyn Gregory, Human Resources Director
Christine Bundren, HR Specialist/Training
Pat Marvel, Marketing and Community Relations Director
Allison Boyer, Executive Assistant

Guests: None

Board Chair Aguirre called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. and advised attendees that Committee Chair M. Frances Barron would be a few minutes late.

Roll Call (Item I.) All members listed above represent a quorum. Committee Chair Barron arrived at 5:45 p.m. Trustee Crear attended via telephone and called in at 5:35 p.m. Counsel Welt attended via telephone.

Agenda (Item II.) Trustee Benavidez moved to approve the Agenda as proposed. There was no opposition and the motion carried.

Discussion and possible Committee action regarding revisions to the District's *Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual* (Chapter II General Provisions, Section R-Travel Policy) in recognition of reduced resources for staff and Board travel and training. (Item III.) Trustee Aguirre asked Executive Director Goodrich to update the Committee members. Ms. Goodrich explained that the proposed changes to the current travel policy contained in Section R of the District's *Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual* were an attempt by herself, Ms. Gregory and Ms. Bundren to capture the essence of the discussion at the July meeting regarding travel by Trustees on District business. The proposed changes have also been discussed with Committee Chair Barron and Board Chair Aguirre.

In summary, the changes to the existing Travel Policy include:

- Adding wording that encourages Trustees to attend at least one ALA function during their time of service.
- Adding wording for the Board Chair to be notified of a Trustee's intent to attend a conference.
- Adding wording that the Board Chair and Executive Director must approve all Trustee travel.

- Clarifying that all travel and event attendance must be approved according to the needs of the District.
- Adding travel and room upgrades to the list of items considered personal expenses and not approved by the District.
- Clarifying that costs for any changes to conference or travel plans be the responsibility of the traveler.
- Adding a requirement for Trustees to provide an oral report at the next board meeting after their return from a conference.

Ms. Goodrich also said that several items were not clear after the last meeting of the Committee. The first item is to clarify the different roles of Trustees and staff as it involves travel. While Trustees in their discussions with Christine Bundren prior to the July meeting seem to indicate they want to be treated the same as District employees, Ms. Goodrich believed that the differences between Trustees and staff require different allocations. District staff are paid employees. In the past, staff have made formal requests for travel, and those attending have had their registration fees and travel costs that do not exceed the established budget covered by the District. This year, staff wishing to attend conferences out of town can request administrative leave, but no travel costs have been budgeted. For staff, Goodrich said that conferences are a part of their individual professional development, some of which may be required for the individual to move ahead in their field. In the case of District Trustees, they receive a small stipend for their attendance at meetings, and are really volunteers. For Trustees, conferences are one way to learn about their role and find out about developments in the library world. Goodrich emphasized that she wanted to maintain a level playing field for Trustees so that their ability to attend conferences was not limited by their personal resources.

Ms. Goodrich said that the second point that was unclear covers how the FY 2010-2011 travel budget of \$25,000 would be allocated. This amount covers Trustee travel and the small amount the Executive Director would require for travel as part of her position (Ms. Goodrich emphasized that she was not planning to travel to conferences this fiscal year, or would pay for all expenses herself). Previously, \$45,000 was budgeted in FY 2008-2009 and \$24,501 was spent; \$45,000 was budgeted in FY 2009-2010 and \$23,362 was spent. The amount spent included travel by Trustees to conferences and travel to conferences and other travel for the Executive Director.

Ms. Goodrich said that there seem to be two approaches. The first approach is to budget a specific amount per conference per Trustee who indicates a wish to attend. As each conference approaches, the amount would be continually adjusted based upon the money remaining in the budget. The second approach would be to allocate a specific amount per Trustee for the year. The Trustee could use the amount for travel to any of the multiple library conferences that take place in a given year they choose to attend. Trustees Davis-Hoggard, Reese and Aguirre liked this approach.

While these two items did not need to be included in the proposed policy changes as they refer to process, Ms. Goodrich wanted clarification for staff.

The entire Committee as well as the Trustees not on the Committee participated in the wide-ranging discussion that followed. Trustee Crear phoned in at 5:35 p.m. and Committee Chair Barron arrived at 5:45 p.m. and took over from Board Chair Aguirre.

The two main issues discussed were: the role of the Board Chair in the decision and approval process for travel by District Trustees as well as whether Trustees should even be travelling to conferences as no funds were budgeted for employee travel.

Trustees Davis-Hoggard, Reese, Benavidez, Saunders and Crear were not comfortable (in Davis-Hoggard's case, strongly opposed) to the requirement for the Board Chair to be advised or in a position to approve travel for other Trustees. The reasons for this included: the appropriateness of the Chair approving activity of other Trustees, concerns about how the procedure would work and how to resolve differences of opinion.

Chair Barron said that the Chair's role in the policy was included so that the Executive Director was not put into a position to tell a Trustee no regarding their attendance at a conference during a time of budget shortfalls.

The second main issue discussed was whether Trustees should be travelling to conferences as no funds were budgeted for employee travel. Trustee Saunders was very concerned about the fundamental fairness of Trustees receiving District money to travel to library conferences while staff, already under stress from layoffs and other cutbacks, could not. He wanted to avoid any perception that Trustees are receiving perquisites that could be subject to abuse. Saunders asked if individual Trustees' allocation, if that was the method favored by the Board, could be re-allocated to staff travel.

Ms. Goodrich responded that the idea was wonderful in theory but could be unworkable in practice as the move by a few Trustees to reallocate their funds would perhaps allow only one or two staff attendees and bring up issues of how to determine which staff could attend a particular conference. She also noted that staff, when asked for suggestions to cut the District's budget, suggested cutting staff travel.

Ms. Gregory then discussed the education and training that is currently available to District staff. She explained that the District allocated a certain amount for registration fees for staff interested in attending the Nevada Library Association conference, which was held this year in Henderson and did not involve travel costs. Online training is becoming more common and her staff are looking into providing more training at District locations so that more staff may benefit without incurring travel costs. Both Goodrich and Gregory reiterated that staff would be given administrative leave should they wish to attend library conferences on their own.

Trustees commented on the value of conferences and online training, with Trustee Ence noting that, as a beginner, he preferred getting information online and that he would be interested in attending conferences in person in the future. Trustee Kirsh commented that he felt lost at his first conference which occurred several months after he was appointed to the Board, but was really looking forward to attending them with some experience behind him. He also wanted to clarify how Trustees would handle travel arrangements.

Trustee Reese noted that she prefers attending conferences due to the variety of programs available in one location. Trustees Davis-Hoggard, Barron, Benavidez and Crear also commented on their conference experiences. Trustee Davis-Hoggard noted that ALTAFF, (Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations), was going to be offering online training for those interested. Several Trustees emphasized that it should be up to the individual to determine what would best help them in getting the training and information they needed.

Ms. Goodrich asked for direction in moving forward, noting that while the meeting was for the Committee, the entire Board with the exception of Trustee Carrasco was present. Did Trustees want to move forward with the proposed policy or table the discussion until a further meeting to also discuss the use of money allocated for travel?

After further comments about the role of the Chair in Trustee travel decisions, the references to the Chair in the proposed policy were removed (Items 2.A and 2.D).

Trustee Davis-Hoggard moved to recommend to the Board of Trustees the revisions of the *Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual* as stated below (the proposed changes are in *italics*):

Add R.1.c. : *Trustees are strongly encouraged to attend at least one American Library Association function during the course of their term.*

Change R.2.d. to read: The Executive Director or designee shall approve all *staff* travel requests, authorize the number of days for travel and event attendance, and monitor expenditures, reporting monthly to the Board of Trustees on the status of *all* travel and training.

Change R.2.e. to read: Approvals for travel requests and event attendance will be made *according to the needs of the District* and in a nondiscriminatory manner in keeping with the District's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.

Add to R.4.d: The Library District will **not** reimburse expenses of a personal nature including, but not limited to:

- Alcohol
- Tours
- Rental cars or taxis
- Telephone calls
- Travel costs for guests
- Toiletries

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- Entertainment (including in-room pay-per-view movies)
- *Travel upgrades*
- *Room upgrades*

Change R.4.e. to read: All costs incurred due to cancellation *or changes* of conference or travel plans will be borne by the traveler, unless approved for payment by the Executive Director.

Change R.6.a. to read: Upon return from travel, the individual may be required to submit a report to the Executive Director within 30 days of completing the travel. *Trustees who attend conferences or seminars will be placed on the agenda at the subsequent Board of Trustees' meeting to provide an oral report.*

There was no opposition and the motion carried.

**Announcements
(Item IV.)**

None.

**Public Comment
(Item V.)**

None.

**Adjournment
(Item VI.)**

Chair Barron adjourned the meeting at 6:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Frances Barron, Committee Chair