ILF Legislative Committee
Sept 6, 2016 Minutes

Attendance: Monica Cassanova, Carolyn Elliott, Jos Holman, Kristi Howe (phone), MacKenzie Ledley (phone), Lucinda Nord, Dr. Nazareth Pantaloni (phone), Terry Rheinheimer(phone), Nick Schenkel, Edra Waterman, and Bill Wiebenga

Absent: Kelly Ehinger (flu), Melody Gault, Michael McCullough (couldn’t get away from school), Jake Speer, Leslie Sutherlin

ABBREVIATED MEETING SUMMARY (Note this could replace the detailed minutes for future if committee members prefer summary with actions only and no detail of discussion.)

- Committee approved minutes from Aug. 2, 2016.
- Committee discussed questions and clarifications from reports sent in advance by the Executive Director, Legislative Advocates and Local Income Tax (LIT) Committee.
- Committee discussed Local Income Tax (LIT) issue, and after receiving explanation and recommendation from LIT Committee, agreed that no specific legislation would be sought at this time to maintain current funding levels to libraries from LIT, as it appears to be a local issue. Legislative Advocates will continue to monitor to explore openings for potential legislative resolution. ILF may also explore how to support local library directors in their own local advocacy and awareness building.
- ILF has convened calls and meetings with ILF members and key stakeholders regarding Indiana’s plan for implementation of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ILF outlined its objectives and strategies. Committee members are encouraged to participate in calls, 9/24 ESSA workshop and/or IDOE input meetings throughout the state 9/14-10/12.
- Committee reached consensus on intended outcomes, agenda items and roles for the Legislative Fall Forum. Lucinda will work with Jos, Bill and Legislative Advocates to finalize.
- Committee discussed process, document creation and targeted audiences for the 2017 Policy Agenda/Key Legislative Efforts. Committee will develop and recommend priorities to the Board. ILF Office will develop expanded explanatory documents and talking points for members and stakeholders.
- Other actions agreed by consensus during the meeting:
  o ILF will encourage participation by library directors in the broadband survey by ISL.
  o If time allows, Fall Forum may include a discussion of broader view of advocacy and how legislative work fits into the ILF Work Plan.
  o Next Legislative Committee meetings will be held Oct. 5, 3:15ish, after Fall Forum at the event location and Tuesday, Nov. 15, 10:30amET at the ILF Office.
- Meeting was called to order at 10:35 and adjourned at 1:30.

DETAILED MINUTES – Note that committee will decide next meeting whether detailed notes below or summary notes from page 1 are desired.

Chair Jos Holman called meeting to order at 10:35 and explained that the agenda and pre-sent reports are a little different format than in prior meetings. Edra expressed appreciation for reports being sent in advance.
REPORTS, QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS - Jos asked if committee members had any questions or needed clarifications about the reports provided in writing in advance (see 4-page document). Follow-up actions are in red.

1. A question for the Indiana State Library, but no one from ISL present, so question was held.

2. Questions and clarifications about the director’s report and the Work Plan.
   a. Why is Lucinda registering as a lobbyist and how that would affect work with the contracted firm and the Legislative Committee? What is the benefit to members?
      i. Lucinda explained that it is both a protection for ILF as well as a way to advance the mission. The IRS and the State of Indiana both have rules about how nonprofit organizations spend and track any resources used for lobbying. While most of the work we do at ILF is advocacy, the perception will be that Lucinda is lobbying. The threshold for Indiana’s legislative lobbying requirement is $500; therefore, if ILF spends more than $500 a year in Lucinda’s time, then ILF needs to register and track for Lucinda. ILF already is registered for its contract with Bose, and Carolyn and Matt track their time accordingly. However, prior ILF reporting has not been consistent (to the State and IRS). Lucinda and the Board discussed ways to advance the mission and to ensure that all tracking and reporting is completed beyond reproach.
      ii. The relationship with Bose essentially will not change. Lucinda, Carolyn and Matt are working collaboratively, each bringing different relationships and information to the Legislative Committee and to the advocacy work. Carolyn shared her support for Lucinda’s registering and our work together. What might be different is that legislative/advocacy work will be more directly connected to the ILF Office, the Board and the strategic plan—especially in terms of communications and alignment. Lucinda has asked Carolyn and Matt to copy her and the committee, as policy questions should be run through the office. She will coordinate communications with Bose as the contractor—just as a library director would not want a constituent or committee member making requests of a contractor directly.
      iii. The benefit of Lucinda’s registering is that she brings contacts and relationships that benefit the library community. Because Lucinda has been a registered lobbyist for more than 15 years, legislators may call her directly about library issues. Sometimes a contact is perceived as “lobbying” even when it is simple information or advocacy.
   b. How and should this information be disseminated to membership?
      i. Committee discussed whether and how this information should be communicated to members. Discussion grew into a larger discussion about the differences between lobbying and advocacy. Members will discuss more at Fall Forum, especially as it relates to an understanding of Advocacy.
   c. In the Work Plan, what is meant by changes in governance and structure?
      i. ILF has been through mergers, including one within the last year with the ILF Endowment. The legal documents required for the merger identified governance and structural issues that need to be corrected to be operating by nonprofit law and best practices. For example, certain divisions and committees take action without board approvals, while others are not active at all. Certain committees do not have an official line or representation on the Board; thus, the board approved board liaisons at the Aug meeting. Additionally, when associations, divisions or committees hold events or take actions, their activities are not necessarily covered by our general liability or directors’ and officers’ insurance in the current structure. ILF simply needs to clean up its legal and organizing documents. Longer term, the strategic planning process will help align the work to operate as one organization.

3. Questions for Legislative Advocates, Carolyn Elliott and Matt Long
   a. Who determines the amount to advocate for funding in the state budget?
Committee usually looks to the ISL for leadership on the right amount to be requested related to funding for INSPIRE and funding for Connectivity lines in the state budget. ILF then supports the advocacy efforts for both. ILF sometimes assists the State Librarian in assessing needs for Connectivity line as administered by ISL. Carolyn expressed need for additional information (stats and stories) to justify additional funding for each, including usage of INSPIRE and information about broader Connectivity needs (access, equipment, speed, users, uses, etc.). The ISL recently posted a survey that attempts to quantify the needs—to get at both the library needs as well as the community needs. ILF will encourage libraries to participate in ISL’s broadband survey.

Committee had larger discussion about Connectivity and Broadband in general, as two candidates for governor are making Broadband a priority.

1. Lucinda explained the broadband issue as a priority from three perspectives: first, as support for libraries that need more speed and bandwidth to keep up with patron needs; second, as support for the 14% of Hoosiers who have no access (only dial up); and third, for the vast number of Hoosiers who have access but cannot afford it—and thus rely on libraries as their access.

2. Specific to libraries, committees discussed history of the state funding related to e-rate and non-e-rate funding, and how state budget included a portion for those using and not using ENA as their access. Certain libraries elect not to participate in the connectivity program due to compliance or philosophical issues. While it is not a large amount of money ($1.8M-2M), it is very significant for the smaller libraries that participate.

3. Committee discussed how while libraries may want to secure additional funding if new resources for broadband are dedicated, but that this also poses some risks. Legislators and other competitors may not understand the services currently funded under Connectivity.

Nick Schenkel asked about Sharon Negele being scheduled to come to Fall Forum. Should he reach out to other library directors in her district to contact her or be present since she is a regular attender at Third House sessions in the district?

Committee discussed that it is good to have many library directors and staff at the Fall Forum. While Rep. Negele will be there as a resource to us, it will also be good to have people she knows from her district present but that there is no specific ask of her.

MINUTES – The minutes from the Aug. 2 meeting were approved, with motion from Bill and second from Nick. Committee. Later in the meeting, committee discussed that they are adjusting to the detail in the minutes, as some prefer action items only and fear a “chilling effect” on discussion if discussion is included in the minutes. Lucinda explained that the detail is provided to assist those who are absent and to provide a record of key discussion. She asked whether committee prefers attributing comments, as this is the practice evident in other ILF records. Jos asked Lucinda to write the minutes for the committee, and the committee will discuss their preferences in how minutes should be written after seeing two months of minutes.

WORK PLAN - Committee members identified areas in the Work Plan that relate directly to the Legislative Committee. Lucinda stressed that many other areas also relate to larger advocacy strategies that help build member awareness, public will and stakeholder support to help advance a legislative/policy agenda.

- Committee discussed how the Work Plan does not change the work with the Indiana General Assembly in 2017. The strategic planning process does not place legislative work on hold. The Work Plan does not change how ILF identifies legislative priorities nor how ILF contracts with Bose as Legislative Advocates to be present in the statehouse. The Work Plan addresses how the ILF office plans to support members in advocacy.

- The scope of the committee was discussed, as was also raised in August meeting. Lucinda shared a vision for a broader definition of advocacy than only state legislation. She sees the need to build awareness and will among members, stakeholders and legislators, then (as appropriate) to pass or
defeat legislation, and then to influence how the law is implemented. She gave the example of ESSA, federal legislation. ILF is working with members and potential partners on Indiana’s plan, which may result in state legislation and will result in a state plan for ESSA implementation. Her view of advocacy work involves communications, relationship building and continued influence and action after a law is passed. She views the role of the Legislative Committee as the primary shaper of policy priorities, the feedback loop for advocacy efforts and with help of Network Coord and reps, assistants on helping with local awareness and engagement.

- Jos expressed a more limited view of the work of the committee—for the committee to focus on legislation as priority. Bill shared a nuanced view, that legislative work is large enough for the committee’s attention, but also that ILF has to be concerned with a broader role of advocacy. Committee explored whether they or perhaps the ILF office, another committee or the board should be assigned other components of advocacy, such as feedback on external communications and stakeholder engagement.

- Terry Rheinheimer, as the federal advocacy rep, expressed a desire for ILF to be more proactive in federal legislation, which was echoed. Committee discussed federal work as it aligns with state legislative committee priorities.

- Committee agreed that the issue, as well as how the committee may be involved in the implementation of the Work Plan, needs further discussion, perhaps if time allows at the Fall Forum. Committee agrees that we cannot be legislative advocates in a vacuum and appreciate that certain practices may change with the new leadership at ILF.

LOCAL INCOME TAX (LIT)

- Carolyn asked whether and how ILF should support continuation of Local Income Tax (LIT) funding. For example, is it worthwhile to explore legislation that would guarantee that a taxing unit’s (library, township, etc.) LIT amount would not go lower than some percentage that is currently received? This is important especially where local debt service is based on the anticipated income.

- Edra Waterman offered an explanation of the sub-committee’s (Edra, Kristi Howe, Nick Schenkel, Robyn Young) findings, after review of the Umbaugh report and other data. She explained that it is complicated, based on whether a county is a former COIT or CAGIT county, resulting in LIT Council or County Council making decisions. There are three buckets where local officials may place certified shares based on the levy portion. Committee members were especially sensitive to those counties where the county council or newly elected officials may change course, but there is a recognition that they have always had the authority to move the funds. The sub-committee concluded that changes to the current LIT allocations would be neither simple nor quickly implemented and that a better focus is to encourage library directors reliant on LIT to maintain relationships locally.

- Committee conclusion: LIT is a local issue. ILF is monitoring and may seek legislative resolution with the right opportunity and the right partner. Until then, ILF may work to educate members about the issue and the importance of local relationships.

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA)

- ILF has convened calls and meetings with ILF members and key stakeholders regarding Indiana’s plan for implementation of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ILF outlined its objectives and strategies. ILF aims to provide summary and talking points to members and to be a part of the workgroup by IN Dept of Education that is developing the State’s plan. Lucinda explained it is important to manage expectations that our efforts are to make sure that school libraries and certified librarians are elevated and included in the plan, but not necessarily to increase funding, as there are many competing interests. Our goals are 1) to elevate the role that school libraries and librarians play and 2) to advocate that school libraries and certified librarians are included in the State’s plan.

- Committee members are encouraged to participate in calls, the 9/24 ESSA workshop and/or IDOE input meetings throughout the state 9/14-10/12. (see pre-sent documents)
LEGISLATIVE FALL FORUM

- Committee agreed with intended outcomes for the event and the elements included on the draft annotated agenda. Lucinda will work with Bill and Jos to add the additional items requested (LIT and broader view of advocacy) to the agenda, including the items below, while preserving adequate time for a focus on the priority document.

- Carolyn will introduce invited guests Rep. Negele and Courtney Schaafsma. Committee discussed roles for co-chairs, executive director and committee members and Lucinda’s outline for how participants may be engaged in the development of the principles and legislative priorities and how questions may be managed for the speakers. Committee discussed how participants may be grouped with limited intentionality at tables, with committee members serving as table discussion leaders and note takers.

- Jos explained that participants may come with their own agendas and issues that may require some amount of time for discussion.

2017 POLICY AGENDA /KEY LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS

- Committee members anticipate all the listed issues may be discussed, including: routine issues such as budget for connectivity and INSPIRE; strategic and opportunistic issues of ESSA, Pre-K, workforce development, broadband and LIT; as well as anticipating defense in potential proposal to allow transfers within or among taxing units, guns and other issues. Fall Forum will help prioritize issues.

- Lucinda requested clarification on the policy agenda/priorities and the related documents that have been created in the past and the audiences for distribution.
  - She explained her prior policy work in other organizations where the board-approved agenda would include additional specificity about the position that the organization is taking. Then each priority issue would include a quick summary of the issue, key research and story to make the case and the specific policy priority position.
  - Committee leaders explained that the agenda has been intentionally broad so that the Legislative Advocates could take actions as they felt appropriate. Lucinda reflected she prefers a policy priority document that is both broad, allowing flexibility, and more specific and robust, in order to build a shared understanding of the “case” for and intended outcomes.
  - Committee discussed the targeted audience for documents, that the Key Legislative Efforts has been shared internally with members and sometimes has been available on the website, but not with policymakers or stakeholders. Committee discussed how additional summary documents and talking points may be developed by the office after the Board approves the policy priorities. Note that ILF is already working on similar documents for the ESSA meetings in order to help members with common messaging. Committee members echoed how more robust documents would be appreciated.

OTHER BUSINESS – In the interest of time, committee did not explore.

NEXT MEETINGS

- Next Legislative Committee meetings will be held
  - Oct. 5, 3:15ish, after Fall Forum at the event location (Ft. Ben in Indy) and
  - Tuesday, Nov. 15, 10:30amET at the ILF Office. Note this is after the election.
  - While committee entertained idea of gathering at the ILF Annual Conference, committee agreed it would likely be too hard to fit in timing and room scheduling.

ADJOURNMENT – meeting concluded around 1:30.