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**Alabama Virtual Library Council
Meeting Minutes
January 20, 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)
Holly Flores (APLS)

A.P. Hoffman (ACCS)
Tyler Carr (ASA)
Amy E. Henderson (APLS)
Annie Payton (ACHE)
Debbie Turner (ALSDE)
Nancy Pack (APLS)

Approval of November 18, 2020 Minutes: Brad Fricks motioned approve the minutes from the November 18 meeting. Phill Johnson seconded the motion. Ron Leonard requested a correction of a typo [“off” instead of “of”] on the last page. A roll call vote unanimously passed the motion.

Financial Report: Ron Leonard reported that the amount today is larger than it was previously because we rolled over \$106,949, so the total available balance is \$425,623. He also pointed out that there is still money in the budget for a part-time publicist that has not yet been awarded.

Unfinished Business: There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

Usage Statistics: Bill Paine reported that he pulled all usage data from 2020 and 2019 to compare the two years. Usage was down from 2020, likely due to COVID.

Publicity/Communications Intern: Cristin Dillard said that after having a conversation with the Training Committee and the Publicity Committee, it was decided to continue moving forward with one of the recommendations that came from the Council. In light of state personnel findings and some information that was provided in regards to where a position may be housed as a part-time position versus if we were to go the route of an intern. She said that they looked at what that would look like if we were to look at a communications and publicity intern. Cristin presented a document that listed job duties and

responsibilities so that the Council can take a look at what this position can potentially do. The Council allocated \$50,000 for a communications/publicist position, but an intern would not be paid in the same way. We would probably be looking more at a stipend than a salary. The committees recommended to try to use an intern from February to December, whether as a six- or twelve-month internship. Cristin said that she confirmed with Bill that ASA can create an online internship application to live on the website.

Cristin said that there was one more item that came from the committees' recommendations. We need to move forward with purchasing an online platform for webinars. Nancy Pack agreed that we need to move forward quickly. Cristin said that the application form should be available this week, and it will be made available to all of the agencies, as well as Jay Lamar and the Commerce Department and the Department of Rehabilitation, since they also have programs in place already for placing interns. Nancy Pack commended the committees on the great job done. Ron Leonard agreed with Nancy on both of her comments, and asked if we needed to double the compensation if we added two interns. Cristin Dillard said that the compensation listed would be for one person. She added that this is up for discussion; if someone signs on for a semester, it would probably be in the \$1,000 range. If they sign on, instead, for the full twelve months, that would probably be on the higher end of the \$2,500 range; the time commitment would be the determination. Also, we would expect, when it is safe to do so, for them to travel to Montgomery to present to the Council. There is a lot more benefit to the Council than what is on the paper here.

Resource for Consideration: epermittest.com – Susan Zana and Bill Paine – Susan Zana said that the resource asks you which state you are in, and then it presents materials relevant to your state. There are practice tests, drivers manual, and other resources that would help teens or adults who want to take the drivers license test. It looks like a good resource; it doesn't look particularly sophisticated, but there is nothing that is clunky about it or that would cause concern. Bill Paine said that the resource reached out to us via the website's helpdesk submission form. Ron Leonard asked if we know how their statistics are reported. Susan Zana responded that it looks like a link to a website; Bill Paine agreed that it does look like a website link, and was doubtful if stats would be available. A council member suggested that we add it to the resource page instead of the database page. Cristin Dillard confirmed that the recommendation will be that this resource be placed on the resource page. Cristin asked for a motion, and Susan Zana motioned to adopt the recommendation. Phill Johnson seconded, and it then passed with unanimous consent from the rest of the Council.

OLD BUSINESS

Edweek subscription consideration – Brad Fricks – Edweek.org is a site that publishes news about K-12 and other information about K-12 including teacher professional development. We reviewed their product last year, and the Database Review Committee found that, although the content is pretty good, the site was very cumbersome and difficult to navigate. Also, at that time, they also quoted a price of \$577,000. They have now totally revamped their website, and it is a lot easier to navigate; that is why they are coming back to us this year for us to consider including them in the AVL. Does the Council believe that \$500,000 is too heavy a price for us to even begin to evaluate? Ron Leonard agreed that this amount is too high. Cristin Dillard agreed that it is cost-prohibitive. Renee Marty said that it doesn't fit all of our constituents either; the general public would likely not be interested in a resource like this. Cristin Dillard asked for any other discussion, and when there was none, she accepted the committee's recommendation to not pursue an Edweek subscription.

Gale Representatives – Ron Leonard and Bill Paine met with some representatives from Gale. Cristin Dillard asked Bill and Ron to explain to the Council what we are about to hear from a visitor from Gale at

11:15 in this meeting. Bill Paine explained that he and Ron Leonard were contacted by Jackie Sullivan at Gale in regards to the Council's decision about the proxy URLs. Gale creates some accounts for every institution in Alabama that has their own specific Gale URL for Gale resources that they can use to access AVL Gale resources without having to go through AVL. Ron and Bill were surprised by that, so they thought they should brief Cristin and invite Ms. Sullivan to present this information to the Council at the next meeting for discussion. Cristin asked if anyone else on the Council had any questions or comments before the Gale representative joined the Council. Susan Zana commented that she is currently a student at Montevallo, and she uses the Gale resources for her coursework through the university website; if universities in the state have been doing this up to this time, and it hasn't necessarily affected our stats negatively, we might want to consider allowing Gale to continue that. The reason for doing that is clear, but from a student perspective, a student would be more likely to use a resource that is linked through the university website. Bill responded that the impression that he and Ron got was that Gale was talking specifically about URLs authenticating for AVL, so that is what was cause for concern. Ron added that he had a question for the academic libraries, which was what are the academic libraries hearing from your students/faculty about this? Phill Johnson said that he hasn't received any feedback, but it could be because they just returned from the break.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

- **Finance Committee** – Ron Leonard – We have already discussed the budget report, but one thing to add: Tax receipts are better than expected, so we may not be faced with a cut at the end of the year, so that is good news.
- **Database Review** – Brad Fricks – There is some information in the Google folder about a couple of resources that we will start reviewing.
- **Selection and Licensing** – Ron Leonard – Nothing new to report
- **Bylaws** – Nancy Pack – The committee is being assembled.
- **Legislative Committee** – Phill Johnson – It is unclear about how is the best way to address legislators; they might not zoom with us, and face-to-face may not be an option this year. Phill discussed with Nancy about the letter writing campaign that APLS is doing; they have four templates that they are using, so maybe we could consider doing something similar to that. Obviously we are going to continue our information campaign so that legislators know the value of the AVL. Also, we could put something on the website to encourage people to contact their legislator. Ron agreed with that idea, and suggested we do something for Valentine's Day, maybe with the catch phrase Love the AVL!
Cristin said that she would get the Legislative and Publicity Committees to work together to build form letters, flyers, and an announcement.
- **OER Commons** – Phill Johnson – They have been working on updating our list of champions at the two- and four-year institutions; the goal is to reach out to those people on that updated list and determine what they have in progress. We would like to have a webinar about the OER Commons in March.
- **Publicity Committee** – Amy Henderson -- Nothing additional to add.
- **Training Committee** – Susan Zana – The e-learning course that ALSDE has been doing may yield some new trainers. While looking at the members of the committee, ALSDE and APLS are already represented, but Susan would like there to be representatives from ACHE and ACCS because training might look different depending on which agency you're involved in. For example, the needs of an elementary school student is going to be very different than the needs

of a college student. So if someone from each of those agencies would consider being a part of the training committee, that would be amazing. Cristin added that these representatives would not necessarily need to be a member of the council, but someone who goes to a lot of training in those agencies. Please communicate with Susan Zana if you would like to recommend someone to join the training committee, especially from ACHE or ACCS. One more thing to consider: funds are also available for stipends for trainers; we want to recruit the best trainers for AVL.

GALE REPRESENTATIVES

Jackie Sullivan, Gale representative, began by thanking the AVL for allowing Gale to present at the meeting. She said that they have a relationship with over 30 different statewide programs across the country, and AVL has quite a robust collection. Other representatives in attendance:

- Chris Michela, Director of Technical Services (co-presenter)
- Eric Ely, Technical Solutions Consultant
- Tony Bottrel, Technical Solutions Consultant
- Tammy VanBuren, Gale Training Coordinator

The focus for today is to talk about the access methods to Gale resources. With COVID, things have shifted so quickly to providing virtual and online resources to all of your peers and students and patrons in the state. Your goals are to provide secure access to your users, track usage to show performance, and make end-users aware of the resources available to them. The AVL delivers the three Es: Equity, Excellence, and Economy. Our goals today are to understand your concerns, make sure that we understand your objectives are to show the impact of the AVL resources, and overview the different access options and authentication options so we can start working on a roadmap that supports your goals. So as far as your technical and operational, we know that it is important to provide secure access, compliant to the license agreement, to the resources that you've invested in. We also know that usage is really what drives those talking points with your funding sources so you can continue fostering advocates for your support in the state, both financially and strategically, while looking at the usage of the databases to support statewide initiatives for each of your library communities. Access strategies for end-users of hundreds of different libraries [in Alabama] are also important to consider. Jackie then asked for input from the Council as to what concerns they would like to directly address in this meeting. Ron Leonard said that one of his concerns is that if the end-user doesn't know where the resource is coming from, we might not necessarily get the credit for it. Obviously, when we are providing direct URLs to a lot of people, there's a greater likelihood that some bad characters might get hold of that URL, which might lead to resources to be taken down. Bill Paine stressed that when the AVL was getting the requests for direct URLs via the AVL web form, it wasn't just for Gale resources; it was for several different vendors. The Council discussed the idea, and decided that it was best to not give permission for direct access. Also, it should be noted that providing support is not a burden; ASA's contract to the AVL includes technical support.

Chris Michela continued with the presentation, with the next focus being access options. Gale offers the standard authentication methods: IP, password, geolocation, etc. Gale also works now with Schoology, Canvas, and other LMSs. Chris added that in his ten years working with consortia with Gale, they have never had to take a product down because of improper usage [that Ron expressed concern about earlier]. If they do see a problem like this, they will reach out to the customer for that particular location ID first to see what is actually happening. Chris added that handing out additional URLs, if that is what the Council decided to go with, is part of the license, and there is no additional cost for the creation/maintenance of those additional URLs; it is included in the contract. That is also a way to provide location-based usage statistics, in addition to the state library level.

Jackie said that she wanted to take a moment hear from the Council for questions or comments. She noted that the AVL has been partnered with Gale since 2004, when we added Litfinder. In 2008, the AVL moved to a more robust package from Gale.

Chris added that they have worked with other states that had multiple vendors, and they were able to implement tools to assist the support staff where they have library lookups that don't just utilize Gale, but also provide links to other vendors, as well. These types of pages list all of the vendors and resources, and the end-user types in the library or organization they are with to access the materials available to them.

Ron asked the representatives to explain to the Council (as they had explained in an earlier conversation to Ron and Bill) why Gale may not be getting the stats if the end user is using EDS, our discovery service. Jackie responded that they have uncovered that the way resources are set up within a discovery service (configurations, choices that you have), there is an issue with retrieving stats; Gale has worked closely with EBSCO and ProQuest to identify those settings that may impact usage—how the user sees it, and more importantly, how the data analytics are captured. The AVL uses EBSCO's discovery service on your portal page. When you are looking at usage, you really need to take two sets of usage reports—one for EBSCO, and one from Gale. There is a lot of activity that is happening within the EDS system that is capturing statistics. This happens with any database that provides full text, not just Gale. The usage for a vendor partner doesn't start until the end-user is in our native interface. The metadata that we provide to EBSCO helps with the results on the display list, but if the same resource is provided by more than one provider (Gale, EBSCO, ProQuest), the way it is weighted determines who gets the credit for the retrieval. Jackie recommends for the AVL to combine the EBSCO report and the Gale report to get a big-picture view of your data. Gale provides a dashboard with a data analytics tool.

Cristin asked for further comments or questions from the Council to direct to the Gale representatives. Ron thanked Jackie for joining us; he added that this has been very informative. Jackie responded that this was just a mini-review. Gale would like to have an annual business review to look at the analytics and update the Council.

Brad Fricks motioned to adjourn. Ron Leonard seconded the motion. The motion was carried and the January 20, 2021 AVL Council meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM CST.