Digital Commonwealth Board Meeting

Minutes

July 20, 2021

Approved at August 17, 2021 Meeting

10:04 am: meeting called to order by President Kate Boylan.
Present (via Zoom): Kate Boylan, Kate Bradley, Amanda Fowler, Maureen Mann, Justin Snow, Tegan Kehoe, Danielle Sangalang, Hans Bergmann, Sonia Pacheco, Evan Knight, Rachel Jirka
Absent: Eben English
Guests: Glynda Benham, Jake Sadow (for Eben English), Helen Charbonneau, Andrew Begley, Matt Amory, Paige Neumann, Graham Goss.

The June minutes were **approved** as presented.

Conference Committee:
- Graham Goss and Paige Neumann reported that the Committee had determined that the 2022 conference should be virtual. A virtual conference is prudent given the continuance of the pandemic and because the cost is lower, and more speakers would be available. The theme of the conference will be "Making Digital Libraries More User-Oriented." The conference will be in early April, perhaps on the 14th.

Membership Committee:
- Helen Charbonneau listed the programs the Membership and Outreach & Education Committees are hosting for the Fall ("Behind the Scenes at the American Antiquarian Society", Primary Sets Program (Outreach & Education), Digital Humanities with Francesca Giannetti, two potential events – one on race, and a Crosscultural Competency Workshop – with faculty members from the North Shore Community College, and User Experiences with Digital Commonwealth),).
- Helen also described the committee plans for finding new members for the Membership Committee as well as continuing to find new members for Digital Commonwealth as a whole. Jenn Belcher and Glynda are working on the written plan for the short- and long-term goals for recruiting new Digital Commonwealth members.

Outreach and Education Committee:
- Andrew Begley reported that the committee is continuing to explore paid advertising to promote Digital Commonwealth. MBTA advertising is one option. Tegan Kehoe explained that the $100 in the budget was simply a place holder and that more money could be made available for advertising.

- Andrew also reported that the Committee is working on reaching out to teachers and has met with Boston Public Schools librarians. That meeting made clear that the elementary teachers want more <u>specific</u> recommendations on how to use Digital Commonwealth materials in their teaching.
- The Committee needs to identify decision makers in the schools.
- The Board noted that the ex-officio Board position for a representative from the Massachusetts School Library Association is still vacant.

Repository Committee:
- Did not meet.

BPL Update:
- Main news is that BPL employees are all back in the building. Site visits can resume although they haven't yet.
- See **Appendix #1** for copy of BPL report delivered to the Board

Financial Update:
- Tegan Kehoe reported that we continue to do well financially.   Revenue is $19,635.
- Tegan provided an "Introduction" to Digital Commonwealth finances for new (and continuing) members of the Board [see **Appendix #2** below]. As a follow up to this, Glynda offered to set up one or more "Understanding Digital Commonwealth" sessions for any interested board and committee members.
- Glynda Benham reported that Membership was at 237 up 12% from last year.

DPLA Update:
- Nothing to report

Meeting was adjourned at 11:58 pm
Next Meeting: August 17, 2021. 10:00am-12:00pm. (Zoom)
Hans Bergmann, Secretary

Appendix #1
Boston Public Library Update June 19, 2021 - July 20, 2021

Digital Services Report

Site visits completed (Virtual)
1. None (We're full time back in the library now, so site visits should resume soon)

Bound Material Collections added to Internet Archive
1. None (they were focusing on in-house BPL materials for June, they'll be focusing on statewide materials through July)

Reopening update
● All BPL staff returned to the office full-time on July 6

Repository and Portal Report

Collections added to Portal
- No collections were ingested or harvested during this period; we have suspended all ingests in preparation for migrating content to the new DC3 repository system.

Repository and Portal Development
- Deployment of new repository system to test server environment.
  - Testing and refining the migration process for repository assets and metadata to cloud storage. Developers are working with the metadata team to review the migrated test records to ensure accuracy and completeness and revising the export process as issues are identified.
  - Initial setup of servers and applications for deploying the new repository system in production
  - We anticipate that we will begin migrating content from the production repository in early August; the migration will likely take 4-6 weeks to complete.

Collaborative Services Report

The Boston Public Library has been focused on business relating to the safe reopening of our physical spaces and the smooth transition of staff back to in-person daily work. Borrowing policies that were changed in response to COVID-19 closures have needed to be reset and communicated to the public. This includes turning billing back on for unreturned items, resetting digital checkout limits for Hoopla and Kanopy, 10 and 6 per month, respectively. Masks are still required in library buildings at all times. No food and drink may be consumed, except in outdoor spaces. There are no indoor events or meetings, though we are awaiting further guidance from the city about this and expect news soon. We've not yet returned to our full pre-COVID operating hours but will be adding hours over the coming months. Otherwise, all regular services have resumed in-person, in addition to all the remote options to connect with BPL staff and collections.

New Electronic Resources for Staff and Patrons (access all from BPL list of online resources at: https://www.bpl.org/online-resources/):
- Creativebug: FINALLY an online resource for all of you artsy crafty people out there! Creativebug has thousands of award-winning art & craft video classes taught by recognized design experts and artists.

- Rolling Stone Archive: Contains the complete backfile of Rolling Stone magazine, from its launch in 1967 to the present. It has been a leading vehicle for rock and popular music journalism, as well as covering wider entertainment topics such as film and popular culture.
- The Wall Street Journal (digital access to the current edition): Access the Wall Street Journal from anywhere!
- EBSCO:
  - Sports Illustrated Magazine archive
  - Politics and Society Magazine archive
  - Business Magazine Archive
  - General Magazine archive
- MyHeritage Library Edition: one of the largest, most internationally diverse genealogy databases of its kind. It provides access to billions of historical documents, millions of historical photos, and other resources in thousands of databases that span the past five centuries.
- Vault Career Guides: Vault publishes numerous employers, career, internship, resume, and interviewing guidebooks. The guides cover industries such as law, consulting, investment banking, accounting, investment management, private equity, hedge funds, Internet and social media, IT and engineering, energy, health care, advertising, and more.
- Newspaper Archive: Searchable full-page reproductions of historical newspapers, some of which were made from the collections of the Boston Public Library. Boston coverage includes: Boston Globe (morning and evening editions), 1872-1922; Boston Post, 1831-1922. Also includes historical newspapers published in these states: Massachusetts, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, D.C., New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Vermont.
- Completed the Archives of Sexuality and Gender (Gale/Cengage): LGBTQ History & Culture Since 1940; Sex and Sexuality, 16th – 20thcenturies.
- Completed the British Library Newspapers digital archive with Part V: 1746-1950.
- Completed the digital archive: Making of the Modern Law: ACLU Papers, Part II.

Appendix #2

Introduction to Digital Commonwealth finances, personnel, etc., for the board, FY 2022

As you all know, we're a volunteer-run organization. The board and the committees are the primary workforce. We also work with a few vendors – an accounting service, and tax prep. We currently have two independent contractor positions we work closely with, the conference coordinator and membership manager. We are hiring a new conference coordinator for the 2022 conference, and we are re-evaluating the membership manager role before hiring for it; it may stay a membership manager role or be described as something more like operations director. The current membership manager, Glynda Benham, will be with us through the end of December 2021; she had also been the conference coordinator, but the roles are not designed to necessarily be done by the same person. She has been in both roles about four or five years.

In the past we have talked about hiring a graduate student intern, both to help us with creating content for our members and as part of service to the profession, but we have tabled it for the time being. We've also talked about hiring either a part-time development person or executive director, and so far have always decided it's not right for our size and goals at this time, but may revisit that as Glynda has been serving in a role closer to executive director than it says in her contract. In the past, we used the Mass Library system temp service BiblioTemps, which is convenient but typically somewhat expensive for our needs.

When we have programs such as workshops, we can always reimburse the speaker for expenses and mileage. If you incur expenses like buying the refreshments for a program, send your receipts to me, and I'll put them through our accounting service. You can reach me at treasurer@digitalcommonwealth.org as well as my work email, I get them in the same inbox.

As treasurer, I keep track of where we are in our finances and any financial decisions we need to make, and explain things to the group so that we can make those decisions. Please always feel free to ask me if you have questions or if the way I explained something isn't helpful for you, either during a meeting or between meetings. Before each meeting, I circulate the financial reports for the most recent full month, and at each meeting, I give a short summary on where we are financially. At meetings in which the membership manager is not present, I also summarize the membership reports the membership manager prepares. Our fiscal year is the same as our board year – beginning of July through the end of June – so as of now, we're in fiscal year 2022. Our accounting is on an accrual basis, the standard for businesses and nonprofits, meaning that we record an expense or income as soon as it happens, rather than when it's paid. We don't break our budget out month-by-month, so in a given month I might say that it looks like we're over budget for something but it's to be expected at that time of year.

Our main source of revenue is institutional membership. The membership fees are tiered based on institution size, and institutions that are considering whether membership is worth it are encouraged to choose the tier that they're comfortable with rather than not being members. In FY 2020 we also introduced a Friends of Digital Commonwealth membership category for individuals, for a nominal fee and some of the privileges of membership, but it's unlikely this will become a large part of our budget. We also changed the Network membership category, which allowed some organizations to receive

membership benefits through library networks they are a part of, to the Consortia category, which does not include membership benefits for member organizations. Very few organizations made use of Network membership in the past, so the difference was more in potential revenue than actual revenue. Conference registrations are also a source of revenue, but the conference is designed to break even, although it often turns a profit. Our workshops have a registration fee, but that's as much to reduce no-shows as to cover expenses.

Our largest categories of expenses each year other than the conference are operational costs, such as the membership and conference coordinator, accounting fees, etc., and our Digital Public Library of America membership. We do not have an endowment, but during fiscal year 2019 we opened a money market account with our bank (Citizens Bank) where we keep the money that is not actively being used for operating expenses in a given month, which generates some interest income. Out of our total assets, a certain amount is designated in reserve for if we ever need to liquidate, as determined by a board task force some years ago – the exact amount changes year to year as it's adjusted for inflation, but it's around $20k.

In FY 2017, we raised our membership rates over a two-year period and created tiered membership so that it was still affordable for smaller institutions. In the past few years, we had been working on how to spend our increased revenue on programming. Often, the constraining factor is committee members' time, rather than the costs. Over the past several years we have been working with the committees on creating explicit committee budgets, designed to help committees feel empowered to spend, and improving communication between the board and committees both on financial and other conversations.

The top financial conversations the board will want to have this year will be about the work currently done by the membership manager, and how to put our money where our mouth is regarding our goals for diversity, equity and inclusion work.

 We are also discussing moving our banking to a locally-owned bank, but this conversation may not happen until after we have dealt with more time-sensitive projects. Our continued membership in DPLA is something we're keeping an eye on, and it's not primarily a financial conversation, but the membership dues of $10k a year are a factor.

The board is in the process of a multi-year effort towards better institutional memory and succession planning, including sharing information about finances.