

**Minutes of the Advisory Committee
to the
Blind and Physically Handicapped Library Services
Mississippi Library Commission
February 21, 2008**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Advisory Committee to the Blind and Physically Handicapped Library Services (BPHLS) Division of the Mississippi Library Commission (MLC) was held on Thursday, February 21, 2008, at the Mississippi Library Commission, 3881 Eastwood Drive, Jackson, Mississippi.

Members present included: Mike Duke, Alice Shands, Karen Brown, Harold Miller, B.J. LeJeune, Ginger Broome, Mike Chew, Alison Smitherman, Sam Gleese, Ed Hill, Melvin Smitherman, Sandy Temple, Ralph Smitherman, Billy Tannehill, Gene Cryder, and Judy McNeece. MLC staff attending included Rahye Puckett, John Whitlock, Cindy Nugent, Margaret Smitherman, Gina Dyess, Jerry Roberts, Charles Murray, Gloria Jimerson, and Jennifer Walker. Lisa Roby attended as a guest.

Mike Duke, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m. Introductions were made and new members recognized.

The minutes of the August 16, 2007 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Mike Chew to approve the minutes as distributed. Billy Tannehill seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **Bylaws** — No report.

- **Machine Retrieval** —
- **Publicity** — No report from the Publicity Committee. Rahye stated that outreach activities since the August 2007 meeting would be discussed as part of the Librarian's Report.

- **Technology Assessment** — Sam Gleese discussed the KNFB telephone-the cost is around \$2,200.00. Rahye mentioned the update of the KLAS system and John Whitlock stated that the multiple screen access was helpful.

- **Nominating** — Rahye Puckett stated that we would need to discuss nominations at the August meeting.

A motion was made by Melvin Smitherman to approve all committee reports. Ralph Smitherman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Executive Director's Report:

Sharman Smith was unable to attend the meeting.

Friends of Handicapped Readers (FOHR) Report:

Ginger Broome stated that FOHR had purchased a digital camera for use by the library. She thanked the Mississippi Council of the Blind for its donation of \$1,000.00. It was noted that Virginia Scott received the Ruby Assaf Award, presented annually by the Friends of Mississippi Libraries during the annual conference of the Mississippi Library Association. Ginger noted that on March 4 and 5; BPHLS would celebrate the establishment of the National Library Service for the Blind under the Library of Congress through passage of the Pratt/Smoot Act of 1931. Robert Sams is scheduled to be the guest narrator. On April 17, we will hold the annual volunteer recognition luncheon in memory of Virginia Alexander. On November 4, from 1 to 3 p.m. we will celebrate 35 years of service for BPHLS in Mississippi. Ginger encouraged attendance at meetings and stated that FOHR needs new volunteers. The next meeting of the FOHR is scheduled to be conducted March 10, at 3:30 p.m. Since the last Advisory Committee meeting 1,148 volunteer hours were performed.

Humanware Victor Stream Report:

Julian LaRose, a representative with Humanware, was unable to participate in the meeting.

Telephone Pioneers Report:

During the months of July 2007 through January 2008, the Telephone Pioneer Repair Group repaired 513 talking book machines and donated 535 hours.

Braille Repair Report:

Ed Hill stated that in 2007 he repaired 156 Perkins Brailers and this process took around 780 hours. Ed provides this service to individuals at no charge.

Digital Services Report:

Margaret Smitherman provided an update on digital services offered to registered BPHLS patrons. Since August of 2007, twenty-three new titles have been obtained. At present the library has 400 titles. Bibliographies are available in large print, Braille and email. We currently have four Otis players for patrons and one for display. With the four players 123 books have been circulated since last August. Margaret stated the Otis players were no longer available for purchase. Another machine, the MuVo, Audible compatible, is currently on order for use with this service. BPHLS now has forty Playaway titles.

Regional Librarian Report:

Rahye Puckett presented several comments from patrons who were pleased with the efforts of our volunteer base. The regional library still has a vacant position that has not yet been filled since the library was on Ellis Avenue. It was noted that the new library was being utilized by many groups.

- During the remainder of this year seven individuals will be eligible for our ten squared club.
- The 2008 Pratt/Smoot celebration will again be sponsored the Mississippi Council of the Blind and the Jackson Chapter of the Council of the Blind. Robert Sams will be the guest narrator.
- Martha Harmon Pardee has agreed to attend the Pratt/Smoot in 2009 as guest speaker.
- The contract with the state of Alabama was renewed. Alabama circulates all RC (recorded cassettes) numbered less than 40000 to BPHLS patrons.

Other BPHLS Staff Reports:

- Jerry Roberts reported the following statistics since the August 2007 Advisory Committee meeting:
 - Circulated over 85,396 titles in all media
 - 137 books were returned for repair
 - Added 1,113 titles and 7,244 copies of new R C and Braille books
 - Volunteers repaired 62 titles
 - 1,904 books, no longer under warranty, were repaired
 - 7,853 mail cards have been sent to Alabama since July of 2007
 - Also during this time frame BPHLS circulated 338 descriptive videos to requesting Alabama patrons
- Gina Dyess reported on the copy allotment:
 - Since January NLS has limited the number of RC (recorded cassettes) books on tape that may be ordered each month (776 titles). While this number may be increased or decreased on a monthly basis, the number ordered may not exceed the 9,312 copies allocated by NLS annually for BPHLS.
 - Digital Talking Books (DTBs): We may order 195 copies monthly of the DTBs. This, too may be increased or decreased on a monthly basis, but may not exceed the 2,340 copies allocated annually by NLS. NLS has been producing digital talking books since 2000.
- Cindy Nugent discussed/reported:
 - Second Annual Winter Reading Program for Adults entitled, "A Mid-Winter's Nights Read which began January 21 and is scheduled to end April 11
 - 2007 Summer Leading Program for children, the theme and dates scheduled

- BPHLS staff had performed 271 hours of consulting work
- Mailed 505 letters to public schools in the northern and northeastern sections of the state informing about BPHL services and offering to visit and/or conduct in-service training.
- John Whitlock discussed/reported:
 - BPHLS currently has 1,579 active patrons registered for the WebOPAC
 - Since July of 2007 over 2,000 searches have been performed
 - In fiscal year 2007 there were 9,641 searches on this service.
 - Updated version of KLAS will give day-by-day and even hour-by-hour information concerning these searches
 - Currently 5,970 patrons registered for the library service
 - Ages range from one year to 113 years of age
 - Since August of 2007 volunteers have finished the recording of six books
 - Currently there were three books in production
 - Library staff continues to make presentations statewide.
 - Thanked the Council of the Blind for promoting BPHL services at their Mississippi State Fair booth.

Mike Duke stated that the Strategy of Digital Player Distribution Committee should have a report ready for our August, 2008 meeting.

The next meeting of the BPHLS Advisory Committee is scheduled to be held Thursday, August, 14, 2008, at Mississippi Library Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph Smitherman, Secretary
BPHLS Advisory Committee