

Idaho Talking Book Service Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

10am – 11am (Virtual)

Meeting Purpose: To remain current with Talking Book Service items

Meeting Guidelines:

- We take a statewide view on topics
- We listen as allies
- We follow the agenda
- We come away with next steps

Desired Outcomes:

- Share information and updates with each other
- Learn Do's and Don'ts when working with those that are blind
- Decide on a meeting schedule for 2024

Meeting Leader: LeAnn Gelskey

Facilitator: Stephanie Bailey – White

Recorder: Candace Reynolds

Time	Agenda Item	Who	Action	Length
10:00 am	Meeting set-up: meeting guidelines , agenda	All	Review, Agree	5 min.
10:05 am	Icebreaker activity	All	Share	5 min.
10:10 am	That All May Read Grants	LeAnn	Share	5 min.
10:15 am	Unveiling of TBS logo presented by Haley Westbrook, Graphic/Web Designer	Haley	Share	10 min.
10:25 am	Disability Advocacy – Dos and Don'ts	LeAnn	Share	5 min.
10:30 am	2023 Term Expiration: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alison Steven	LeAnn	Discuss	5 min.
10:35 am	2024 Meeting Schedule	All	Decide	5 min.
10:40 am	TBS Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Calendar 2024• Outreach 2024	All	Share, Discuss	5 min.
10:45 am	Committee Member Updates	All	Share	10 min.
10:55 am	Meeting review: +/-Δ, next steps, topics for next meeting	All	Review	5 min.
11:00 am	Adjourn			

Attendees: Candace Reynolds, Catherine Stanton, Erin Rainey, Haley Westbrook, LeAnn Gelskey, Lynn Johnson, Quincie Mattick, Stephanie Bailey-White, Steve Achabal, Travis Wilson

Next meeting: TBD

That All May Read Grants Reports: They have now completed awarding the \$1000 Funds to libraries to be used to actively promote talking books. The grants were used for visits to senior centers, talking book displays in libraries, large print books, and to purchase devices to demonstrate BARD. Leann said we hope to continue to offer grants in the future. One success that came out of the grants was that the Eagle Public Library sent their library staff to ICfL for a demonstration and tour of the Talking Book and recording studio so they could gain a better understanding of the service. The grants have helped tremendously with bulking up the large print collections in Idaho libraries. Catherine commented that it has made a huge difference in her library's collection.

TBS Logo: TBS has a new Logo that Haley the web designer at ICfL has worked on with assistance from Donna and input from some advisory committee members, as well as others. Part of the decision to change the logo was because the previous logo had a book with wings which is difficult to see and doesn't express that the Talking Books Library is an audiobook service. The new logo is in Bold Serif so it will be easier to read. The G in Talking is tilted and wearing a pair of headphones to represent audiobooks. The color palate is now red, medium blue, light blue, yellow, and orange to provide a better contrast on the website and to allow for more flexibility. It also has a color filter to make it accessible to the color-blind.

Comments from the committee members were that the new logo was clean and provided a nice contrast, eye-catching, fresh, colorful, and easily conveys what the Talking Book Service is. The next steps are to update our existing marketing and outreach materials, brochures, and flyers with the logo and to launch the new branding in June 2024.

Haley will also be working on a stand-alone website for TBS.

Disability Advocacy: LeAnn previewed ICBVI's updated flyer: **Dos and Don'ts When Meeting a Blind Person** (guide attached.)

Travis and Steve commented how helpful these tips are for sighted people who might otherwise breach boundaries. Quincy agreed with the need for people to recognize boundaries. She added that blind people get moved around so much starting at a young age, so become very sensitive to being touched. Her advice regarding service animals, is don't feed or call them, as this can be distracting for the owner. She said a harness sign has been helpful to her, but because anyone can order a service dog harness sign, the best action to take is to ask the person which service the dog provides. Emotional support animals do not qualify as service animals. If a dog is being disruptive, it is the librarian's legal right to ask that it be removed from the premises.

Term Expirations: Alison's term is up for expiration, and she probably will not extend her term, so we will be looking for another committee member.

2024 Proposed Meeting Schedule: We need to decide if we want 3 or 4 meetings a year and which days of the week work best. We determined that Wednesday or Thursday are the best days to meet and will propose dates ASAP, keeping in mind that March 21st to 27th is spring break.

TBS Updates: The staff is looking at work processes and ideas for outreach in the coming year. Our goal is to continue to work with libraries and plan fun events at senior centers to educate Idaho communities about the program. LeAnn will email out outreach plan before our next meeting.

The theme of the 2024 TBS calendar is **Celebrating 50 Years of Idaho TBS** and features history and photos from the past 50 years. The book suggestions are books about Idaho or written by Idaho authors.

Quincy asked how we can make calendars accessible. This led to a discussion about providing braille calendars in the future. LeAnn will follow up researching which printing houses do braille calendars to see if this is a possibility. NLS offers calendars in braille.

Committee Member Updates:

Erin said her biggest challenge now is there is a lack of braille transcribers. It is difficult to find people who can devote the time to the training which takes two years. She is hoping to find volunteers or prison inmates who want to take the course because there is a huge need for braille materials.

Steve hired a third rehab teacher to cover the southwest area. They now have eight teachers throughout Idaho.

Travis has kept busy planning holiday parties and learning to use the TBS rapid certification along with Barbara to sign vets up for BARD. Their main goal is to educate the veterans. They are working on a visual impairment program which is working with medical pharmacies to change policies to make it easier for Vets to get their medication.

Catherine is preparing for their Christmas extravaganza and working on the summer and winter reading programs for the library. She will update us at the next meeting on how the winter reading program went.

Quincy is participating in a social work internship in Pocatello which advocates for blind people.

Agenda items for next meeting:

1. Discuss the VA Rapid Intake. This is a BARD service signup for Vets so they can quickly sign up for a BARD account with TBS without any waiting time.
2. Update on Outreach
3. Discussion of possible candidates to replace Alison

Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Some Do's and Don'ts When Meeting a Blind or Visually Impaired Person

When you read the following, please keep in mind that it may not apply the same way to all blind people. Each one of us is an individual and as such, we each have had different training and experiences, so there's no one size fits all. If you're in doubt, it's always best to ask.

- Do keep your voice at normal levels when speaking to us. Blind does not mean deaf.
- If we use a guide dog, do ask us if you can pet or interact with the dog. If we say "No.", respect that.
- Do talk to the person using the dog if you need to give information. The appropriate place to walk with a guide dog user is on the opposite side of the person so that the dog is not between you. Don't try to guide the dog verbally or physically.
- It is totally fine to use words like "blind", "see", or "look". Despite popular opinion, phrases such as "see you later" or "it looks like" are not going to offend us, and in fact we use the same phrases ourselves.
- Do engage us in casual conversation. Regardless of our visual disability, we are still people.
- Do use specific words when describing where something is, or where to go. Don't give directions by just pointing or saying "over there". We may not be able to determine which way you are pointing or where "over there" is.
- Don't play the "Can you tell who I am by the sound of my voice" game. It can be considered very demeaning and rude.
- When getting into a car, don't assume we need any help opening and closing doors, or putting on our own seatbelt.
- Don't stop at us standing at a crosswalk if the light is against us. Don't honk or yell at us to tell us when to cross. We have been trained to listen to traffic

patterns and cross accordingly; honking or yelling just interferes with this process and can also be unsafe. If you don't know how long the light has been green, don't tell us that it is safe to cross.

- Blindness is a fact of life for people living with vision loss. Don't feel the need to try to find us a cure. Religious beliefs are very personal and it may make us very uncomfortable when complete strangers offer to pray for us.
- Don't assume a person using a cane can't see anything.
- Don't assume that a person not using a white cane can see everything.
- If you're accompanying us into an unfamiliar room, we may ask you about its layout. That way we can split up and do whatever we each want to do.
- When finishing a conversation, do let us know that you are leaving the group or room. We may not realize that you have left and continue talking.
- Do speak directly to us , not the sighted person that may be with us.
- If you are not well acquainted with us, then do let us know who you are when you see us.
- Do keep stairs and hallways clear.
- If you handle anything belonging to a blind person, it is helpful to return it to the same place.
- Do assume that we know where we are going if we are walking down the street with a cane or a dog. If we are out independently, we most likely have been trained and know what we are doing and where we are going. If we are in need of assistance we will ask. If you want to let us know that you are there when we do look like we are in need of something, just say hello or ask if we need help. Again, ask, don't assume.
- If you see a blind person and we look like we may need help, do offer assistance and if it is accepted, we will probably prefer to take your arm rather than you taking hold of us.
- If giving us cash, do tell us the denomination and position of the bills such as "The \$5 is on top and the \$10 is underneath". This will help us stay organized so that we can put the bills away accordingly.
- Do remember that we are in charge of our own lives and do not need supervision or caretaking. Most of us don't want your sympathy, but we

do want to be treated with respect.

- When in doubt of what to do.... just ask!