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COLUMBUS LIBRARY BOARD – PRESIDENT

Nebraska public libraries' accreditation by the Nebraska Library Commission is for a three-year period. Columbus Public Library is on-track for an accreditation review in 2020. The Library Commission's purpose for certification is to ensure that Nebraskans have access to relevant information sources and services facilitated by qualified library personnel, boards, and supports. Library Board Trustees are required to participate in continuing education in order to maintain Board Certification. Public library board of trustees participate, collectively, in twenty hours of continuing education (CE) during each three-year certification period. The Board Certification program goals are: improve board effectiveness, increase board involvement, improve library service, and fulfill library accreditation requirements.

Library board members can earn continuing education hours by attending a library association conference. I attended the 2019 Joint Nebraska Library Association & Iowa Library Association & Nebraska School Library Association Conference. These particular associations conduct joint conferences occasionally. This year's conference was informative, insightful and motivational. There were many sessions to choose from, and each strived to facilitate best practices and new innovative approaches to providing library patrons with services. A primary emphasis of the sessions was on ways to deliver access to information for purposes of enhancing and enriching the lives of the patrons and communities they serve.

This year's conference had a session entitled: *Toward Tech Savvy Trustees*. The presenter advocated for board members to gain experience as consumers of library technology. The topics included strategies to use electronic sharing of agendas, minutes, and reports as much as possible to limit printing costs, and on how to utilize a library's website to its fullest potential. Recommendations were made on how to include current library technology demonstrations within or after board meetings so that the members are informed and then able to share with others the technology available. Another strategy is to make the board members aware and educated on the utilization of their public library's social media presence and the potential to continue to improve social media effectiveness. Social media can support immediacy in accessing and sharing the latest programming and events. At board meetings, Karen Connell, Director, includes demonstrations of technology available at the library, and provides opportunities for the board to participate in continuing education programming, which is available online through the Nebraska Library Commission.

Libraries must continue to research and acquire beneficial technology for their patrons. They are reviewing the potential of virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and mixed reality (MR). These types of technologies provide opportunities for immersive virtual field trips, as in a walk through the solar system; the experience of various weather conditions; a science lab with the ability to fully explore, rotate, and dissect a 3D model of the human body; and previewing a college campus or vacation location.

As a reminder, check out the Columbus Public Library's current and upcoming programming on both Facebook and the library's monthly newsletter. You can also view the library's strategic plan, staff directory and other information on the city's website: www.columbusne.us/library.