MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

Date : January 9, 2014

Time : 10:00 A.M.

Place : Thomas Crane Public Library

Quincy, Massachusetts

Present : Francis R. Murphy, Chairman; Mary Rose Quinn, Vice Chairman; Gregory J. Shesko, Secretary; Carol B. Caro; Mary Ann Cluggish; George T. Comeau; Mary Kronholm; N. Janeen Resnick; Alice M. Welch

Absent : None

**Staff Present:**

Dianne Carty, Acting Director; Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist; Celeste Bruno, Communications Specialist; Barbara Glazerman, Head of Operations and Budget; Marlene Heroux, Reference Information Systems Specialist; Paul Kissman, Library Information Systems Specialist; William Morton, Assistant to the Director; Cynthia Roach, Head of Library Advisory and Development/Government Liaison

**Observers Present:**

Megan Allen, Director of Libraries, Thomas Crane Public Library; Clayton Cheever, Assistant Director, Thomas Crane Public Library; Debby Conrad, Executive Director, SAILS Library Network; Anna Fahey-Flynn, Collaborative Library Services Manager, Boston Public Library; Deb Hoadley, Advisor, Massachusetts Library System; Gregory Pronevitz, Executive Director, Massachusetts Library System

**Call to Order**

Chairman Murphy called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed the attendees. He recognized Megan Allen, Director of Libraries in Quincy, who welcomed the Board to the Thomas Crane Public Library and to Quincy.

Ms. Allen stated that Quincy received a $3,495,291 grant in 1996 under the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program that assisted in the building of the new addition and the restoration of the historic 1882 Richardson building. She expressed her gratitude to MBLC staff members who have assisted the library over the years. Ms. Allen invited the Commissioners to tour the facility and visit the Friends bookstore following their meeting.

**Approval of Business Meeting Minutes – December 5, 2013**

The following corrections were noted:

On page 3, strike the third paragraph and replace with:

“On November 13, 2013 Acting Director Carty, along with MLS Executive Director Gregory Pronevitz, MLS President Patrick Marshall, WMLA President Chris Lindquist, WMLA Treasurer Susan SanSoucie, and Commissioner Resnick met with Senator Rosenberg, Representatives Kulik and Scibak and an aide to Representative Kocot concerning the status of the Whately facility.”

On page 9, strike lines 28 – 30 and replace with:

“Commissioner Resnick attended the meeting with Senator Rosenberg, Representatives Kulik and Scibak and an aide to Representative Kocot concerning the status of the Whately facility on November 13, 2013.”

On page 9, strike line 46, strike “Resnick” and replace with “Kronholm.”

Commissioner Caro moved and Commissioner Quinn seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approve the minutes for the monthly business meeting of December 5, 2013, as corrected.

**The Board voted approval.**

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

Chairman Murphy wished everyone a Happy New Year. He stated that since the December Board meeting, the Legislative Agenda has been published and circulated and the new search for an MBLC Director is commencing. He also noted that since the overall revenue situation seems to be better than recent years, hope is rising that increases in the Board’s account lines may be forthcoming in the state budget.

Chairman Murphy informed the Commissioners that on December 11, 2013 he and Acting Director Carty testified before the House Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets for the capital bond bill for the public library construction program. He relayed that only a few clarifying questions ensued and there did not seem to be any issues. In fact, the committee chairman seemed to be supportive.

Chairman Murphy relayed that a local library advocacy initiative to support the Board’s Legislative Agenda is underway in conjunction with the Legislative Breakfast program. The local initiative will be done “one on one” with legislators at a municipal level. He stated that his library will be meeting with one or more of its legislators later in the month.

Chairman Murphy reported that the Executive Committee and the Agency Management Team are discussing reinstating the Deputy Director position and are reviewing the FY2014 and FY2015 budgets to see if they can accommodate the position.

Chairman Murphy noted that the Massachusetts eBook pilot project, envisioned by the Statewide Resource Sharing Committee, to provide thousands of eBooks to 51 pilot libraries in Massachusetts is underway and MLS Advisor Deb Hoadley will report to the Board later on today’s agenda.

**ACTING DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Acting Director Dianne Carty reported that, on December 11, 2013, she gave testimony before the House Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets for the capital bond bill for the public library construction program.

Acting Director Carty stated that Head of Operations and Budget Barbara Glazerman and she met recently with the new budget analyst for the MBLC.

Acting Director Carty informed the Commissioners that next week she will be submitting the first draft of the Performance Measurement Report for FY2013 which will be shared with the Commissioners. She noted that Legislative Breakfasts begin on the January 17, 2014 and the Massachusetts Municipal Association annual conference is scheduled for January 24 and 25, 2014.

Acting Director Carty provided the following construction update:

* **Scituate Public Library.**  On December 14, 2013, Scituate voters approved a debt exclusion to fund the Library’s $12 million construction project.
* **Belmont Public Library.** The Belmont Public Library did not accept its $7,597,028 grant.  (It had until December 31, 2013 to do so.)
* **Webster Public Library.** The Webster Public Library project is the next to be approved for a provisional grant award, as it is number one on the waiting list.  The construction team expects to recommend that the Board approve Webster for its provisional grant award of $5,366,489 in the near future.
* **Planning and Design Grant Round.**   Applications are due on January 16, 2014.  Approximately thirty applications are expected.  Funding recommendations will be brought forward to the Board at its June 2014 meeting.

Acting Director Carty announced that Snapmass (Snapshot day) will occur during the week of April 7, 2014.  She noted that it is now done every other year. Snapmass is a collaborative effort between the MBLC, MLS, MLA and MSLA.  Snapmass 2012 yielded over 6,000 photos and had 225 participating libraries.

Acting Director Carty reported on #BostonBetter, a project of Boston's museums, libraries, and archives. In April 2014 for the one-year anniversary of the Boston Marathon Bombing, Boston’s cultural institutions plan to open their doors wide, all over the city, to help Boston feel better. They want to start a conversation: What will help you heal? What will help the city heal? Together, how can we show the world that our response to this tragedy is to summon our best selves, individually and collectively?

Acting Director Carty relayed that the Newton Free Library is planning programming in conjunction with the Boston Marathon Bombing Anniversary. Marlene Heroux is attending the meetings of this group and is keeping the agency and the library community apprised of events.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

Cynthia Roach, Head of Library Advisory and Development/Government Liaison, relayed that the Massachusetts Department of Revenue has announced that state tax collections in December 2013 were down by 2.5 percent or $53 million compared to December 2012 but are running 7.1 percent higher in fiscal 2014 compared to the first half of fiscal 2013. The Department of Revenue also reported that collections at the midway point of the fiscal year are running $281 million above the benchmarks used for budgeting purposes. Revenue department officials said withholding collections of $981 million were down 6.5 percent and were largely responsible for the overall decline in December, when receipts missed the monthly benchmark by $76 million. Withholding receipts were $124 million below benchmark for the month, but officials estimated about $50 million was due to taxpayers shifting payments to November from December. Revenue Commissioner Amy Pitter attributed a $44 million shortfall in December to a decline in bonus-related payments. One-time corporate and business tax settlements exceeding $10 million now total $184 million over the past six months. Sales and use tax collections were up 7.4 percent in December and are up 6.4 percent over the first six months of fiscal 2014, compared to the same period in fiscal 2013.

Ms. Roach reported that House 3690, “An Act Providing for Capital Facility Repairs and Improvements for the Commonwealth,” has been released from the House Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets and referred to House Ways and Means. She informed the Commissioners that because the Ethics Committee is adding an amendment, the bill will now become H.3835.

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF MUNICIPALITIES MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS FOR FY2014 STATE AID TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES BASED ON ELIGIBILITY ESTABLISHED IN FY2014 FOR THE MUNICIPAL APPROPRIATION REQUIREMENT AND IN FY2013 FOR THE MINIMUM STANDARDS**

Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist, presented for certification 19 municipalities meeting the requirements for FY2014 State Aid to Public Libraries program.

She noted that four municipalities (Edgartown, Leverett, Southborough and Wakefield) used the flexibility option.

Commissioner Caro moved and Commissioner Shesko seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners certify that the communities on the attached list have met minimum standards of free public library service and award each a FY2014 Library Incentive Grant, a FY2014 Municipal Equalization Grant and a FY2014 Nonresident Circulation offset in the indicated amounts, totaling $110,457.88 and authorize any additional FY2014 State Aid to Public Libraries disbursements that may be possible toward the end of the grant cycle.

**The Board voted approval.**

Ms. Babbitt stated that, to date, 273 communities have been certified and more than $1,974,231 has been awarded in state aid funding.

**REVIEW OF MUNICIPALITIES REQUESTING WAIVERS OF THE FY2014 MUNICIPAL APPROPRIATION REQUIREMENT IN THE FY2014 STATE AID TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES PROGRAM WITHIN THE 10% THRESHOLD**

Liz Babbitt reported that the number of MAR waiver applications has dropped to 72 from the 2009 high of 123 applicants. Out of the 72 current applicants, 61 libraries received an increase in funding but not enough to meet the MAR.

Ms. Babbitt reviewed with the Commissioners background material relating to the 72 municipalities that had applied for a waiver of the Municipal Appropriation Requirement for FY2014. She reported that those municipalities within the 10% threshold are only required to submit their petition and documentation in writing to the Board. These 72 municipalities are Ashland, Attleboro, Bellingham, Berkley, Beverly, Billerica, Blackstone, Boston, Carver, Chelsea, Clarksburg, Clinton, Dartmouth, Douglas, Dudley, East Bridgewater, Fairhaven, Fall River, Falmouth, Florida, Franklin, Haverhill, Holbrook, Holliston, Hopedale, Huntington, Kingston, Lawrence, Leicester, Lenox, Longmeadow, Lynn, Malden, Medford, Mendon, Middleborough, Millbury, Monson, Newbury, North Adams, North Attleborough, Northborough, Norwell, Oak Bluffs, Palmer, Paxton, Pepperell, Pittsfield, Plainville, Provincetown, Quincy, Sheffield, Somerset, Somerville, South Hadley, Springfield, Templeton, Tewksbury, Uxbridge, Ware, Wareham, Warren, West Boylston, West Tisbury, Westford, Weymouth, Wilbraham, Windsor, Winthrop, Woburn, Worcester and Yarmouth.

The Commissioners observed that funding to many of these libraries is slowly recovering. However, they also expressed concern that many of the current MAR waiver applicants have received waivers for several years.

Ms. Babbitt noted that, for the first time in several years, no library experienced a disproportionate budget cut greater than 10%. Disproportionate budget reductions are one factor in the Board's consideration of whether or not to grant a MAR waiver. The library's budget reduction is compared with the overall reduction in the municipal budget. Cuts beyond the 10% budget reduction used as the benchmark for disproportionate cuts indicate that the library has been targeted for budget reductions much greater than other municipal departments. This benchmark was increased from 5% to 10% for FY2010 in an effort to support libraries through the economic downturn. All but one library, Wareham Free Public Library, were below the original 5% benchmark.

Commissioners raised concern regarding funding to the Wareham Free Public Library. The library's budget has been reduced by 24.77%, but because the municipal budget was reduced by 17.88%, when the two budgets are compared the disproportionate cut to the library is -6.89%. This is below the current benchmark used to indicate that the library's budget has been targeted. However, it is the only municipality of the 72 requesting a waiver to be above the original 5% benchmark. The community has received MAR waivers for the past four years and at present funding to the 000000.library is more than 50% under the MAR requirement.

Commissioners determined that they needed to know more from Wareham about how library services have been impacted and how the municipality plans to support the library in the future. The Commissioners noted that this not only impacts Wareham residents, but other communities that are certified in the program and therefore required to provide reciprocal services and that the State Aid to Public Libraries program is only fair when all certified libraries are pulling their weight. The Commissioners requested that local officials from Wareham be present at the February Board meeting to discuss these issues.

Ms. Babbitt noted that the Commissioners will vote on MAR waiver applications at their February Board meeting. She stated that State Aid awards are roughly half of the total state aid funding that libraries will receive. Additional payments to libraries are expected toward the end of the grant cycle in the spring.

**CONSIDERATION OF AN APPOINTMENT TO THE STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON LIBRARIES (SACL)**

Cynthia Roach stated that SACL, the Statewide Advisory Council on Libraries, has one opening to fill the unexpired term of Rebecca Mazur, a school library representative, who had to resign. Ms. Roach relayed that Cathy Collins, the Library Teacher at Sharon High School, has applied to fill Ms. Mazur’s term which runs through September 30, 2014.

Commissioner Quinn moved and Commissioner Cluggish seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners appoint Cathy Collins to the State Advisory Council of Libraries as a School Library Representative to fill an unexpired term ending September 30, 2014.

**The Board voted approval.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF THE FY2015 PLAN OF SERVICE AND PROGRAM AND BUDGET FOR THE LIBRARY FOR THE COMMONWEALTH**

Chairman Murphy presented for approval the FY2015 Plan of Service and program budget for the Library for the Commonwealth as presented and discussed by Curriculum Coordinator for the Boston Public Library Anna Fahey-Flynn at the December 5, 2013 Board meeting.

Commissioner Shesko moved and Commissioner Quinn seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the FY2015 Plan of Service and Budget filed on November 22, 2013 for the Boston Public Library as the Library for the Commonwealth with a bottom line of $2,421,970, including a personnel budget of $1,408,712 that exceeds the established 50% limit on personnel expenditures by $197,727 as detailed in the accompanying documentation.

**The Board voted approval.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF THE FY2015 PLAN OF SERVICE AND PROGRAM AND BUDGET FOR THE MASSACHUSETTS LIBRARY SYSTEM**

Chairman Murphy presented for approval the FY2015 Plan of Service and program budget for the Massachusetts Library System as presented and discussed by MLS Executive Director Gregory Pronevitz at the December 5, 2013 Board meeting.

Commissioner Caro moved and Commissioner Comeau seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the FY2015 Plan of Service and Budget filed on November 20, 2013 for the Massachusetts Library System with a bottom line of $7,225,123, as detailed in the accompanying documentation.

**The Board voted approval.**

**REPORT FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS LIBRARY SYSTEM**

MLS Executive Director Gregory Pronevitz reported on MLS Continuing Education distribution.

He stated that in FY2013, 334 events (68 online) were held with 3,322 in-person and 1,323 online attendees. The distribution of events was highest in the former Western, Central, and Southeast areas along with online events. He stated that public and school library staff attended most frequently in person while public and academics attend the most frequently online. MLS is currently exploring ways to provide more training to those who attend less frequently.

Mr. Pronevitz informed the Commissioners that the buyers and MLS are working through contingencies to conclude the sale of the Whately facility and are hoping for a closing in February. MLS is exploring alternative office space for MLS’s long-term Western Massachusetts presence. He also noted that MLS is working with its landlord to expand the Marlborough office to accommodate the new ILL Center and Resource Sharing team.

Mr. Pronevitz relayed that MLS staff and/or Executive Board members will attend all Legislative Breakfasts.

He informed the Commissioners that Tone Nunes circuit rider position ended last month with the depletion of Gates Grant funds.

Mr. Pronevitz stated that negotiations are continuing with ProQuest for the EBL short-term loan service.

**REPORT ON THE MASSACHUSETTS EBOOK PILOT PROGRAM**

Deb Hoadley, Advisor, Massachusetts Library System, reported that the MA eBook pilot project, envisioned by the Statewide Resource Sharing Committee, to provide thousands of eBooks to 51 pilot libraries in Massachusetts is underway.

She relayed that the primary goal is to create a single eBook platform and shared collection for all Massachusetts libraries and their patrons. Massachusetts is a national leader in resource sharing. The volume of lending for books and physical media has leveled off over the past three years. There is strong interest and strong growth in the use of eBooks. The MBLC and MLS are striving to find a path toward wider statewide eBook access with the pilot project.

Ms. Hoadley stated that confirmed ownership (or perpetual access) is a second goal of this project. Many eBook vendors cannot guarantee ownership. Many vendors require use of their own platform for ongoing access. Libraries that choose to switch platforms could lose their collection.

A third priority for this project is a user-friendly patron experience. The statewide committee’s efforts go beyond a statewide eBook platform and also include studies to create a statewide library card and a statewide discovery system to integrate and simplify searching. This three-pronged approach will simplify login/authentication as well as patron discovery and checkout systems.

Local content provision is a fourth goal. The pilot plans to explore uploading content from local authors and publishers in partnership with libraries to develop connections with local content providers.

Ms. Hoadley reported that MLS in cooperation with its vendor partners Baker & Taylor and BiblioLabs launched the MA eBook Project on November 21, 2013 when 51 pilot libraries began to offer eBooks to their communities for a six-month pilot project to explore different models for eBook lending, different platforms, and user experiences.

Baker & Taylor will make more than 3,000 eBooks available to pilot libraries via its Axis 360 digital media circulation platform. Axis 360 is a state-of-the-art digital content circulation content platform. It offers a fully ADA-compliant eBook solution distributing titles in multiple formats including Blio and standard ePub and PDF formats. The Collection Development Task Force can select from more than 500,000 eBook titles via the Title Source 360 acquisition tool.

BiblioLabs will make over 30,000 compelling eBooks and other materials available on an unlimited multi-user basis to pilot libraries via its BiblioBoard platform. BiblioLabs was selected for this project because of its unique model that not only does away with checkouts and waiting lists for eBooks, but features as a publishing platform for libraries with special collections to make those collections easily available to patrons.

BiblioLabs offers Massachusetts libraries an innovative eBook content platform that gives users the ability to access hundreds of curated collections of books, images, documents, artifacts, ephemera, audio, and video related to specific themes. This brand new multimedia experience is built around high-resolution primary source historical content and a growing library of contemporary publisher content including children's books, graphic novels, comics, and contemporary nonfiction. Users can access BiblioBoard on a web browser or the native apps for iPad, Kindle Fire HD, Nexus 7, or Galaxy Tab.

Ms. Hoadley demonstrated the platforms for the Commissioners and the attendees and answered questions about the pilot project.

**STANDING COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS**

Commissioner Caro, co-chair of the Director Search Committee, reported that an information packet for the Director position has been assembled which will be available at the ALA Mid-Winter conference in Philadelphia where Director Search Committee members Molly Fogarty and Gregory Pronevitz will be present to answer inquiries at the ALA Job Center. She relayed that the job posting commenced on January 6, 2014, will be advertised for two months. The Committee will meet again on February 6, 2014; review of applications will begin in March; initial interviews will be scheduled for the week of March 17, 2014.

**COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES**

Commissioner Resnick attended a Western Massachusetts Library Advocates (WMLA) Board meeting on December 19, 2013.

Commissioner Welch, as the Board’s liaison, attended the SACL meeting on December 19, 2013 at the Board offices in Boston.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Murphy adjourned the January 9, 2014 monthly business meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners at 12:34 P.M.

Gregory J. Shesko

Secretary