MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

Date : March 6, 2014

Time : 10:00 A.M.

Place : Board of Library Commissioners

Boston, Massachusetts

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

Absent : None

**Staff Present:**

Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist; Celeste Bruno, Communications Specialist; Marlene Heroux, Reference Information Systems Specialist; Rachel Masse, Administrative Coordinator; William Morton, Assistant to the Director; Cynthia Roach, Head of Library Advisory and Development/Government Liaison

**Observers Present:**

Gregory Pronevitz, Executive Director, Massachusetts Library System

**Call to Order**

Chairman Murphy called the meeting to order at 10:08 A.M. and welcomed the attendees.

**Approval of Minutes – February 6, 2014**

The following corrections were noted:

On page 3, line 41, change “counting opinions” to “Counting Opinions software.”

On page 5, line 46, add “Commissioner Resnick abstained as to the municipality of South Hadley.”

On page 6, delete lines 29 through 32.

On page 7, line 28, insert “new staff members:” following the word “three.”

Commissioner Caro moved and Commissioner Resnick seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approve the minutes for the monthly business meeting of February 6, 2014, as corrected.

**The Board voted approval.**

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

Chairman Murphy noted that the overall state revenue situation seems to be better than in recent years. Since revenues are still coming in over benchmark, this could have a positive effect for the Board’s account lines in the FY2015 state budget.

Chairman Murphy reminded the Commissioners that a local library advocacy initiative to support the Board’s Legislative Agenda commenced in January 2014 in conjunction with the Legislative Breakfast program. He noted that since the local initiative is done “one-on-one” at a municipal level, the results will be hard to measure other than future success in the program funding increases for State Aid and Technology. He informed the Commissioners that in late January, his library in Arlington met with local legislators who promised support in the budget process and who urged the library to make sure that the Ways and Means Committee members receive the same message.

Chairman Murphy reported that on March 3, 2014 he attended the Joint Ways and Means Committee budget hearing in Hanover on the FY2015 budget at which Acting Director Dianne Carty presented a synopsis of the written arguments from the Legislative Agenda and distributed packets containing the Legislative Agenda, the green sheet, and a breakout of E-content costs. He stated 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.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

Cynthia Roach, Head of Library Advisory and Development and Government Liaison, reported that the House passed H.3933, which is the amended H.3920, “An Act for Providing Capital Facility Repairs and Improvements for The Commonwealth.” She relayed that Section 2A, for library construction, remains intact. There were several amendments sponsored and one consolidated amendment plus a section that addressed the lease of Essex Agricultural Technical School which were adopted. She noted that the consolidated amendment that was approved includes $40,000 to upgrade the technology at the West Boylston Public Library. The House passed the bill 148 to 2.

Ms. Roach also reported that H.3292, “An Act Relative to the Massachusetts Center for The Book,” was reported favorably by the Committee on Tourism, Arts and Culture and referred to the Committee on House Ways and Means.

Ms. Roach informed the Commissioners that Acting Director Carty and she met with Representative Kate Hogan a few weeks ago to talk about the Legislative Agenda. Rep. Hogan recommended that the MBLC find champions for each Board account line. Ms. Roach relayed that for the past two weeks, they have been asking legislators to champion lines. She stated that she has been working with the MLA Legislative Committee to make time for these champions to speak at Library Legislative Day on Monday March 31, 2014 at the State House.

Ms. Roach reported that state revenue collections totaling $1.34 billion in February 2014 exceeded estimates by $206 million due to $207 million in one-time tax settlements that under state law are earmarked for the state’s “rainy day” reserve fund. Revenue Commissioner Amy Pitter announced the February revenue numbers on March 5, 2014 that put the state’s year-to-date collections at $14.5 billion, or 8.5 percent higher than this time last year and $288 million above revised benchmarks. Ms Roach stated that February is usually a small month for tax collections because sales taxes tend to be low due to the post-holiday shopping lull. Sales tax collections in February were up $13 million, or 3.5 percent, from last year, but still $12 million below the monthly benchmark. Income tax refunds were also up $34 million from last year to $439 million in February, $33 million above estimates.

Ms. Roach reported that President Barack Obama released his budget request for the 2015 fiscal year. The proposed budget for the Library Services and Technology Act falls $2 million short from the $180.9 million enacted by the U.S. Congress for the 2014 fiscal year. The big hit came to the state program, with slight increases to the set aside for Native Americans and Hawaiians and the National Leadership grants.

Ms. Roach relayed that review teams are in the process of reviewing the 28 grant applications submitted for the 2013-14 Planning and Design Grant round under the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program. The first of five review teams met on March 4, 2014, four more teams will be meeting during the month of March.

She noted that the West Tisbury Public Library will open its new facility on March 22, 2014.  The dedication of the building will take place that day at 10:00 a.m.

Ms. Roach stated that close to 80 trustees and library foundation members have signed up for the Trustee Focus workshop on March 8, 2014.

**MARKETING PLAN UPDATE**

Celeste Bruno, Communications Specialist, updated the Commissioners on several topics. She showed the latest document developed to support the Legislative Agenda: the “Bestseller Price Comparison Chart” which is based on information from Douglas County libraries. The chart lists eBooks that are not for sale to libraries and also highlights the price differential between what consumers pay for an eBook and what libraries are charged. Libraries sometimes pay between 60 to 1,000 percent more for the same eBook. Ms. Bruno also showed a card that was developed in collaboration with MLS and MLA, which individuals may use to show they support the eBook Pilot. She also mentioned that response to the Legislative Agenda continues to be positive, with many libraries requesting additional copies to use with Friends, trustees and patrons.

The Statewide Public Relations Advisory Committee met in February to discuss various statewide initiatives, including the new virtual catalog, statewide library card, Boston Public Library’s role in making eBooks accessible to all residents, and promotion of the Statewide eBook Pilot. Committee members set a special meeting to focus on creating an identity for the new virtual catalog and will meet jointly with the eBook Promotion taskforce in the spring.

Ms. Bruno stated that all is ready for Snapmass (Massachusetts’ Snapshot Day). The process has been a success thanks to a great collaboration between MLS, MBLC, academic, school and public libraries. Ms. Bruno showed Commissioners the Snapmass Toolkit created by the MBLC and also mentioned that Dianne Carty used Counting Opinions software to create the survey that will be used to collect data from the day.

Ms. Bruno stated that Paul Kissman, Callan Bittrich, and she have been working with Buyer Advertising to make the consumer portal easy to use no matter what device (iphone, tablet, laptop, etc.) a person is using.

Ms. Bruno presented a summary of outcomes from the meeting that Sarah Sogigian (MLS), Rachel Masse, and she had with the Boston Bruins for summer reading. In the 2014 program some of the successful elements from last year will be brought back: READ posters, prizes and their funding, and the Blades themed visits. The group is also trying to develop some new ideas that will appeal more to teens. She stated that the Bruins have also committed to funding, which helps keep the program free for libraries.

Ms. Bruno also mentioned that libraries across the Commonwealth have been participating in the Boston Bruins/Cradles to Crayons PJ Drive. The MBLC is running a drive in the office and will be transporting the PJs collected from other libraries to Cradles to Crayons. The Bruins held two special PJ Drive events at libraries in Bourne and Bellingham.

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF A MUNICIPALITY 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 the municipality of Lee which has met the requirements for FY2014 State Aid to Public Libraries program.

Commissioner Caro moved and Commissioner Kronholm seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners certify that the community on the attached list has met minimum standards of free public library service and award it a FY2014 Library Incentive Grant, a FY2014 Municipal Equalization Grant and a FY2014 Nonresident Circulation offset in the indicated amounts, totaling $3,163.47 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.**

**CONSIDERATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF WAREHAM REQUESTING A WAIVER OF THE FY2014 MUNICIPAL APPROPRIATION REQUIREMENT IN THE FY2014 STATE AID TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES PROGRAM WITHIN THE 10% THRESHOLD**

Since he was not present at the February 6, 2014 Board meeting, Chairman Murphy stated that Vice Chairman Quinn would lead the discussion on Wareham’s waiver request.

Vice Chairman Quinn reminded the Commissioners that, at their January 9, 2014 Board meeting, the Commissioners were presented with background material relating to the 72 municipalities that had applied for a waiver of the Municipal Appropriation Requirement for FY2014. While the Commissioners observed that funding to many of these libraries is slowly recovering, they also expressed concern that many of the current MAR waiver applicants have received waivers for several years.

At the January Board meeting, the Commissioners also raised concern regarding municipal funding to the Wareham Free Public Library. Wareham’s library's budget was reduced by 24.77%, but because the municipal budget was reduced by 17.88%, 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. Wareham has received MAR waivers for the past six years and at present funding to the 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. 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.

Vice Chairman Quinn relayed that at the February 6, 2014 Board meeting local officials from Wareham were in attendance to answer concerns expressed by the Commissioners at their January 9, 2014 Board meeting about Wareham’s FY2014 MAR waiver request.

Vice Chairman Quinn reiterated her remarks at the February Board meeting that since FY2010 the Board has seen an improvement in the funding of public libraries. Of the 72 waiver applicants for FY2014, only three had decreases when compared to their overall town budgets and only one (Wareham) exceeded 5%, at 6.89%. Of the applicant libraries, 61 were either level funded (2) or saw increases (59) in their library budgets. Of the 11 that experienced reductions, 5 were under 1%. The remaining 6 had their budgets reduced by 1.22%, 1.41%, 3.22%, 4.98%, 5.03%, and 24.77%. Vice Chairman Quinn stated that Wareham is the extreme outlier at 24.77%.

Wareham officials at that meeting answered questions from the Commissioners but could not make commitments concerning additional funding for their library. Peter W. Teitelbaum, Chairman of Wareham Board of Selectmen, stated that while he would like to find funds to add to the library budget, he could make no promises. He noted that, as Wareham moves into the FY2015 budget process, the Town is facing a $3 million shortfall. He mentioned the possibility of an override to fund the library. However, the town has never had a successful override.

Vice Chairman Quinn called the Commissioners attention to the proposed motions.

Commissioner Shesko stated his preference for a motion to grant Wareham a waiver “with reservation and with stipulations” of the FY2014 Municipal Appropriation Requirement. Wareham would be granted a waiver if its FY2015 budget was restored to the FY2013 level of $432,835. This represents an increase of $107,198 over the FY2014 budget.

Commissioner Comeau stated his preference for a motion to deny Wareham a waiver of the FY2014 Municipal Appropriation Requirement on the basis of a cumulative reduction in the library’s operating budget of -51.9%, since the first of 6 consecutive waivers in 2008.

Following further discussion by the Commissioners:

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Cluggish seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners deny the municipality of Wareham a waiver of the FY2014 Municipal Appropriation Requirement on the basis of a cumulative reduction in the library’s operating budget of -51.9%, since the first of 6 consecutive waivers in 2008.

**Five Commissioners voted yes. Three Commissioners voted no. The Board voted approval.**

**CONSIDERATION OF A REVISION TO THE FY2014 LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT SPECIAL PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS BUDGET**

Cynthia Roach presented the second budget revision for the FY2014 LSTA Special Priorities and Projects. She noted that these are federal FY2013 funds that need to be expended by September 30, 2014.

Ms. Roach informed the Commissioners that this revision changes one project and omits another for this year. She stated that the project on developing mobile technology will not happen this fiscal year because staff members able to work on this project are involved in the Statewide Library Card Project, a RFI for a discovery system for Small Libraries in Networks programs, and are also assisting MLS with the eBook project.

Ms. Roach stated that the Small Libraries in Networks Planning (SLIN) Committee has held several meetings and wants to set up focus groups across the state to talk about the program to current and potential recipients. As the Committee began looking at SLIN funding, the greater issue of funding formulas for networks was discussed and the Committee wants to arrange a planning day with the Networks and to have this day facilitated. Funding for support of this program is $15,000 and replaces funding approved for a Small Library Institute. The Small Library Institute is being planned and will take place on October 29, 2014. The Institute’s funding will come from the 2015 budget. Ms. Roach noted that the work, which the Small Libraries in Networks Planning Committee is doing now, will provide good background for the Institute next fall.

Commissioner Quinn moved and Commissioner Shesko seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners adopt the proposed revised Special Priorities and Projects for the Library Services and Technology Act program for FY2014 as presented in the attached documentation in the amount of $1,472,162.

**The Board voted approval**.

Following is the revised Special Priorities and Projects budget:

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

Library Services and Technology Act

FY2014 Special Priorities and Projects Budget

Revised March 2014

Projects budgeted for State FY2014 use two sources of LSTA grants; some projects are funded with Federal FY2012 monies, the majority of the projects are funded with Federal FY2013 monies.

Agency Data Coordination $**45,000**

The agency collects much data, but there isn’t one place or one way that it can pull data from all the sources. This project would begin coordinating agency data. The agency’s web development Team will begin this project as it looks to update and revamp the Library Construction Database.

Center for the Book $**25,000**

This covers the cost of annual membership in the Massachusetts Center for the Book. Activities include Letters about Literature, Literary Map of Massachusetts, Massachusetts Book Awards, and participation in the National and Boston Book Festivals.

Emergency Assistance/Disaster Recovery **$20,000**

For the past two years, the agency has combined these programs. There are two contracts for direct assistance to public libraries in the event of a disaster. One contract provides on-site recovery services. The second contract provides professional preservation/consulting services available by telephone or on-site 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Marketing Plan Implementation **$150,000**

The Public Relations Advisory Committee and MBLC staff developed the 2011-2013 Public Awareness Plan. In FY2014, staff will continue the transformation of MBLC publications into the cohesive print and online format, promote summer reading, finish the online newsroom, and promote and support other LSTA-funded programs. Development of the public portal will also continue as the federated search is completed, the virtual catalog implemented, and other search features enhanced.

Network/Small Libraries in Networks Planning **$15,000**

Earlier, a small library institute was planned for this spring. This institute will happen next October 28, 2014 and will be budgeted in the FY2015 budget. As part of the LSTA Plan 2013-2017, the Board needs to address the Small Libraries in Networks Program. A committee was established to look at this program and how the MBLC funds it. The committee has met a few times since last October. The committee is looking at Board support for the program and, at the same time, SACL is wondering whether Network Servers and Connections grants are the best use of LSTA funds. These funds will let the MBLC hire facilitators to conduct focus groups with Small Libraries in Networks participants and potential participants. It will also allow the hiring of a consultant to work on Network funding planning. There is a network planning day set for April 4, 2014.

Planning for Preservation and Access to Historic Resources $**45,000**

This is a planning process to identify the preservation and digitization needs of public, academic, school, and special libraries, museums, and historical societies across the Commonwealth. As part of this project, the Board appointed a Planning Committee at its December meeting. The process will include a look at the Library for the Commonwealth’s digitization project, the Digital Commonwealth, MBLC grant support, and how these interweave with other state and non-profit agencies, such as Mass. Archives. Funding would support a Planning Facilitator/Consultant and funds to hold several focus groups. The process began in February 2014 and will last approximately through early fall 2014.

Statewide Databases **$646,000**

Approximately 1750 libraries that are members of the Massachusetts Library System and all Massachusetts residents who have Internet access will have access to core resources through contracts with Gale/Cengage, Boston Globe through ProQuest, and Encyclopedia Britannica. These database offerings are in partnership with MLS.

Support for Summer Reading Online Registration **$17,000**

This project funds the online registration system.

Virtual Catalog $**61,239**

The virtual catalog is administered and maintained at Fenway Libraries Online (FLO).  The transition to ShareIt, the new Virtual Catalog product, is expected to happen late this year or early next. FLO will maintain the current system product until most libraries have transitioned to ShareIt. This cost covers licensing, FLO help desk support and overall administration and maintenance of URSA.

Web-based Data Collection $**69,615**

Counting Opinions is a web-based data management solution (LibPAS) that facilitates the collection and automatic tabulation of library data and enables the MBLC to manage and define data collection sets.  Public libraries report their ARIS and financial report information on this system. The MBLC is offering a customer satisfaction component for all public libraries. The agency subscribes to InformsUS, which is software that will allow the Board to gather data and feedback, to help us meet the Governor’s customer service initiative.

Website Support $**57,864**

This item covers the ongoing costs of maintaining the MBLC websites (mass.gov/mblc and mass.gov/libraries) for one year. The sites are maintained by a private vendor under a competitively bid service contract.

Workshops/Trainings **$12,000**

Trainings for LSTA sub-grant programs such as Conversation Circles and workshops and training programs for Library Trustees and Friends.

**Special Project Grant Programs**

These are grant programs that are reviewed by staff and are not part of the Direct Grant Process reviewed by SACL. Each award has an application process and evaluation process in place.

E-Book Platform: $**150,000**

This is funding that the Board allocated for the Pilot Project. The Pilot began in 2013; the support for the Pilot is coming from LSTA FY2013 Federal monies instead of Federal FY2012 funds.

NCIP Connections **$25,000**

Funding for NCIP connections will assist Virtual Catalog Members with capital costs to implement NCIP connection on the local ILS. The great advantage of ShareIt is that it uses NCIP to send messages to and from the Virtual Catalog to the local ILS. The grant that the Board awarded to FLO covers the cost of NCIP connections on the Virtual Catalog side; it can easily send messages to the local ILS; these grants provide the funding to implement NCIP on the local side. The Virtual Catalog members (networks and academic libraries) are working with their vendors to talk about NCIP on the local ILS side. Virtual Catalog transactions should be more efficient and easier for library staff with the implementation of NCIP.

Planning for Joint Public Libraries **$10,000**

This permits the Board to issue challenge grants to groups of libraries interested in planning a joint public library or consolidating library services. Projects may be within a municipality or include more than one municipality. The intention is that the communities involved would match this grant with a similar grant from a regional planning agency or with their own funds. The communities would hire a consultant/facilitator to assist the libraries and communities to work through the issues that must be addressed in any consolidation of library services. There is a request from South Hadley Public Library and the Gaylord Library to merge staff and services.

Small Libraries in Networks **$123,444**

This is the targeted grant to CW/MARS and MVLC that assists public libraries in municipalities under 10,000 in population to maintain membership in these networks.

This summer, the MBLC will be establishing a committee to review and update the Small Libraries in Networks Program. The committees charge will be to set criteria for membership and financial support, study the needs and issues of the 40 non-network public libraries, and make recommendations, on the distribution of funds and on a formula for allocation.

**Total Special Projects Budget**  **$1,472,162**

**REPORT FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS LIBRARY SYSTEM**

Gregory Pronevitz, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Library System, informed the Commissioners that the Whately facility is back on the market because the potential buyers withdrew their offer. He relayed that MLS has signed a five-year lease extension to expand its space to plan for additional resource sharing staff, work area, and meeting space. He noted that construction is well underway and MLS expects to move into the expanded space during March.

Mr. Pronevitz reported that MLS is working with current mediated ILLcenters, library networks, members, and vendors to begin the transition in April 2014 to have all Mediated ILL services provided by MLS by the end of June 2014.

Mr. Pronevitz relayed that the MLS Member Services/Account Clerk position has been filled and Lida Refah started in February. He stated that MLS is currently recruiting for an Advisor for Small Public Libraries and Resource Sharing Assistants.

Mr. Pronevitz announced that MLS is hosting a retirement event for Advisor Mary King on March 17, 2014 following the MLS Executive Board meeting in Whately. He noted that Western Massachusetts Library Advocates is cosponsoring the event.

Mr. Pronevitz announced that, in support of the MA eBook Project, MLS has signed the contract with ProQuest for EBL content, with a short-term loan model for lending academic oriented materials; MLS is also meeting with committees to develop recommendations on collection development, training and public relations, and sustainability.

Mr. Pronevitz relayed that MLS has announced a major event, “Bending Boundaries: Libraries as Publishers,” at the DCU Center in Worcester on April 16, 2014. The keynote speaker will be Emerson Professor John Rodzvilla.

He noted that MLS has scheduled two Member Forums: one on Resource Sharing at Massachusetts Maritime Academy in Buzzards Bay on February 26, 2014; the other on Continuing Education at the MITRE Corporation in Bedford on March 28, 2014.

**STANDING COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS**

Commissioner Caro, co-chair of the Director Search Committee, reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, March 4, 2014 to review applicants and identified three candidates for initial interviews by the Director Search Committee to be conducted on March 19, 2014.

**COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES**

Commissioners Comeau, Kronholm and Resnick attended the Legislative Breakfast at the Jones Library in Amherst on February 7, 2014.

Commissioner Welch attended spoke at the Legislative Breakfast at Bolton Public Library on February 7, 2014.

Commissioner Quinn spoke at the Legislative Breakfast at Lexington High School on February 7, 2014.

Commissioner Cluggish spoke at the Legislative Breakfast at Mashpee Public Library on February 7, 2014. She noted that more than 120 people attended.

Commissioner Welch attended the Legislative Breakfast at Millbury Public Library on February 21, 2014.

Commissioner Cluggish spoke at the Legislative Breakfast at Westborough High School on February 28, 2014.

Commissioner Quinn spoke at the Legislative Breakfast at the Storrs Library in Longmeadow on February 28, 2014.

Commissioner Welch attended the “Friends Sharing with Friends” program at Wilmington Public Library on March 1, 2014.

Commissioners Kronholm, Resnick and Shesko attended the Joint Ways and Means Committee budget hearing in Hanover on March 3, 2014.

Commissioners Caro and Quinn attended the Director Search Committee meeting on March 4, 2014. Commissioner Kronholm participated via a conference call.

Commissioner Shesko announced that he would be speaking at the Saugus Legislative Breakfast on March 7, 2014. He stated that he supported Commissioner Cluggish’s request regarding the events calendar.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Murphy adjourned the March 6, 2014 monthly business meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners at 1:12 P.M.

Gregory J. Shesko

Secretary