MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

Date : January 14, 2016

Time : 10:00 A.M.

Place : Minuteman Library Network

 Natick, Massachusetts

Present : Mary Ann Cluggish, Chairman; Francis R. Murphy, Vice Chairman; Carol B. Caro, Secretary; George T. Comeau; Mary Kronholm; Roland A. Ochsenbein; N. Janeen Resnick; Gregory J. Shesko

Absent : Alice M. Welch

**Staff Present:**

Dianne Carty, Director; Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist; Callan Bignoli, Web Coordinator; Celeste Bruno, Communications Director; Barbara Glazerman, Head of Operations and Budget; William Morton, Assistant to the Director; Matthew Perry, Outreach Coordinator; Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs/Government Liaison; Lauren Stara, Library Building Specialist

**Observers Present:**

Carl Cruz, Trustee Vice-Chair, New Bedford Free Public Library; Anna Fahey-Flynn, Collaborative Services Coordinator, Boston Public Library; Joannne Lamothe, Director, Sandwich Public Library; Susan McAlister, Executive Director, Minuteman Library Network; Olivia Melo, Director, New Bedford Free Public Library; Gregory Pronevitz, Executive Director, Massachusetts Library System; Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director, Massachusetts Center for the Book; Ari J. Sky, Chief Financial Officer for the City of New Bedford

**Call to Order**

Chairman Cluggish called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. She recognized Minuteman Library Network Executive Director Susan McAlister who welcomed the Board to Natick and Minuteman Headquarters. Ms. McAlister invited the Commissioners to tour the facility following their meeting.

**Approval of Minutes – December 3, 2015**

The following corrections were noted:

On page 5, line 46, strike “resident’s” and replace with “residents”.

On page 8, line 12, strike “adjust” and replace with “adjusts”.

On page 9, lines 5 & 6, strike “in the throes of” and replace with “preparing for”.

On page 10, line 11, strike “Northfield” and replace with “Lenox”.

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Murphy seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approve the minutes for the monthly business meeting December 3, 2015, as corrected.

**The Board voted approval.**

**Approval of Regulatory Hearing Minutes – December 3, 2015**

The following correction was noted:

On page 2, line 3, strike “12”.

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Shesko seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approve the minutes for the Regulatory Hearing Minutes of December 3, 2015, as corrected.

**The Board voted approval.**

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

Chairman Cluggish stated that she wished to accomplish a two-part strategic refocus for the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) during the next two years.

She emphasized that the first part consists of a goal of helping the library community and legislators understand what the MBLC does, what services the account lines fund, and why cuts in the MBLC’s legislative funding should concern them because of the negative impact that reductions have on both statewide and local library services. Chairman Cluggish also stressed the importance of devising ways to educate the library community with the objective of getting them to understand why it's in their best interests to actively contact legislators to support library services through adequate funding of the Board’s account lines. She stated that this should be a collaborative effort with the Massachusetts Library Association and all key stakeholders.

Chairman Cluggish noted that the library community is on the threshold of a better process with the legislature, amping up advocacy, changing timing by doing things earlier, etc. But all need to work much more strategically. To that end she outlined her recommended **strategic actions** with the legislature:

***1.*** *We should create a document to “calendarize” and guide the timing of various actions that should be taken and when they should be taken. Much of what we are doing now should have been done in preparation in the fall, certainly by November and December at the latest. For instance, since January is when State Representatives are each meeting with Ways and Means and telling them their 3 priorities, we should have the library community* ***start contacting*** *the Governor and State Representatives in the month of November and December and by early January at the latest and Senators later in January and February.*

***2.*** *Working strategically: We’ve already started this, but we should first (November, December/early January) focus on and be contacting legislators who are on* ***Ways and Means****. That means Commissioners and also the libraries in Towns whose legislators who are on House Ways and Means and then later, Senate Ways and Means. We must absolutely make sure that the libraries in those towns are individually contacted; we should create a short document directed at those towns explaining why they are so critically important.*

***3****. I believe that working with MLA each year to set a goal of a minimum 10 calls to their legislators (Representative and Senator) from each community is a fundamental starting place. Surely each town could manage to rally 10 people to call or email their legislators. That's two emails or two phone calls apiece for 10 people.*

***4.*** *Make it easy for everyone: Provide the phone numbers and email addresses of legislators* ***by town*** *and* ***provide a clear, succinct message****. We need to make sure that people do not just ask for support, they must ask legislators to ask Ways and Means to make libraries a* ***PRIORITY****; just asking for support is not particularly useful.*

***5.*** *We also then need to get those same minimum of 10 (or another 10 people) each year to contact Ways and Means and their legislators to sign on at Amendment time.*

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Carty reported on several meetings she attended since the last Board meeting.

* Director Carty met with Elvernoy (Albie) Johnson, State Librarian, on December 7, 2015 to discuss some issues, primarily funding, with the State Library.
* Director Carty attended the meetings of the MLA legislative committee on December 10, 2015. Chairman Cluggish, Mary Rose Quinn, and Celeste Bruno also attended.
* Director Carty and Mary Rose Quinn met with Dave Power, President of Perkins School, and Kim Charlson, Librarian of the Braille and Talking Book Library, on December 15, 2015 to review the new branding for the Perkins School that covers all of the arms of Perkins i.e., the school, the library, support for educators, global impact and Perkins products.
* Director Carty, along with Chairman Cluggish and Commissioner Ochsenbein, met with Representative Kate Hogan on December 16, 2015. During this meeting Representative Hogan announced another Library Legislative Caucus to be held on February 11, 2016 at 1:00 pm.
* Director Carty met with Speaker DeLeo, along with Gregory Pronevitz and 2 constituent librarians on December 21, 2015. This meeting illustrated how important it is to have constituents at meetings with legislators.
* Director Carty, Chairman Cluggish, and Commissioner Caro met with Senator Kathleen O’Connor Ives on January 4, 2016. Both Chairman Cluggish and Director Carty sent follow-up information that Senator O’Connor Ives requested.
* Director Carty and Commissioner Murphy attended the MLS Executive on January 5, 2016.
* Director Carty continues to meet frequently and last met with David Leonard, Interim Director at the BPL, and Gregory Pronevitz, MLS Executive Director, on January 7, 2016. These meetings are to keep each other informed about the political landscape and potential meetings with legislators.
* Director Carty attended the all-day session of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) on January 8, 2016. At the meeting Chief Officers received updates from ALA about the National Policy Agenda for Libraries, information on the Library E-Content Access Project (LEAP), and the Aspen Institute Dialogue regarding a workbook that has been developed for libraries, which will be available on their website shortly.
* Director Carty attended ALA mid-winter on January 8 & 9, 2016 and attended two meetings outside the ALA program. The first was a meeting with the director of the Leadership for Libraries Taskforce, Kathy Settle. Ms. Settle wanted to meet with Massachusetts Librarians and MLS Executive Director Gregory Pronevitz and Director Carty to discuss libraries in the 21st century. The second meeting was with representatives from New Jersey, Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Massachusetts to discuss a pilot approach to cross-state delivery. Currently there is a plan to implement a project between Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The group also discussed the current state of eBooks in the states. Information is going to be shared and compiled.

Director Carty noted that the Massachusetts Book Awards were held on January 12, 2016 at the State House. She stated that the event was well attended with many legislators presenting the awards to the authors in their districts.

Director Carty relayed that Liz Babbitt attended the annual conference for State Data Coordinators in Louisville, Kentucky form December 8 to 10, 2016.

Director Carty stated that a survey was developed to take the “temperature” of the library community regarding potential changes to the State Aid to Public Libraries program. The results will be presented to the Board at the February meeting.

Director Carty announced that the West Springfield Public Library held its soft opening on January 11, 2016; its dedication is scheduled for April 2, 2016.  This approximately 35,000 square foot, $16 million addition/renovation project received $6,276,143 from a MPLPC construction grant that was awarded in 2012.  In addition to receiving local taxpayer dollars generous donors contributed $1.5 million in private funds through their capital campaign.  This project qualifies for a $125,423 - $219,665 Library Green Incentive upon LEED certification.

Director Carty informed the Commissioners that there have been 9C Cuts and the MBLC was not affected.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs and Government Liaison, reported that the Governor’s House 2 budget is due on January 27, 2016. His State of the Commonwealth Address is scheduled for January 21, 2016.

She relayed that Revenue Commissioner Mark Nunnelly has reported that, excluding $26.9 million in one-time tax settlements received over the first six months of fiscal 2016, tax collections in Massachusetts are up 4.4 percent over the same period in fiscal 2015 and $114 million above benchmark. State tax collections in December rose 5.2 percent above December 2014 levels and beat the monthly benchmark by $39 million. The Department of Revenue reported that collections totaled $2.427 billion, up $121 million over December 2014.

Ms. Quinn stated that meetings with legislators, especially with the House and Senate leadership, are ongoing. She noted that the Haverhill Library Director and the Director of the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium had a brief but productive meeting with the Budget Director for Representative Brian Dempsey, Chairman of House Ways and Means.

Ms. Quinn attended the meeting of the MLA Legislative Committee on December 10, 2016 to discuss MLA/MSLA Legislative Day at the State House which will be held on Tuesday, March 8, 2016. The format of the event has changed and the focus will be on showcasing library programs, services and projects. She said more information about the day will be sent out to Commissioners as the plans are formalized.

Ms. Quinn announced that, to date, there are 10 Legislative Breakfasts scheduled throughout the Commonwealth. Updates will be sent out as more events are confirmed. Commissioners who are interested in attending and speaking at these events should contact her so she can RSVP to the hosting library.

She also announced that the Mass Municipal Association’s Trade Show and Convention is scheduled for January 22 and 23, 2016. Commissioners Caro, Cluggish, and Kronholm have agreed to attend and help staff the booth over the two days. Agency staff will include Rosemary Waltos, Lauren Stara, and Liz Babbitt since typical questions asked by MMA attendees focus on State Aid and Construction.

Ms. Quinn relayed that the Governor cut $50 million from the state budget to partially close what ANF has identified as a $320 million gap between projected spending and revenues through end of the fiscal year. The MBLC budget lines were not reduced in this round of 9C cuts. The 9C cuts hit MassHealth hardest with a $10 million to small and mid-size hospitals. The MassHealth cut means the state will forfeit about $5 million in federal reimbursements.

**MARKETING PLAN UPDATE**

In her report to the Commissioners, MBLC Communications Director Celeste Bruno highlighted the interactive web version of the FY2017 Legislative Agenda. The web version includes local library information including the number of items residents received through Interlibrary Loan (ILL). She noted that this information is in a chart with municipal population to help illustrate how highly used this service is. In fact in some municipalities, the number of items residents receive through ILL is greater than the community’s population.

Ms. Bruno noted that all Massachusetts public libraries are below national bandwidth standards set by the FCC. The web version links to more information about this problem and again lists local library information in terms of individual library bandwidth.

She stated that, because of funding cuts, maintaining membership in one of the nine automated networks may be a challenge for some libraries. The web version highlights the funding lost to each network and demonstrates the impact on each senate district. Users can also see what individual libraries have received in State Aid to Public Libraries funding.

Ms. Bruno demonstrated the links provided to the resources that make up statewide digital resource sharing including the research databases, the Digital Commonwealth, the Commonwealth Catalog, the Commonwealth eBook Collections, and the Library for the Commonwealth.

Ms. Bruno finished her report by showing Commissioners the brochures that have been developed or updated including the Construction Map, Construction Grant Round, and Highlights of Library Design. These will be used at the Massachusetts Municipal Association conference and in the upcoming General Construction Grant Round.

**CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS TO THE BOARD’S BYLAWS**

The Commissioners discussed the previously proposed changes as outlined. Several further changes were noted and the Commissioners agreed on those changes offered at today’s meeting.

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Murphy seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners amend the bylaws of the MBLC as outlined in the memorandum of the same title dated January 8, 2016 as further corrected and amended by the Board at today’s meeting.

**The Board voted approval.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF MUNICIPALITIES MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS FOR FY2016 STATE AID TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES BASED ON ELIGIBILITY ESTABLISHED IN FY2016 FOR THE MUNICIPAL APPROPRIATION REQUIREMENT AND IN FY2015 FOR THE MINIMUM STANDARDS**

Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist, presented for certification 99 municipalities meeting the requirements for FY2016 State Aid to Public Libraries program.

Ms. Babbitt also noted that six municipalities (Carlisle, Concord, Dunstable, Edgartown, Lincoln, and Sterling) are using the flexibility option for materials.

She stated that four municipalities (Ashland, Bridgewater, Brockton, and Fitchburg) are using the accommodation option for hours and four municipalities (Auburn, Revere, Southampton, and Tolland) are using the accommodation option for materials. Therefore, these municipalities will receive a prorated award.

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Resnick 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 FY2016 Library Incentive Grant, a FY2016 Municipal Equalization Grant and a FY2016 Nonresident Circulation offset in the indicated amounts, totaling $1,314,954.59 and authorize any additional FY2016 State Aid to Public Libraries disbursements that may be possible toward the end of the grant cycle.

**The Board voted approval.**

**Commissioner Ochsenbein abstained as to Bolton.**

**Commissioner Murphy abstained as to Arlington and Harwich.**

**Commissioner Resnick abstained as to South Hadley.**

Ms. Babbitt reminded the Commissioners that these awards are half payments. The remainder is paid at the end of the grant cycle.

**REVIEW OF MUNICIPALITIES REQUESTING WAIVERS OF THE MUNICIPAL APPROPRIATION REQUIREMENT IN THE FY2016 STATE AID TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES PROGRAM WITHIN THE 5% THRESHOLD**

Mary Rose Quinn reported that the number of MAR waiver applications for FY2016 has dropped to 49 from the 2009 high of 123 applicants.

Ms. Quinn reviewed with the Commissioners background material relating to the 49 municipalities that had applied for a waiver of the Municipal Appropriation Requirement for FY2016. She reported that those municipalities (47) within the 5% threshold are only required to submit their petition and documentation in writing to the Board. These 47 municipalities are, Carver, Chelsea, Clarksburg, East Bridgewater, Fairhaven, Fall River, Franklin, Hanover, Haverhill, Holbrook, Huntington, Lawrence, Lenox, Leverett, Longmeadow, Lynn, Malden, Marshfield, Mendon, Millbury, Monson, Newbury, North Adams, North Attleborough, Northborough, Palmer, Paxton, Pepperell, Pittsfield, Plainville, Provincetown, Scituate, Sheffield, Somerset, Somerville, Spencer, Springfield, Tewksbury, Uxbridge, Ware, Warren, West Springfield, Winchendon, Winthrop, Woburn, 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.

**REVIEW AND PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS FOR WAIVERS OF THE MUNICIPAL APPROPRIATION REQUIREMENT FOR THE FY2016 STATE AID TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES PROGRAM ABOVE THE 5% THRESHOLD**

Ms. Quinn outlined the waiver review process for those municipalities above the 5% threshold. These are required to submit their petition and documentation in writing and present testimony on their petition before the Board at today’s meeting. The two municipalities are New Bedford (-6.91%) and Sandwich (-9.55%).

**New Bedford**

New Bedford Library Director Olivia Mello and Ari J. Sky, Chief Financial Officer for the City of New Bedford, presented testimony on behalf of New Bedford’s petition for a waiver of the MAR in the FY2016 State Aid to Public Libraries Program.

Testimony as presented and/or submitted for the New Bedford Public Library follows.

*November 10, 2015*

*Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

*Board of Library Commissioners*

*98 North Washington St.*

*Boston, MA 02114*

*Dear Board of Library Commissioners:*

*The Board of Library Trustees of the New Bedford Free Public Library will be seeking a waiver of the 2016 Municipal Appropriation Requirement.*

*In April of 2015, I was hired as the Library Director and was presented with a budget that had been developed by the Interim Director and the CFO’s office. At the time of hire I was informed of the need to submit a revised budget which included 3 different cut scenarios - 3%, 5% and 7%.*

*I was able to modify the budget to meet this request while maintaining funding for adequate service by eliminating of a one-time capital purchase totaling $53,395, some materials expenditures and a part-time position. The city council also made additional cuts resulting in a final budget outcome for the library a 4.2% cut.*

*The FY16 budget will allow us to meet the hours open requirement and with utilization of our donations funds, we will be able to meet the materials requirement. We respectfully request the Board of Library Commissioners consider us for a waiver of the 1.025% increase to our fiscal budget for FY16.*

*In this packet you will find the information as required. If further information is needed, we will be sure to supply it.*

*Sincerely,*

*Olivia Melo*

*Library Director*

*January 14, 2016*

*Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

*Board of Library Commissioners*

*98 North Washington St.*

*Boston, MA 02114*

*In April of 2015, I was hired as the Library Director and was presented with a budget that had been developed by the Interim Director and the CFO’s office. At the time of hire I was informed of the need to submit a revised budget which included 3 different cut scenarios - 3%, 5% and 7%.*

*I was able to modify the budget to meet this request while maintaining funding for adequate service by eliminating of a one-time capital purchase totaling $53,395, some materials expenditures and a part-time position. The city council also made additional cuts resulting in a final budget outcome for the library a 4.2% cut.*

*The FY16 budget will allow us to meet the hours open requirement and with utilization of our donations funds, we will be able to meet the materials requirement.*

*The city of New Bedford funds a Main Library, 4 branches and a Bookmobile.*

*Howland-Green Branch in the south of the city serves as a Spanish branch by offering materials and programming in Spanish to a predominantly Latino community.*

*The Casa da Saudade Branch was established in the mid 1970’s as a library for the Portuguese community and continues to follow this mission with over ½ of the collection being books, newspapers, magazines and audio-visual material in Portuguese.*

*The city recognizes the importance of libraries in its multi-lingual community as evident by the continued funding for 5 locations in a 13 mile radius.*

*We respectfully request the Board of Library Commissioners consider us for a waiver of the 1.025% increase to our fiscal budget for FY16.*

*Olivia Melo*

*Library Director*

*October 27, 2015*

*Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

*Board of Library Commissioners*

*98 North Washington Street*

*Boston, MA 02114*

*Dear Board of Library Commissioners:*

*This letter is to notify you that the City of New Bedford fell short of meeting its FY16 Municipal Appropriation Requirement to the New Bedford Public Library.*

*Over the past several years, the City of New Bedford has faced the challenge of maintaining services in the midst of stagnant revenue, increasing fixed costs, such as health insurance and retirement, and the continuing impact of regional assessments. All City departments were directed to submit reduction options as part of the FY 2016 budget process, subject to line-item reviews and received targeted reductions. In addition, departments with a complement of more than five full-time employees were required to meet a 1% vacancy savings target.*

*The FY 2016 budget, as approved by the City Council, reduced non-public safety operating expenditures by 1.2%. Included in this number was the elimination of a one-time capital purchase from the Library’s budget, totaling $53,395. An increase to public safety operating expenditures was due entirely to the expiration of a Federal SAFER grant in the Fire Department. The largest increases occurred in non-discretionary areas, such as benefits (5.2%), State and County Assessments (13.4%) and the regional vocational high school (12.3%).*

*We respectfully request that the Board of Library Commissioners find in favor of our request for a waiver from the FY 2016 Municipal Appropriation Requirement for the New Bedford Public Library. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any additional information.*

*Sincerely,*

*Ari J. Sky*

*Chief Financial Officer*

**Sandwich**

Joanne Lamothe, Library Director, Sandwich Free Library presented testimony on behalf of Sandwich’s petition for a waiver of the MAR in the FY2016 State Aid to Public Libraries Program.

Testimony as presented and/or submitted for the Sandwich Free Public Library follows.

*Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners*

*98 N. Washington Street, Suite 401*

*Boston, MA 02114*

*Re: Sandwich Public Library Waiver Hearing - January 14, 2016*

***Special Circumstances:***

*The Sandwich Public Library budget has historically been offset by interest income from the Weston Trust Fund which has its origins in the building of the original library in 1911. The Fund is administered by three elected trustees and the interest income is given to the library annually.*

*Historically, the library's budget has been developed by projecting the income from the Weston Fund. However, the actual funds are not actually received until the end of the fiscal year.*

*Concerned with market fluctuations and a generally poor accounting practice, I approached the Town Manager. He informed me that the Town's independent auditors were also concerned and the practice of relying on funds that were not on hand nor confirmed as to the amount, placed the town at financial risk. It was determined that the practice needed to be corrected.*

*Finally, in FY15 the town was able to rectify this practice appropriating the funds that would have been provided to the library via the trust. The one-time correction would enable the library to "bank" this income at the commencement of the fiscal year rather than relying on receiving the income at the conclusion of the fiscal year.*

*The town appropriated the amount that normally would have been received from the additional revenue sources thereby creating an increase in the library budget to correct the former practice.*

*Additionally, as noted in the Town Manager's correspondence with the Board, retirements of several senior staff members resulting in replacement staff at lower salaries.*

***Request for consideration of waiver and town support:***

*The town has historically supported the library. Even though the criteria for certification do not factor capital expenditures, it is important to note that since 2013 the town has spent $1.4 million dollars in improvements to the existing library building. No other town buildings, with the exception of the schools, have received funding for facilities improvement. This past year saw the completion of a new heating and cooling system including conversion to natural gas and over $400,000 for a new, expanded parking lot including a bio-retention area to protect groundwater Other projects within the last five years period have included $28,000 for a new septic system and restroom improvements and $250,000 in Community Preservation Act funding for exterior repairs including a new slate roof on the original 1911building and a new roof covering the 1965 and 1985 additions. We are currently developing design specifications for a new elevator and an upgrade of the library's fire alarm system with funding in the amount of $96,000 approved as a capital expense at the May 2015 Town meeting. Looking forward we are optimistic that town meeting in May will approve a $50,000 funding request to improve library entrances. These projects and the support of town government in bringing them forward to the voters, are strong proof that the town does indeed support library operations.*

*Recently, the town archivist, whose minimal part-time salary was raised through fund raising by the Friends of the Sandwich Town Archives was abruptly forced to retire due to a medical issue. I approached the Town Manager to build the case to fund a full time professional archivist in the next budget year, FY17. During the course of the discussion, Town Manager noted that he thought he could find the requisite funding to post the position immediately rather than wait until the next fiscal year. This action is indicative of the support that he has for the library and the services offered to the community. We are currently interviewing candidates and expect the funding to be transferred to the library budget as soon as the appointment is made.*

*Finally, we are currently in contract negotiations with the library staff. Town methodology is such that once the contract is settled, additional funds will be transferred into the library budget thereby increasing the FY16 town appropriation.*

***Effect on library services:***

*There has been no effect on library services. Operational funding has not been decreased, but rather, the correction in the receipt of trust funds caused an artificial "blip" in the library's operating budget. In fact, we hear more favorable remarks from our patrons that due to the extensive capital improvements, that the library is a more welcoming and comfortable environment.*

***Future plans to meet the MAR:***

*Future plans will to meet the MAR will be incumbent on the town's general financial picture which is healthy.*

*The library is currently meeting the hours open requirement and materials expenditure during this fiscal year.*

*In closing, it is the position of the Town of Sandwich and the Sandwich Public Library that the failure to meet the MAR was caused by extenuating circumstances and the library did not suffer disproportionate cuts. Further data is available by an examination of the required worksheet submitted by the town's financial officer and correspondence from Town Manager George Dunham.*

*The Sandwich Public Library respectfully requests your consideration in granting a waiver.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Joanne Lamothe*

*Library Director*

Commissioner Comeau thanked Ms. Lamothe for her testimony and noted his concern that there was not a Town fiscal representative at today’s meeting to present Sandwich’s case for a waiver. He stated that it is not the librarian’s role to explain the Town’s disproportionate cut to the library’s budget.

*October 6, 2015*

*Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners*

*98 N. Washington Street, Suite 401*

*Boston, MA 02114*

***Re:*** *Town of Sandwich Public Library Fiscal Explanation*

*The purpose of this letter is to explain the FY’16 budget as it relates to the Sandwich Public Library and the Town of Sandwich as a whole. One of the requirements of the “Petition for Waiver of the FY’16 Municipal Appropriation Requirement” is a letter from the municipal official most responsible for the municipal budget about why a waiver is being sought. As you will see in the information found below, the budget for the Sandwich Public Library has been treated better than most other municipal budgets and the reason a waiver is being requested is because your process does not take into consideration other expense increases and individual reasons about why a department budget was adjusted a certain way.*

*To assist in my explanation of the Library budget, the most important document to review is the cover sheet of the FY’16 Library budget #610 that I have identified as Attachment #1. This cover sheet shows a 4-year history of actual expenditures (FY’11-FY’14), what was appropriated for the fiscal year we were in the midst of when the FY’16 budget was being prepared (FY’15), and what I recommended for the Board of Selectmen to approve for FY’16. Unlike most other department budgets, the Library also includes transfers of funds from other sources, specifically State Aid to Libraries program, the Weston Trust Fund income, and fundraisers from the Friends of the Sandwich Town Archives and Friends of the Sandwich Public Library. Traditionally, funds have been transferred from all 4 of these additional sources to offset Library budget expenses.*

*The Town’s independent auditors have remarked for more than a decade that our longstanding practice of counting on these transfers without having the funds in our possession places us at financial risk if the entities that donate the funds do not ultimately transfer sufficient amounts to our account by the end of the fiscal year. In short, don’t prospectively count on funds being transferred – it’s far more prudent to have the funds transferred to the Town, determine how much we’ve received, then count them toward the following fiscal year’s budget. To enact this best practice, the Town needed for one fiscal year to not count on the majority of transfers, with the one exception of the State Aid to Libraries program.*

*Financially, we were never in a position to make this transition until FY’15. As you see on Attachment #1, in FY’15 we did not count on receiving any funds from the Weston Fund or either of the two fundraising organizations. This meant that the normal offset of $46,847 from the total budget was reduced to $17,500. The Town made up the $29,347 by adding to the Library’s net FY’15 budget meaning the base appropriation increased by 5.0%, more than twice as much as the other municipal departments in total. Attachment #2 is the summary page of the Library budget highlighting historic budget and future budget information. Please see the “Note section of Attachment #2 which explains why the FY’15 budget increased so much when 3 of the usual 4 transfers were zeroed out.*

*Our financial goal was to absorb this increase to the Library budget for one fiscal year, then reinstitute the transfers for the following fiscal year = FY’16. You will see in Attachment #1 that for FY’16 I only counted on reinstating one of the three transfers – the Weston Fund. I did not reinstate the two fundraising transfers in FY’16 as I did not want to base such a large municipal budget on speculative fundraising as we had done in the past. By not including these offsets for FY’15 and only reinstating one of them for FY’16 it makes it look like the net Library budget decreased where, in truth, it was more safely funded by not relying on the offsets and is providing the same, if not greater, services that it always has. It should also be noted that I only budgeted on receiving $17,500 from the State Aid to Libraries program when for the last 17 years we have received more than that, which means that I have given the Library department added cushion for their expenses.*

*Another important point to make is every fiscal year I budget each department with the exact names of people in municipal positions at the exact salary levels they are receiving. If individuals retire or leave the employment of the Town in one fiscal year, I make the correction the following fiscal year. During FY’15, several senior staff at the Library retired and were replaced with new people in those positions, most of whom were being paid less than the senior person who retired. This change is base salaries was reflected in the FY’16 budget when you notice the decrease in personnel expenses by almost $30,000 between FY’15 and FY’16. This natural transition takes place in every municipal budget when individuals leave the employment of the Town.*

*Finally, in terms of operating budget expenses, there are several, very expensive employee related costs that are paid from other department accounts, not the individual budgets of each department. The best examples of this are our employee group health insurance costs, our retirement costs, and our worker’s compensation and liability insurance costs. In FY’16, group health insurance rates increased 10.00%, our retirement assessments increased by 5.38%, and our worker’s compensation and liability insurance increased by 8.20%. All of these employee related expenses are covered outside of the Library budget and must be considered when assessing the Town’s actual costs for the Library. The Library is the 3rd largest municipal department in terms of number of employees after the Fire and Police Departments and personnel expenses make up 76% of the total Library budget.*

*Lastly, your analysis does not include capital expenses as part of your municipal appropriation requirement. Since FY’13, we have appropriated $650,000 for Library HVAC improvements; $28,000 for septic system and bathroom improvements; $85,000 for elevator improvements; $11,875 for alarm system upgrades; $250,000 in Community Preservation Act funds for exterior repairs and improvements, and $409,000 to redesign and substantially expand the Library parking lot. This total of $1,433,875 far exceeds the amount spent on any other Town building during this same period except for some major repairs that were approved for Sandwich High School. No other municipal building has received as much attention or funding as the Library over the last 5 years.*

*I hope this letter explains why it is not accurate to claim that Sandwich did not meet its municipal appropriation requirement for theFY’16 Library budget. When all the factors highlighted above are considered, more funds are being spent on Library services than ever. Sandwich is inappropriately being singled out for wise budget decisions that, if anything, minimize the Library budget’s risk on speculative transfers from organizations that might not always be able to raise the volume of funds they have in the past and by the fact that substantial Library employee related costs are being paid from other budgets.*

*Thank you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 508-888-5144*

*Sincerely yours,*

*George H. Dunham*

*Town Manager*

*cc: Board of Selectmen*

 *Library Director*

 *Finance Director*

**CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF AMENDED REGULATIONS, 605 CMR 7:00: REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEMS**

Lauren Stara, Library Building Specialist relayed that the amendments propose to repeal the following sections, which apply to a regional library structure that no longer exists:

* Section 7.01, Regional Reference and Research Centers; Standards
* Section 7.03, Statewide Advisory Council on Cooperative Library Programs

Following the state’s process for amending regulations, if the Board approves the proposed changes to 605 CMR 7.00, they will be adopted as permanent regulations upon publication in the Massachusetts Register on January 29, 2016.

Commissioner Shesko moved and Commissioner Murphy seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approve the proposed changes to 605 CMR 7.00, Regional Library Systems as permanent regulations following the completion of the state regulatory filing process.

**The Board voted approval.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF THE FY2017 PLAN OF SERVICE AND PROGRAM AND BUDGET FOR THE LIBRARY FOR THE COMMONWEALTH**

Anna Fahey-Flynn, Collaborative Library Services Manager, Boston Public Library presented for approval the FY2017 Plan of Service and program budget for the Library for the Commonwealth program of the Boston Public Library.

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Ms. Fahey-Flynn noted that the budget BPL is submitting is funded at $2,766,209. The increase of $264,326, will allow BPL to further the important work in the areas of retro-conversion, digitization, and electronic content for residents across the Commonwealth.

She noted that significant budget increases can be seen in two budget lines: Books and Other Library Materials and Contracted Services. The increase in Books and Other Library Materials is to boost the Boston Public Library's e-Book collection (67% of this collection's usage comes from outside of Boston). The increase in the Contracted Services goes directly to digitization and retrospective conversion. The increase in digitization will allow the BPL to provide digitization services for a greater amount of cultural institutions across the State, and the increase in retrospective conversion will allow electronic access for additional BPL collections that are currently not cataloged or digitized.

Ms. Fahey-Flynn stated that, as in recent years, BPL requests that the personnel costs for the two developer positions and the statewide metadata coordinator working on the Digital Commonwealth project be over and above the 50% personnel costs allowed in the LFC budget.

Commissioner Caro moved and Commissioner Ochsenbein seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approve the FY2017 Plan of Service and Budget filed on December 1, 2015 for the Boston Public Library as the Library for the Commonwealth with a bottom line of $2,501,883, including a personnel budget of $1,545,630 that exceeds the established 50% limit on personnel expenditures by $294,688.50 as detailed in the accompanying documentation.

**The Board voted approval.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF THE FY2017 PLAN OF SERVICE AND PROGRAM AND BUDGET FOR THE MASSACHUSETTS LIBRARY SYSTEM**

Gregory Pronevitz, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Library System, presented for approval the FY2017 Plan of Service and program budget for the Massachusetts Library System as presented and discussed at the December 3, 2015 Board meeting.

Commissioner Murphy moved and Commissioner Comeau seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approve the FY2017 Plan of Service and Budget filed on November 18, 2015 for the Massachusetts Library System with a bottom line of $7,381,599 as detailed in the accompanying documentation.

**The Board voted approval.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF THE FY2017 PLAN OF SERVICE AND PROGRAM AND BUDGET FOR THE MASSACHUSETTS CENTER FOR THE BOOK**

Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Center for the Book, presented for approval the FY2017 Plan of Service and program budget for the Massachusetts Center for the Book as presented and discussed at the December 3, 2015 Board meeting.

Commissioner Caro moved and Commissioner Shesko seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the FY2017 Plan of Service and Budget filed on November 25, 2015 for the Massachusetts Center for the Book with a bottom line of $200,000 as detailed in the accompanying documentation.

**The Board voted approval.**

**REPORT FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS LIBRARY SYSTEM**

MLS Executive Director Gregory Pronevitz reported on the following items:

**Whately Facility and WMRLS**

* MLS is actively reviewing options for rental space along the I-91 corridor between Springfield and Greenfield. The sites under active consideration are in Northampton and W. Springfield.
* MLS is waiting for a final FY2015 statement from its auditor in preparation for requesting loan forgiveness.

**Strategic Planning**

* The Strategic Planning Committee will meet on February 2, 2016.
* MLS is scheduling five Community Planning Workshops for member and stakeholder input in late February and early March.

**Legislative Activities**

* MLS will have representation at all legislative breakfasts.
* MLS has submitted a proposal for the Legislative Day Showcase.
* Gregory Pronevitz has been attending meetings with legislative leaders when possible.

**American Library Association**

* MLS hosted a booth with lots of traffic for both MLS and the Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium (MHEC).
* Gregory Pronevitz attended several meetings on consortial eBooks and eBook grants.
* Gregory Pronevitz attended meetings on delivery and interstate delivery.

**Upcoming Library Directors Forums**

* Suffolk University on January 27, 2016
* Belmont Public Library on February 10, 2016 (Urban Library Directors)

**REPORT FROM THE LIBRARY FOR THE COMMONWEALTH**

Anna Fahey-Flynn, Collaborative Services Manager at Boston Public Library, reported on the

following items:

**Announcements:**

* BPL is one of 13 OverDrive customers to have over 1 million eBook circs in 2015.
* Boston Public Library has finished a reorganization of the Central Library’s reference departments. This reorganization will align with new service models that will be unveiled at the opening of the Johnson Building 1st floor in summer 2016.

**InterLibrary Loan Tune up:**

* BPL held a two-day workflow tune up with its document delivery software vendor, Atlas/Illiad. Improved efficiencies will shorten turnaround time.

 **Digital Commonwealth update:**

* Developers recently completed a test ingestion of Internet Archive materials (cookbooks from the BPL collection) into the Digital Commonwealth portal/repository. There were no problems and the developers will begin ingesting Massachusetts materials scanned by Internet Archive shortly. Each bound volume is readable online, and the text is fully searchable. The page also includes the different download options provided by Internet Archive.
* Anna Fahey-Flynn presented “[**Using Digital Libraries to Discover Primary Sources for Teaching and Learning**](http://www.cvent.com/events/digital-learning-day-wgbh/custom-17-d4adb5c14db341df97c5bff3455f60c3.aspx#content8),” on behalf of DPLA & BPL at Digital Learning Day, organized and sponsored by the Massachusetts School Library Association, WGBH and BPS Learning Media.

**American Library Association Mid-Winter Meeting:**

* BPL staffed a booth with the primary goal of recruiting for open BPL positions. The booth generated a lot of traffic. Also promoted was BPL’s Library for the Commonwealth program and digitization services to Massachusetts institutions.
* Anna Fahey-Flynn also attended meetings focused around upcoming grants that will improve e-book delivery on a statewide level by seamlessly combining collections for patrons regardless of the contributing institution/organization. For example, a patron could access the Boston Public Library, Commonwealth E-Book Collection and their local network collection at the same time and in the same place.

**COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES**

Chairman Cluggish attended the meeting of the MLA legislative committee on December 10, 2015.

Chairman Cluggish and Commissioner Ochsenbein met with Representative Kate Hogan on December 16, 2015.

Chairman Cluggish and Commissioner Caro met with Senator Kathleen O’Connor Ives on January 4, 2016.

Chairman Cluggish and Commissioners Murphy and Caro attended the Executive Committee meeting on January 4, 2016 at the Board offices in Boston.

Commissioner Murphy attended the MLS Executive Board meeting in Marlborough on January 5, 2016.

Chairman Cluggish and Commissioners Caro and Ochsenbein attended programs at the ALA Midwinter Conference 2016 held January 8-12, 2016 at the Boston Convention and Exposition Center.

Commissioners Kronholm, Resnick, and Murphy attended the Massachusetts Book Awards event held on January 12, 2016 at the State House.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Cluggish adjourned the January 14, 2016 monthly business meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners at 12:38 P.M.

Carol B. Caro

Secretary