MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

Date : April 5, 2018

Time : 10:00 A.M.

Place : Granby Free Public Library

Granby, Massachusetts

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

Absent : Carol B. Caro; Alice M. Welch

**Staff Present:**

James Lonergan, Director; Celeste Bruno, Communications Director; Kate Butler, Electronic Services Specialist; Tracey Dimant, Head of Operations & Budget; Rob Favini, Head of Library Advisory and Development; Rachel Masse, Assistant to the Director; Matthew Perry, Outreach Coordinator; Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs / Government Liaison; Lauren Stara, Library Building Specialist; Rosemary Waltos, Library Building Specialist

**Observers Present:**

Barbara Kerr, Library Director, Medford Public Library; Gregory Pronevitz, Executive Director, Massachusetts Library System (MLS)

**Call to Order**

Chairman Cluggish called the meeting to order at 10:03 A.M.

**Approval of Minutes: March 1, 2018**

* Strike page 8 line 14

Commissioner Ochsenbein moved and Commissioner Comeau seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the minutes for the monthly business meeting on March 1, 2018 with correction listed above.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Chairman’s Report**

Chairman Cluggish said activities in the past month were mostly about advocacy. She spoke about the excellent turnout at Library Legislative Day; there were an extraordinary number of first timers. People who attended met with their legislators. The three new caucus chairs gave inspiring speeches at the business lunch and participated in a debriefing afterwards.

On March 20 she testified along with Director Lonergan at House Ways and Means at Everett High School. Chairman Cluggish focused on only the MBLC budget line and the networks and technology budget line.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Meetings/activities since the last Board meeting:

March 6—Library Legislative Day, State House

March 16—Presentation at Athol Public Library Legislative Breakfast

March 19—MLS Executive Board and MLS Executive Director Search Committee meetings, Northampton

March 20—Joint Committee on Ways & Means, Everett High School Library

March 21-23—PLA Virtual Conference

March 26—Massachusetts School Library Association Conference, DCU Center, Worcester

March 27—MLS/LFC/MBLC Planning and Information Sharing Meeting

March 28—COSLA Member Update Webinar

April 3—Sasaki Prototype Meeting

April 4—MLS Sustainability Task Force Conference Call

MBLC staff participated in Library Legislative Day events at the State House on Tuesday, March 6, including staffing a table and a half of agency information, with a special focus on the Massachusetts Public Library Construction program (MPLCP) (thank you to Matt, Roe and Lauren for all their efforts). I presented briefings on our Legislative Agenda at two sessions, and Mary Rose spoke at the First Time Attendee program. Commissioner Cluggish was the final speaker at the luncheon.

Commissioner Cluggish and I presented testimony at the Joint Committee on Ways and Means FY2019 budget hearings at Everett High School Library on Tuesday, March 20. Sen. DiDomenico was the Sen. Chair and Rep. McGonagle was the House Chair. We were unfortunately not able to finish presenting our oral testimony due to timing issues but were told that Committee members would review our written testimony. We will make sure that we have a clear understanding of the time allotted for our testimony in the future and will be prepared to provide a briefer, highlighted version if necessary.

IMLS’s FY2018 budget was finally passed on March 23, despite the current Federal fiscal year starting October 1st, 2017 and the President’s proposed elimination of IMLS. IMLS received an additional $9 million overall, with a $5.7 million increase to the LSTA program, of which $4.7 million is for the Grants to States program. Our FY2018 allotment is $3,283,698, an $87,461 increase over our FY2017 funding.

The Museum and Library Services Act of 2017, S. 2271, has been introduced by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI), Susan Collins (R-ME), Thad Cochran (R-MS), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK). The 2017 MLSA reauthorizes the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), showing congressional support for the agency and its programs and services.

Representatives of the MBLC, MLS and LFC management teams met for information sharing and to review our respective strategic plans and plans of service to identify issues regarding duplication of effort, gaps in service, and appropriateness of roles, as called for in our strategic plan. We primarily discussed areas in which our services overlap, including: strategic planning; BLTs (Basic Library Techniques); Trustees/Friends; and eResources. We also discussed advocacy strategies.

We have announced our partnership with State Treasurer Goldberg’s Office of Economic Empowerment (OEE) to celebrate Financial Literacy Month during April. We have created materials that are available on MBLC Aware, and also have a page on our public portal that includes a toolkit created by OEE that includes financial online games, apps, and other resources for your patrons to use. In addition to these resources, we are also launching a social media campaign during the month of April called “What Are You Saving For?” We want to hear from library staff and patrons about their financial goals to get people thinking about how to go about saving money and becoming financially literate. We’re using the hashtag #ISaveFor to answer this question.

Staff News: We are pleased to announce that Maura Deedy will be the MBLC’s new Library Advisory Specialist, working with library trustees and friends and the agency’s LSTA program, amongst other responsibilities. Maura most recently was the Assistant Director of Libraries with the Robbins Library in Arlington. She previously held positions at the Weymouth Public Libraries and at the Ferguson Library in Stamford, CT. Maura graduated from Wheaton College and has an MLS from Simmons College. She will start her new position on May 1, 2018. We are very much looking forward to having Maura join us.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs/ Government Liaison presented the following report:

February Revenue collections totaled $1.268 billion, up $96 million over February 2017 but down $78 million or 5.8% from the revised monthly benchmark. Revenues were still $725 million ahead of the FY 2018 benchmark year-to-date. Commissioner Harding (Department of Revenue [DOR]) expects that the next few months will see revenues normalize closer to the benchmarks. Income tax collections were $68 million or 12.9% ahead of last February, and $75 million below benchmark. Withholding collections (a subcategory of income tax) were $78 million or 8.3% ahead of last February, $38 million below the monthly benchmark. For the fiscal year-to-date period, revenues of $17.160 billion were $1.309 billion or 8.3% ahead of the prior year figure, and are $725 million or 4.4% above benchmark. On January 12 of this year, Administration and Finance Secretary, Michael Heffernan revised the FY 2018 revenue estimate upward by $157 million from 26.504 billion to $26.661 billion to reflect the stronger year-to-date performance in the category of income tax withholding.

Mid-month tax collections for March were $1.173 billion, down $187 million or 13.8% for the same period last year. Income taxes totaled $484 million, down $84 million or 14.9% from March 2017. Corporate and Business taxes were $534 million, $119 million or 18.2% less than last year. Sales and use taxes are up $5 million and other taxes are up $10 million over last year. Refunds are up as well; refunds total mid-month $193 million, up $122 million from last year at the same time.

The final Legislative Breakfast of the season was held March 16 in Athol. Senator Ann Gobi and Representative Susannah Whipps, both firm library supporters, attended. The newly formed Central Massachusetts Library Advocates organized the event. The breakfast took place after Library Legislative Day (3/6/18) and the budget hearing with the Joint Committee on Ways and Means (3/13/2018).

Library Legislative Day at the State House drew a crowd of more than 300 library supporters from across the Commonwealth. The two Legislative Briefings and New Attendees orientation were well attended. House Caucus Co-Chairs Natalie Higgins and Brian Murray attended and spoke at the briefings and the orientation. They were joined by Senator Eric Lesser, the Senate Co-Chair, at lunch to offer brief remarks. Senator Lesser referred to providing equal access to technology and the internet, activities supported by the Board’s Technology and Resource Sharing line (7000-9506), as a social justice issue. The Massachusetts School Library Association (MSLA), presented an overview of the Report commissioned by the Special Commission on School Library Services. The day concluded with a very productive meeting between the MLA/MSLA event organizers, MBLC and Affiliates, and the Caucus Co-Chairs and their staffs to discuss the next steps in the budget cycle and plans for the Caucus going forward.

Blind Legislative and Information Networking Day (BLIND), which was scheduled for the week following Legislative Day, was canceled due to snow. Both the original date and the snow date had higher than usual snow totals, making it impossible for supporters to travel to the State House.

The MBLC had an opportunity to testify on the FY 2019 budget before the Joint Committee on Ways and Means at Everett High School on Tuesday, March 13. The MBLC testified with Economic Development as well as Workforce Development, Mass Cultural Council and the Cannabis Control Commission. The MBLC testimony included the Legislative Agenda, the line item Fact Sheets, and the other documents given out at Legislative Day and the Breakfasts. The House Ways and Means Budget for FY 2019 is expected to be released Wednesday, April 11 with an amendment deadline of Friday, April 13 at 5 pm.

A meeting was held with Representatives Higgins and Murray on April 4 to discuss the House Ways and Means budget due out on Wed. April 11. Representatives Joan Meschino, Mary Keefe, Byron Rushing, Kate Hogan, Natalie Higgins and Brian Murray are lined up to file amendments if the funding proposed by Ways and Means does not meet the MBLC’s funding requests. The caucus co-chairs will send out a joint message for legislators to sign on to all the library amendments after each Champion sends out a message for their individual amendment.

The House Library Caucus Co-Chairs provided an updated list of House Caucus Members. Once the House Budget is settled, the MBLC will reach out to Senator Lesser’s office to request an updated list of Senate Caucus members and to schedule a meeting to discuss the Senate budget and amendment sponsors.

Six library supporters from Massachusetts, including Director Lonergan, have signed up to attend National Library Legislative Day (NLLD) on May 7 and 8 in Washington D.C. In addition to IMLS/LSTA funding, the attendees will also discuss Net Neutrality, the Marrakesh Treaty and state and local library initiatives that impact the Congressional Districts in Massachusetts.

**Consideration of a request from the Medford Public Library for an extension of time to confirm local funding and accept its provisional grant award in the massachusetts public library construction program**

Barbara Kerr, Director, Medford Public Library requested an extension of time to confirm local funding and accept its provisional grant award in the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program.

Commissioner Murphy moved and Commissioner Resnick seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners grants an extension of time to May 1, 2018 to the City of Medford in order for the City to confirm local funding and accept its provisional grant for the Medford Public Library Construction project.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Consideration of Certificate of Commendation for Irene Gillies, Library Director, Eldredge Public Library, Chatham**

Director Lonergan read the certificate that will be given to Ms. Gillies on Sunday.

In appreciation for exemplary dedication to public library services in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, we hereby offer our sincere thanks and appreciation.

Commissioner Comeau moved and commissioner Murphy seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners awards a Certificate of Commendation to Irene Gillies of the Eldredge Public Library, Chatham for her outstanding career and contributions to library services.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Discussion of Strategic Plan**

Strategic Plan Update

Rob spoke about the Library Advisory- launched new programs for LSTA

* 47 proposals came in this year. 25 are the new programs, 53% of applicants are the new topics
* Looking into a Trustee Institute for next year; looking for a fresh look for the trustee orientation
* Base orientation on the frequently asked questions

Mary Rose Quinn spoke about State Aid

* How we count and manage the data collected from libraries
* Need to provide guidance for new trustees but also new directors; a strong director can form a strong board
* Looking at new data for the ARIS Report

James Lonergan spoke about selected affiliates

* Define who does what. Had first meeting with MLS and LFC to see where there is overlap
* More proactive and keeping up to date with affiliates
* Creating a benchmark or a model; look for common elements

Paul Kissman spoke about Networks

* Making progress with networks, new Network Survey coming out
* Changing nature of electronic resources; without funding will be not be making progress
* In June will be coming to Board to approve State Grants

**Report on the Massachusetts School Library Commissioner Study**

Gregory Pronevitz, Executive Director of MLS presented the School Library Commissioner Study:

A special legislative commission charged with examining the status of school library programs in Massachusetts public schools released a report this month noting significant inequities in school library staffing, access to library resources, technology and funding in the Commonwealth’s schools.  Based on these findings, the Commission provided legislators with a comprehensive set of recommendations and a long-term plan for achieving them.

The Commission, chaired by Representative Sean Garballey, was established following the passage of Bill S.1906 in 2013.  This legislation included eleven data points for investigation to measure the status of school library programs. The Commission included members of the library and educational fields in Massachusetts, including those with extensive knowledge of school library programs.  The Commissioners authorized an academic study conducted in concert with The Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries (CISSL) at Rutgers University and distributed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to examine the Commonwealth’s school library programs.  The research was conducted by two respected academic research experts in the library and information science field, Dr. Carol A. Gordon and Dr. Robin Cicchetti. Dr. Gordon is a retired Associate Professor in the Department of Library and Information Science at CISSL, and Dr. Cicchetti is the Head Librarian at Concord-Carlisle Regional High School in Massachusetts.

The Commission’s findings published as **The Massachusetts School Library Study: Equity and Access for Students in the Commonwealth**, included:

* **A lack of equity in school staffing**, with one in five schools in Massachusetts having no licensed school librarian, and 43% of  schools have no library or technology director providing oversight of school library programs.  In the majority of public schools, there is no library support staff, leaving librarians to perform clerical duties such as checking in books instead of teaching students.  No one at DESE is charged with overseeing the Commonwealth’s school library programs, and there are currently no comprehensive data regarding the number of schools with licensed school librarians.
* **Limited access to school libraries in many schools.** Libraries, particularly in urban districts, are frequently closed, often to provide spaces for testing or due to lack of adequate staffing.  Many schools have a “fixed schedule” program where students can access the library just once a week, not when they need research materials or a new book to read.
* **Inequities in access to digital information and technology** are seen in urban districts compared to their rural and suburban counterparts.  Researchers also found that school libraries in rural and urban districts had limited access to computers compared to suburban districts, and 40% of school libraries reported poor internet access.  The Commission also found that while the Massachusetts Library System (MLS) and Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) provide a host of subsidized electronic resources that schools can access, not all districts take advantage of them. For example, one-third of schools reported not using online academic resources, such as encyclopedias, periodicals, and newspapers provided by MLS.  Two-thirds of school districts do not participate in inter-library loan programs, and 71% of schools did not take advantage of heavily subsidized e-books available through the Commonwealth e-book collection. Membership in the Massachusetts Library System requires the presence of a licensed school librarian, and 20% of districts reporting did not belong to the MLS.  Researchers also noted that school librarians are well-positioned to provide professional development on information literacy, such as using digital resources or conducting effective internet searches, to teachers and administrators. However, this requires school librarians to receive continual professional training, and this is not widely offered.
* **A lack of uniform funding and budgeting sources for school libraries** is seen across the Commonwealth, and researchers found that urban school libraries receive significantly lower funding allocated than suburban libraries.   Several librarians reported receiving no funding for their library programs, and use donations, fundraisers, and personal funds to add materials to the library collection.  Many districts are using antiquated audiovisual materials, such as audiocassettes and VHS tapes, while students in well-supported districts are using audio and video streaming sources.  Overall, however, the Commission learned that funding for school library resources in most districts is not adequate to provide newer materials or technologies.
* **Library instruction and help is not consistent across school districts.** School librarians are trained to provide instruction in information literacy and research, however, researchers reported wide variation in the number of classes taught in each school, the grade levels taught, and the ability of school librarians to collaborate with teachers to plan research and literacy projects.  In some districts, librarians report covering multiple schools, managing study halls, having space closed for testing, and numerous other factors that interfere with their ability to teach. Many librarians participating in the study noted that having a supportive administrator was key in providing strong instruction, but in many districts, the instructional role of the school librarian was not well-supported.

In a letter to the Legislature, the Commission noted that DESE recently revised its educational frameworks in ways that indicate the importance of the skills and resources that are provided by strong school library programs.  These standards focus on the need for strong print literacy skills for all students beginning in the early grades, as well as building technology capacity for all students. Information literacy skills, the ability to find, evaluate and use information are now explicitly in the Digital Literacy and Computer Science Frameworks adopted by DESE in 2016.

The Commission provided legislators with a series of recommendations for improving equity in Massachusetts public schools, and provided a comprehensive plan and timeline for their implementation.  In a letter to the Massachusetts Legislature, the Commissioners urged legislators to accept their recommendations and work with DESE to ensure their implementation. The Commission recommendations include:

**Recommendation 1.0. Improve Access to School Libraries and School Librarians**

* **Recommendation 1A.** Every public school in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has a school library and a certified school librarian.
* **Recommendation 1B.** Establish the position and responsibilities of the School Library Curriculum Specialist at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
* **Recommendation 1C.** Support a culture of inquiry in schools that sustains inquiry and resource-based learning, collaborative teaching, and the integration of digital technology to improve access for all students.

**Recommendation 2.0. Improve Access to Information Resources in School Libraries:    
Information Resources** are highly dependent on digital **Information Technology** that facilitates access. Without adequate infrastructure and devices students cannot access the information and support they need to develop digital literacy, ethics, and safety.

* **Recommendation 2A.** Increase access to print resources in school libraries.
* **Recommendation 2B.** Increase access to electronic resources in school libraries.

**Recommendation 3.0. Improve Access to Information Technology:**  
**Professional Development** for the licensed school librarians emerged as a strong trend in the data. It is critical that licensed librarians are hired to manage the Commonwealth’s school libraries. Since the library and information science field is dynamic, school librarians need continuing and high quality professional development to deliver high quality, relevant **instruction and help** to students and ongoing, just-enough-just-in-time training for teachers and administrators.

* **Recommendation 3A.** Improve access to internet and digital devices in school libraries.
* **Recommendation 3B.** Increase access to Information Technology through staffing.

**Recommendation 4.0. Improve Access to Library Instruction and Help**

* **Recommendation 4A.** Promote best instructional practices in the school library.

**Recommendation 5.0. Improve Access to Funding:**  
**Funding** cuts across all the dimensions of school librarianship. Guidelines for Budget Allocation and Expenditure should be developed to support Recommendations 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, and 4.0.

Read the full study on the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners website. <https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/youth-services/school-libraries-study.php>

**REPORT FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS LIBRARY SYSTEM**

Gregory Pronevitz, Executive Director of MLS presented the following report:

**Commonwealth eBook Collections**

We anticipate that we will have launched enrollment and information about the transition to Overdrive to libraries in collaboration with Celeste and Matt soon. No announcement about an academic product is available at this time.

**Cooperative Purchasing: Digital Library Products**

We are working with MHEC now to launch a new contract for digital library products including electronic resources. We expect to launch the process in June with product reviews occurring this fall.

**Delivery RFP**

-We’ve signed a ten-year agreement with Optima to provide stability for this service with a ten-year contract that includes stipulations to allow either party to terminate early (with appropriate penalties).

-Includes provisions for 2% per year cost increases along with allowances for fuel costs, labor cost, and MLS budget issues.

**Interlibrary Loan via ComCat**

We have successfully piloted using ComCat to fill mediated interlibrary loan requests. This approach shares the burden of lending more equitably among libraries. We will continue testing in hopes for a complete switch sometime in June.

**Search Committee Update**

Melinda Webster Loof, Bowman School, Lexington, Search Committee Chair, announced that the Committee was finalizing preparations to announce the opening for Executive Director. The position has now been posted and applications are being submitted. In addition, the library community is encouraged to send input to the Committee through a dedicated email address: [searchcommittee@masslibsystem.org](mailto:searchcommittee@masslibsystem.org).

**Delivery Cost Sharing Policy begins July 1, 2018**

MLS is in the final steps of negotiating a long-term agreement with Optima for delivery services. Unfortunately, the contract will create an imbalanced budget. To help balance the budget, the Board approved a cost sharing policy to allow MLS to continue core services at current levels, while asking these members who will benefit from a service with limited availability to share costs. We have notified the 51 member libraries who have the special hold/return sorting service by which holds are delivered in one set of bins and returns are in separate bins. This allows a library to quickly process holds to meet patron needs.

Beginning July 1, 2018, libraries that wish to retain this service have been asked to share costs of $1,000 per year. Should a library decide not to participate, delivery will continue without this special sorting. If libraries decline, MLS will offer the service to new libraries with high-volume delivery service at the same cost to utilized existing sort-to-light capacity.

**Long-Term Sustainability Task Force Formed**

Now that the future costs of delivery are fixed, with the exception of fuel costs and increases in minimum wage and healthcare, the Board will examine opportunities to develop long-term sustainability over a ten-year period. A small task force has been formed to bring recommendations to the Board. As our thinking on this important topic is forming, we would like to encourage member participation in evaluating our options.

**Standing Committee and Liaison Reports**

**COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES**

**Commissioner Comeau**

* Attended the Brockton Legislative Reception

**Commissioner Ochsenbein**

* Called into E-Board Conference

**Commissioner Resnick**

* Attended Library Legislative Day
* WMLA Board meeting on March 15
* Attended C/W Mars users council meeting

**Commissioner Murphy**

* Attended MLS Meeting in Northampton

**Commissioner Kronholm**

* March 15 attended Western Mass Library Advocates Board Meeting
* Called into E-Board Conference Call

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Shesko seconded to adjourn the April 5, 2018 monthly business meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners at 12:30 PM.



Mary Kronholm

Secretary