MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

Date : December 7, 2017

Time : 10:00 A.M.

Place : Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners Office

Boston, Massachusetts

Present : Mary Ann Cluggish, Chairman; Roland A. Ochsenbein, Vice Chairman; Mary Kronholm, Secretary; Carol B. Caro; George T. Comeau Esq.; Francis R. Murphy; Gregory J. Shesko; Alice M. Welch

Absent : N. Janeen Resnick

**Staff Present:**

James Lonergan, Director; Celeste Bruno, Communications Director; Kate Butler, Electronic Services Specialist; Tracey Dimant, Head of Operations & Budget; Lyndsay Forbes, Project Manager & Grants Specialist; Paul Kissman, Library Information Systems Specialist; Rachel Masse, Assistant to the Director; Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs / Government Liaison; Lauren Stara, Library Building Specialist; Rosemary Waltos, Library Building Specialist

**Observers Present:**

Barbara Kerr, Director, Medford Public Library; Sarah Sogigian, Consulting and Training Services Director, Massachusetts Library System (MLS); Ellen Tonello, Trustee Chair, Medford Public Library

**Call to Order**

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

**Approval of Minutes: November 2, 2017**

Commissioner Caro moved and Commissioner Comeau seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the minutes for the monthly business meeting on November 2, 2017 as presented.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Chairman’s Report**

Chairman Cluggish reported that on November 14 she, Director Lonergan and Mary Rose Quinn attended a meeting with House Ways & Means staff set up for us by Alice Peisch, her state rep who is Chair of the Joint Committee on Education.

They met with David Bunker, the Budget Director and another staffer. Chairman Cluggish described what she believed was different about this meeting.

Alice briefly introduced them, and then Chairman Cluggish did a short introduction to the Agency and our budget. She positioned the MBLC as providing "programs, services and assistance" to over 370 local libraries across the state, avoiding using all forms of the word "administration" with the idea of reframing our message.

**She immediately mentioned the highly visible Public Library Construction Grant Program, associated that with providing “expertise”, and then briefly described the popular Summer Reading program.**

She said the MBLC also works *behind the scenes* to oversee a statewide inter-dependent system of library resource sharing. That the "Stand alone - Go it Alone" library no longer exists and that it is now one big statewide inter-dependent system.

**She said that because much of the work the MBLC does *behind the scenes*, unfortunately means it goes *unnoticed* and therefore *undervalued* by legislators, with the result that the MBLC budget line is at 1998 levels.**

She believes the takeaway is that talking about *programs, services and assistance* and *expertise*, and not talking about *Administration* seemed to immediately catch their attention. We had been advised that this was better messaging and positioning.

They said we would be working with a House Ways and Means budget analyst.

During the meeting, we mentioned help with resumes and applying for jobs online. David Bunker said he had not heard about that before.

Chairman Cluggish brought up the English as a Second Language (ESOL) programs and the fact that proficient English speakers earn 25-40% more than those who do not speak English well. She had some numbers from Shelley Quezada and some directly from Library Directors. She told them that we didn't have exact numbers but that there are perhaps as many at least 2000 if not close to 3000 ESOL learners enrolled in libraries. For instance, 300 Framingham with waiting list of 70, Newton 400, Wellesley 110, Amherst 275. They both immediately perked up, looked interested and wrote that down. We had been told previously of their interest in the underserved.

Director Lonergan covered the rest of the line items. Since then Chairman Cluggish has recieved an email from David Bunker. Jeff Sanchez, new Chairman of House Ways and Means dropped in to shake hands with us. Alice Peisch told us she would be working on setting up a meeting for us with Chairman Sanchez.

Chairman Cluggish believes that reframing and positioning the Agency using the words "programs, services, assistance" and "expertise" and avoiding using the term "administration" could be significant in our advocacy efforts.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Meetings/activities since the last Board meeting:

* November 6—Presented “MBLC Update” at Massachusetts Library System (MLS) Annual Meeting, Worcester
* November 8—Meeting with Tracey Dimant and Administration and Finance (A&F) Analyst Rob Oliver regarding FY2019 maintenance and expansionary budgets
* November 9—Testified at House Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets Oversight Hearing, State House
* November 14—Commissioner Cluggish, Rep. Alice Peisch, Mary Rose and I met with House Ways and Means staff, State House
* November 15—Sasaki Team presentation to MBLC staff
* November 16—Meeting to discuss Bruins PJ Drive with Rachel, Matt (who did an excellent job running the meeting) and representatives from the Bruins, school superintendents and the WonderFund, including First Lady Lauren Baker
* November 17—Commonwealth Employee Performance Recognition Ceremony, State House, with Tracey Dimant and our two Citation for Outstanding Performance winners, Paul Kissman and Matt Perry
* November 20—Meeting with Ben Stone, Director of Capital Planning and Long Term Obligations and Jennifer Sullivan, Assistant Secretary for Capital Finance at A&F at the State House to discuss capital bond bill funding levels for FY2019-2023, the possibility of raising our annual cap, and a new bond authorization
* December 1—Presentation at MVLC Legislative Breakfast at the Parker Memorial Library in Dracut

Funding for the Massachusetts Center for the Book (MCB) became available in early November and we were able to process MCB’s first quarter request. I will be meeting with Sharon Shaloo and former Commissioner Em Claire Knowles to discuss MCB matters on Monday, Dec. 18.

Mary Rose Quinn and I will meet with the two new co-chairs of the House Library Legislative Caucus, Reps. Natalie Higgins (4th Worcester District) and Brian Murray (10th Worcester District) on Tuesday, Dec. 19 to share our FY 2019 Legislative Agenda, the schedule of library legislative breakfasts to date, Massachusetts Library Association’s Legislative Day (March 6) plans, and any other background information about library funding and services they might find helpful in their new roles.

I spoke with Nicholas Butts, Deputy Director, Boards and Commissions with the Office of the Governor on Friday, Dec. 1. We discussed the upcoming expiration of the terms for Commissioners Caro and Murphy, the timing of appointments for new commissioners, and whether I or other MBLC staff could be of assistance in the process. Mr. Butts told me they have a list of applicants that they will draw from for appointments to the Board but they welcome our forwarding additional applicants. They do not want to leave seats open and will be conducting background checks soon with the goal of appointing two new commissioners in January. In the meantime, we will review the MBLC’s Commissioner Orientation Manual and will be seeking input regarding the orientation process for new commissioners.

**Trustee Fall Focus:** Seventy trustees and library directors representing 39 Massachusetts communities attended a fall training on state laws and regulations cosponsored by MBLC and Massachusetts Library Trustee Association (MLTA) on Saturday, Nov. 18 at the Goodnow Library in Sudbury.  Three state experts presented information on Conflict of Interest, Open Meeting Law, and the “do’s and don’t’ s” of campaigns and balloting especially developed for library trustees. The presentations were designed to deepen and update the audience’s understanding of the complex state laws and regulations they need to follow, and recent (October 2017) revisions and clarifications to the Open Meeting Law were particularly timely and relevant. The day included lunch provided by the Massachusetts Library Trustees Association, a presentation on advocacy by Commissioner Cluggish, and concluded with the MLTA Annual Meeting.

**Trustee Trainings:** Two evening Trustee orientation sessions were recently held in far corners of the Commonwealth – a general orientation in Shelburne Falls on October 26 at which Commissioner Resnick spoke and a session focused on Policy Development (with updates on laws from the November 18 workshop)  on November 29 at the West Tisbury library on Martha’s Vineyard.  We’ve had additional requests recently for sessions from Provincetown, Hanover, Gloucester, Bedford, and Brockton but current Library Advisory and Development (LAD) staffing doesn’t make it possible to meet the demand for Trustee training.  We are considering some remote training ideas and the possibilities for purchasing training modules from American Library Association’s (ALA) United for Libraries, while at the same time, acknowledging the importance of live interaction and custom program development that has been the hallmark and cornerstone of MBLC’s advisory work.

**Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA):** Early in November, the “LSTA New Grant Offerings” flyer was mailed directly to all public libraries and an email announcement of the opening of the newest grant round was sent after the commissioners approved the latest plan. Libraries appear to be responding favorably to the established and new grant ideas, judging from early comments and phone calls from librarians. In addition to the normal promotion of the LSTA program, all of the MBLC/LSTA consultants have made efforts to talk up the program and demonstrate its value in outreach activities and in daily interactions with librarians and trustees.  Letters of Intent are due Thursday, Dec. 7.

Members of the MBLC LSTA team will present grant writing workshops in several locations in Massachusetts in January and February and will work closely with libraries to develop and refine grant proposals.   One of the requirements for participation in the LSTA program in Massachusetts is that a library must have a Long Range Plan on file with the MBLC and keep it updated with annual Action Plans.  MLS consultants work with individual libraries year-round to help them with their planning.  Libraries are very familiar with this long-standing requirement and we expect a robust grant round judging from the number of plans that have recently been filed (67 in November alone), including plans from libraries that have never before submitted any form of planning documents.

**Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP):** Of the nine projects that were awarded provisional construction grant awards in July, the following have secured their local funding:

* Dartmouth, North Branch
* Weymouth, Tufts Library (main library)
* Springfield, E. Forest Park Branch
* Hadley, Goodwin Memorial Library

Wayland and Medford have requested extensions or are requesting extensions at today’s meeting. Norwell and Kington will be requesting approval of local fund before January 12 deadline.

Of the twenty-four projects placed on the waiting list, three have secured local funding and are going forward with construction while waiting for their MPLCP grant award:

* Grafton - #16 on waiting list
* Boston, Dudley Square Branch - #20 on waiting list
* Cambridge, Valente Branch - #22 on waiting list

**2010-11 Construction Grant Round Up**

Twenty-seven projects were approved for construction grant in the 2010-11 grant round.  Of those 20 went forward and 16 have been completed.  The last to open to the public was the Hopkinton Public Library in October.  Four remain under construction and will be completed in 2018.

* Webster
* Sherborn
* Woburn
* Leicester

**Your Voice, Your Library Study**

The *Your Voice Your Library* study has moved into the data analysis phase. The staff survey garnered just under 700 completed responses, with good distribution from all networks except Boston Metro. This data is being layered onto the patron survey data and ARIS data to answer some of our questions. Sasaki plans to contextualize the data with other information, such demographics, economics, and travel time.

Sasaki did a presentation of preliminary findings with key MBLC staff members to gain insight into the areas on which we want to concentrate, and what we think are most useful for our purposes. We gathered feedback and are sending it to Sasaki this week. Sasaki will be reporting on findings and recommendations to the Board in the spring.

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Grant: The first set of *Finding Common Ground: Collaborative Training for the Cultural Heritage and Emergency Response Communities* workshops has been completed to rave reviews. The second set *Disaster Planning* begins in January. Session proposals have been accepted for the New England Archivists meeting in New Haven in March and the Massachusetts Library Association meeting in Framingham in May. We are awaiting notification on our submission to the Society of American Archivists, which is in Washington, D.C. in August. We plan to submit a session proposal to the New England Museum Association for the fall as soon as the submission process opens up.

**Staff News:**

As previously announced, Ruth Urell, the Head of Library Advisory and Development (LAD), will retire on December 20. This will be Ruth’s final Board meeting. We thank Ruth for her dedicated service to the MBLC and to the Commonwealth’s libraries and wish her well on her upcoming retirement!

We will interview candidates for the Head of Library Advisory and Development position the week of December 11-15. We plan on posting the Trustee/Friends Information Specialist position (possibly with a revised title) after the new Head of LAD position is filled.

Gregor Trinkaus-Randall presented a workshop on Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management at the International Council on Archives conference in Mexico City, November 27-29. It was a success, especially since some of the participants were from Mexico City and Puerto Rico.

Liz Babbitt will attend Institute of Museum and Library Services’ (IMLS) State Data Coordinators Annual Meeting in Phoenix, AZ from December 4-7.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

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

Preliminary revenue projections for November totaled $1.737 billion, $25 million or 1.5% above benchmark. For the fiscal year to date, revenue collections totaled $9.921 billion, $204 million or 2.1% more than the year to date benchmark. The Department of Revenue (DOR) commissioner noted that “the November results are consistent with expectations for steady, modest growth”.

The FY 2018 budget was finalized mid-November just before the end of formal legislative sessions for the year with the last of the Senate overrides which totaled $124 million. The updated budget numbers are reflected in the final “green sheet” budget document. The Center for the Book has started to receive its funding since its override was approved. There has been no word yet on the $50,000 earmark funding for the Worcester Bookmobile which was attached to the Worcester Talking Book Library line.

FY 2019 budget revenue consensus hearings have begun. Economic experts, the treasurer, and the DOR commissioner are among those testifying on Beacon Hill. The information gathered at these sessions will help the Governor and legislative leadership determine tax revenue expectations for the next fiscal year and develop a consensus figure for the total FY 2019 state budget. The Governor, House and Senate will each craft a budget based on the consensus figure that reflects their own funding priorities. Positive revenue news includes a possible $82 million increase in tax revenue resulting from marijuana sales; concerns include an increase in health care costs, minimal wage growth, and Federal issues related to the tax cuts proposed by the President and Congress.

Rep. Kate Hogan, who stepped down as the Legislative Library Caucus Chair at the end of last fiscal year, has appointed Co-chairs from the House side to lead the Caucus. Rep. Natalie Higgins is a freshman legislator from Leominster and Rep. Brian Murray, also sworn for the first time last January, is from Milford. James Lonergan and Mary Rose Quinn will meet with the new House Co-chairs and their aides in a few weeks to provide them with the Legislative Agenda and other materials related to the MBLC and statewide library programs and services.

The Northeast Region kicked off the Legislative Breakfast season on December 1 at the Moses Greeley Parker Memorial Library in Dracut. Sen. Barbara L’Italien and Rep. Colleen Garry spoke about the important role that libraries play in their lives. The Town Manager spoke about the significant impact of state library funding on local budgets and services.

The Worcester Public Library will hold a Legislative Breakfast on February 16. The Legislative Host for the Breakfast will be Acting Sen. President Harriette Chandler.

The Breakfasts to date include:

December 1 MVLC Breakfast at Dracut, Legislative Host: Sen. Barbara L’Italien

January 19 SAILS Breakfast at Bristol Community College, Host: Jocelyn Tavares

January 26 Berkshire Breakfast at North Adams, Host: Alex Reczkowski (Pittsfield)

February 9 OCLN Reception at 6pm in Brockton, Legislative Host: Sen. Michael Brady

Additional Breakfasts are being planned by the Western Mass Library Advocates (WMLA) and the newly formed Central Mass Library Advocates (CMLA). CMLA will be the advocacy group for the sixty two Central Massachusetts libraries. They have already scheduled a Breakfast in Milford and are hoping to have another in the Leominster area.

The SAILS Network has also been hosting “coffees” with legislators at local libraries this fall. These events are smaller, less formal, and more conversational in tone than the larger breakfasts.

At the Federal level, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is set to roll back Net Neutrality protections put in place during the Obama Administration. The library community is concerned that elimination of these protections jeopardizes access to high speed internet which levels the playing field for all people to connect with educational resources and economic opportunities.

The MBLC will participate in the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) Convention and Trade Show again this year. This event is a great way to reach out to municipal officials to discuss the MBLC Programs and Services, especially construction and State Aid. Staff members and Commissioners will staff the booth again this year. The event is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, Jan. 19 and 20.

**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**

Ellen Tonello, Chair of the Trustees of the Medford Public Library presented the following presentation to the Board:

To the Board of Library Commissioners,

The City of Medford and the Medford Public Library are excited to be one of the first libraries to receive a provisional grant in Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program. While we anticipate accepting our construction grant award, we must request an extension of time to March 27, 2018 to do so.

As soon as we found out that the Library was approved for a provisional grant award, the mayor's office, and the library began preparing for the city council vote. We hired a fundraising consultant, started a foundation, and are in the process of running a feasibility study for the capital campaign. We started right away in the summer but it soon became clear that we would need an extension.

2017 was an election year for all of the city council members as well as for the mayor so election season slowed down our progress. Happily, Mayor Burke and all of the incumbent councilors were reelected so we are now going forward as quickly as possible.

However, we do need extra time so the Library and the Mayor's office can complete its planning and preparations to ask for local funds. A March vote will give the Library Trustees time to finish the feasibility study, make initial contacts with major donors, and bring the foundation board up to speed on their responsibilities. More time would also allow us to hold public meetings, intensify our PR, and raise more support for the project.

Medford is excited about this project and we are expecting a good city council vote. We are determined to go to the city council with the backing of the community and solid information about funding sources. To do this we need a little more time to put all the information together. To that end, we are asking for an extension to March 27, 2018.

* Commissioner Murphy expressed his concern that the library wasn’t giving themselves enough time.
* Commissioner Cluggish followed that up by saying anything could happen that is out your control so having a few extra weeks is important.
* Commissioner Comeau also felt that the giving the library a few more weeks than they requested couldn’t hurt and if they didn’t them then that was also good.

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Murphy seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners grants an extension of time to the April 17, 2018 in order to confirm local funding and accept its provisional grant to the City of Medford for its library construction project for the Medford Public Library.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Consideration of approval of municipalities meeting the requirements for the FY2018 State Aid to Public Libraries based on eligibility established in FY2018 for the municipal appropriation requirement and in FY2017 for the minimum standards**

Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs presented for certification of 146 municipalities meeting the requirements for FY2018 State Aid to Public Libraries program.

Ms. Quinn reminded the Commissioners that these awards are half payments. The remainder is paid at the end of the grant cycle. The total first half payments for the first group of municipalities is $1,474,390.07.

Commissioner Murphy moved and Commissioner Ochsenbein seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners certifies that the communities on the list presented in agenda item 6 have met minimum standards of free public library service and awards each a FY2018 Library Incentive Grant, a FY2018 Municipal Equalization Grant and a Fy2018 Nonresident Circulation offset in the indicted amounts, totaling $1,474,390.07, and authorizes any additional FY2018 State Aid to Public Libraries disbursements that may be possible toward the end of the grant cycle.

**The Board voted approval: 6 votes For, 2 Abstentions**

**Commissioner Murphy abstained for Arlington and Harwich.**

**Commissioner Comeau abstained for Canton.**

**Presentation and discussion of the fy2019 plan of service and program and budget for the Massachusetts Library System and monthly report**

Sarah Sogigian, Consulting and Training Services Director presented the report from MLS:

The FY19 Budget and Plan of Service was approved at our annual meeting on November 6, 2017 at the College of the Holy Cross.

Notes:

* We are in year two of our current Strategic Plan and continue to focus on goals and priorities listed in the plan.
* We are committed to continue to support Commonwealth eBook Collection and Database subscriptions.
* Our biggest variable in the budget right now is that the bid for the delivery contract is out publicly right now. We will negotiate and begin on July 1, 2018. If the price in the contract goes up, that will affect our budget. The committee is working now and plans to have a recommendation to our executive board at our December meeting.

We strongly support a three percent increase to line 9401. The FY19 budget continues the service curtailments from last year: delivery reductions, database subscription reductions, and leaving a consultant position vacant.

The budget is based on our current annual budget figure $7,480,434

**Standing Committee and Liaison Reports**

**Commissioner Caro** reported about the meeting she attended at the Perkins School for the Blind. At the meeting they demonstrated new “smart glasses”. The navigational glasses use a live streaming camera and a special cell phone app. The Google Glass allows someone else to act as your eyes. This technology was developed by the company AIRA along with AT&T.

AIRA employees are in California but can help people navigate around the world.

**Commissioner Murphy** reported that he attended the Massachusetts Library Systems annual meeting on November 6, 2017 at Holy Cross in Worcester.

**Commissioner Activities**

Commissioner Welch

* Attended a conference for public health nurses at Devens. They are interested in what libraries are doing to help patrons with health issues. It is a beginning into future programs as libraries go into the future.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Tracey Dimant, Head of Operations and Budget presented the Commissioners with a revised format of the MBLC budget for FY2019 which was previously discussed at the October Board Meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Caro moved and Commissioner Murphy seconded to adjourn the December 7, 2017 monthly business meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners at 11:40 A.M.



Mary Kronholm

Secretary