MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

Date : April 4, 2019

Time : 10:00 A.M.

Place : Wareham Free Library

 Wareham, Massachusetts

Present : Roland A. Ochsenbein, Chairman; Mary Ann Cluggish, Vice Chairman; Mary Kronholm, Secretary; Deb Abraham; Les Ball; Philip Madell, Esq.; Gina Perille; Alice M. Welch

Absent : N. Janeen Resnick

**Staff Present:**

James Lonergan, Director; Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist; Celeste Bruno, Communications Director; Tracey Dimant, Head of Operations & Budget; Rob Favini, Head of Library Advisory and Development; Rachel Masse, Assistant to the Director; Matthew Perry, Outreach Coordinator; Shelley Quezada, Consultant to the Unserved; Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs/Government Liaison; Lauren Stara, Library Building Specialist

**Observers Present:**

Catherine Halpin, Collaborative Library Services Coordinator, Boston Public Library (BPL); Em Claire Knowles, Clerk, Massachusetts Center for the Book (MCB); Krista McLeod, Board Member, Massachusetts Center for the Book (MCB); Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director, Massachusetts Center for the Book (MCB); Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director, Massachusetts Library System (MLS)

**Call to Order**

Chairman Ochsenbein called the meeting to order at 10:01 A.M.

**Approval of Minutes: March 7, 2019**

Commissioner Abraham moved and Commissioner Cluggish seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the minutes for the monthly business meeting on March 7, 2019 as presented.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Chairman’s Report**

Chairman Ochsenbein presented the following report:

I had the special honor of helping to open and dedicate the renovated/expanded Woburn Public Library on March 16. This event was notable in that this special building is a designated National Historic Landmark and is particularly beloved by the community. The 30,000+ square foot addition beautifully complements the comprehensively renovated historic building, and adds the space and capacity necessary to serve the needs of the city of Woburn for many years. I’m sure it will win awards. Reports were that some 3,000 people came through the doors during the 3 hours of the opening festivities. While there, I was able to spend time with both of the new State Representatives that represent Woburn: Richard Haggerty of Woburn and Michelle Ciccolo of Lexington.

Other construction related milestones during the month included groundbreakings at Weymouth and Erving. Commissioners Ball and Resnick represented the Board at these events.

On March 29, Director Lonergan and I provided testimony before the Joint House and Senate Committee on Ways and Means, held at Roxbury Community College. Director Lonergan discussed and provided rationale for the MBLC FY 2020 Legislative Agenda requests, while I detailed our needs for a new construction bond and an increase to the annual construction spending cap. We were allotted our full time and responded to several questions from lawmakers. Overall, our testimony met with positive responses and expressions of support.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Lonergan presented the following report:

Meetings/activities since the last Board meeting:

* March 11—MLS Executive Board Meeting, Marlborough
* March 12—Attended “Story of a Building: Town of Stoughton Public Library”
* March 15—Open Educational Resources call with UMass staff
* March 18—MLS Executive Director Search Final Interviews, Marlborough
* March 21—Meeting with Department of Early and Secondary Education (DESE) Commissioner Jeff Riley and MSLA representatives, Malden
* March 22—Amherst Legislative Breakfast, Jones Library
* March 27—MBLC/HELM (Higher Education Libraries of Massachusetts) meeting with Rob and Paul
* March 29—Joint Ways & Means Committee Budget Hearing, Roxbury Community College
* March 31—Presented as part of panel “Using the Massachusetts School Library Study: Equity and Access for the Students of the Commonwealth” at the MSLA 2019 Conference, Framingham
* April 1—COSLA (Chief Officers of State Library Agencies) conference call re: ALA/IMLS Library Funding Task Force
* April 2—Call with Mary Rose, Lauren, and Maine State Librarian and staff re: Ecosystem study
* April 3—Call with Maya Jonas-Silver, Director of Capital Planning at Administration and Finance (A&F)

Commissioner Ochsenbein and I presented testimony on our FY2020 legislative agenda at the Joint Committee on Ways & Means hearing on Friday, March 29 at Roxbury Community College. Senator Collins and Representative Malia chaired the hearing. Despite the hearing running over an hour and a half behind schedule by the time we testified, we were able to deliver our complete testimonies and were asked multiple questions about the importance of statewide support for library programs and services and about how legislators could support our efforts to obtain a new construction bond.

Tracey, Mary Rose, Lauren and I spoke with Maya Jonas-Silver, Director of Capital Planning with the Executive Office of Administration and Finance (A&F) to discuss our annual cap and a new bond bill. Maya is supportive of funding to cover the projects on our waitlist but is questioning why we are requesting funding for our next grant round now given we wouldn’t be awarding grants from a new bond until FY2025. We explained the multi-year process of applying for planning and design grants prior to preparing applications for construction grants, and the importance of having committed funding available prior to announcing a grant round. We are researching the timing of our last planning and design grant rounds and our previous bond and will follow up with Maya.

Massachusetts School Library Association representatives and I met for the second time with the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Jeff Riley, to discuss priorities from the recommendations of the Special Commission on School Library Services in Massachusetts. MSLA’s top priorities include having a School Library Specialist appointed at DESE, who would serve as a liaison to the education and library communities, and a census of public school library programs. Commissioner Riley is open to both (although the position, if created, may only be partially focused on school libraries) and will follow up with us regarding these two priorities within a few weeks. He is also interested in visiting an exemplary school library in the coming months; MSLA will work on scheduling this visit.

I participated in a COSLA conference call regarding ALA’s new IMLS Funding Taskforce. ALA’s Committee on Legislation formed the task force, which will explore the short-term goal of raising IMLS funds an additional $17 million to fully fund the base allotment and to the reauthorized level as a next step. Membership of the Task Force will include but not be limited to ALA Committee on Legislation members as well as representatives from United for Libraries, COSLA, Urban Libraries Council, Chapters, and other interested parties such as American Indian Library Association. The Task Force will commit to providing a preliminary report by ALA Annual 2019.

I attended the Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official program: “Story of a Building: Town of Stoughton Public Library” along with Lauren Stara and Andrea Bunker. Sessions included:

* The Town’s Vision on Renovating and Expanding Our Library: Why and How ;
* Getting the Town Onboard and Financing Our Project: Applying for a Grant (Lauren presented during this session);
* Building the Project Team;
* Operating and Maintaining our New Public Library; and
* Project Challenges, Successes, and Lessons Learned

The MCPPO program usually examines school buildings; this was the first time they focused on a public library.

MPLCP: On Wednesday, March 20, the Greenfield City Council voted 9-3-1 to authorize the local funding required for their construction project. We have started the contracting process.

Rob and LAD (Library Advisory and Development) consultants are attending MLS Strategic Planning workshops in order to better understand MLS’s strategic plan trainings and how libraries carry out their strategic planning. MBLC and MLS staff will discuss how we might modify our processes and requirements in order to encourage small libraries to submit plans.

Shelley and Rob met with Corey Prachniak-Rincón, Director of the Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth on March 12. They discussed ways that the Commission can provide training and resources to public libraries across the state. We are excited about this partnership as it will provide needed resources to librarians who are serving the LGBTQ community and their families. Public libraries, typically through youth services, have been seen as safe spaces for LGBTQ youth for some time. The Commission has several training sessions that can be delivered through the MLS. They are also creating a resource list brochure that can be distributed to libraries.

Evan attended the March 14 COSTEP board meeting at the Massachusetts State Archives.  He submitted a plan for revision of the “Resources” section of the COSTEP website, and at the same time introduced plans on how to approach pivoting the organization to involve more agencies and institutions. September is Emergency Preparedness month and is the target to release COSTEP website updates and a new communications policy.

The MBLC communications team has wrapped up several campaigns. The Boston Bruins PJ Drive ended with libraries going well beyond their goal of collecting 10,000 pajamas to 13,215. This beats the entire statewide goal of 12,000. In total more than 20,000 pajamas were collected for kids in need, beating last year’s total by nearly 10,000. MBLC staff held/participated in four library events including a kickoff with First Lady of the Commonwealth at Lawrence Public Library. In the local rivalries, Jonathan Bourne Library beat Morrill Memorial Library in Norwood to be the statewide winner of the PJ drive. Norwood came in second statewide. In the Blackstone Valley competition, Whitinsville beat out five other libraries to be the winner. In the MLS and MBLC rivalry, MLS won by 45 pairs. The team is meeting with Mrs. Baker, representatives from DCF Wonderfund, and the Boston Bruins in mid-April for a PJ Drive debrief and to discuss potential future collaborations.

In this year’s #LibraryLovers campaign nearly 3,000 valentines were sent to legislators. The valentines represent what the library community often says to legislators about why libraries are important, but hearing directly from residents who are impacted is more powerful.

Results from Wired to Reach You, the Old Colony Library Network’s campaign that received support from the MBLC communications team, are in line with past campaigns. The campaign asked residents why their network is important to them. Comments were received regarding 70% of the member libraries. Over 200 comments were shared with legislators.
The MBLC communications team has been promoting the upcoming Massachusetts Library Trustee Institute. Social media posts, a press release, and invitations highlight the event’s speakers and the day’s focus on advocacy. The team will also create a program and other materials to be used during the event.

Summer reading has already started for the communications team. In collaboration with MLS, the team has presented at five summer library workshops across the state. The team has worked with the Boston Bruins and Vineyard libraries to coordinate the 2nd annual “Skate into Summer with Blades” event that involves all of the Vineyard libraries on July 31. The team is also working with the Boston Bruins and Lawrence Public Library to hold an event in late June. The application for a Blades (Bruins mascot) visit went out to all libraries this week. The team is also going on site visits to determine a location for this summer’s kickoff with Bruins prospect players. The date of the kickoff is June 27.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

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

**The final Legislative Breakfast of the season was held in Amherst on Friday, March 22. Commissioners Resnick and Kronholm represented the Board; staff members James Lonergan, Lauren Stara, Andrea Bunker, and Mary Rose Quinn were in attendance as well. Legislators included Senator Jo Comerford and Representatives Mindy Domb, Paul Mark, Natalie Blais, and Lindsay Sabadosa, among others. Senator Comerford and the representatives were all supportive of the Legislative Agenda and several promised to make libraries a priority in the budget when they spoke with Ways and Means.**

**The MBLC budget testimony before the Joint Committee on Ways and Means took place on Friday, March 29 at Roxbury Community College. In addition to the Testimony from James Lonergan and Commission Chairman Roland Ochsenbein, the MBLC packets distributed to the committee members included: the Legislative Agenda for FY 2020, the line item and affiliate fact sheets, the construction fact sheet and waitlist, the most current construction map, the green budget sheet, the budget organizational chart, and the letters of support from the Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) and the Western and Central Massachusetts Library Advocates (WMLA, CMLA). The testimony and links to the documents have been emailed to the Host/Chair of the Hearing, Representative Elizabeth Malia so that they can be distributed to the entire Committee on Ways and Means.**

**The House Ways and Means budget proposal is expected to be released on Wednesday, April 10. We will be working with the House Library Caucus co-chairs, Representatives Brian Murray and Natalie Higgins on amendments for the MBLC budget lines, if necessary.**

The state's budget revenue shortfall has disappeared after $2.67 billion in taxes were collected in March, putting Massachusetts $19 million above the estimates used to build the state's current $41 billion budget. The tax collections in March exceeded projections by $316 million, or 13.4 percent, and were 19 percent higher than the same month last year. Meanwhile, income tax refunds for the month were down, totaling $350 million in March, which was $43 million, or 11 percent lower than March 2018. Historically, the amount sent out in refunds is substantially greater than payments with returns during March. March is the sixth largest month for state revenues. Collections in April, May, and June have accounted for an average of 30 percent of the state's total revenues in the last fifteen fiscal years. Below is the summary from the Department of Revenue monthly report:

* March 2019 revenues of $2.67 billion were $316 million above benchmark
* Income tax collections for March were $1.086 billion, which is $86 million or 8.6% above benchmark and $124 million or 12.9% above March 2018.
* Withholding collections for March totaled $1.286 billion, $2 million or 0.1% above benchmark, and $46 million or 3.7% above March 2018.
* Income tax estimated payments totaled $24 million for March, $5 million or 27.6% above benchmark and $4 million or 18.7% above March 2018.
* Income tax return payments totaled $126 million for March, $31 million or 33.0% more than benchmark and $31 million or 32.4% above March 2018.
* Income tax refunds in March totaled $350 million in outflows, $47 million or 11.9% less than benchmark and $43 million or 11.0% less than March 2018.
* Sales and use tax collections for March totaled $487 million, which is $3 million or 0.6% less than benchmark and $12 million or 2.6% more than March 2018.
* Corporate and business tax collections for the month totaled $927 million, $226 million above benchmark and $279 million more than March 2018.
* Other tax collections for March totaled $167 million, which is $8 million or 4.9% more than benchmark and $11 million or 7.1% more than March 2018.

Massachusetts libraries will play a critical role in the upcoming 2020 Decennial Census. In past counts, libraries have provided meeting space for hiring, interviewing, and training census workers, and shelf and display spaces for census information, among other library related activities to help support a complete count of the population in the Commonwealth. Libraries are trusted community resources, protecting the privacy of their users; they have the technological resources to allow people to complete the census online; libraries reach more of their communities than any other municipal department.

Massachusetts' large populations of immigrants, college students, and renters make it one of the most difficult states to count on the census every ten years. Boston has one of the lowest census return rates in the country. But the traditionally hard-to-count state could be even harder during the 2020 Census because of growing fears in immigrant communities, the growing distrust of government, the addition of thousands of new housing units, and the shift to count most people online. Libraries are uniquely positioned to help reach out to these groups and many others traditionally under-represented in the census count, including people with disabilities, young children, older residents, Americans living abroad, and people who are homeless.

The Secretary of the Commonwealth, Bill Galvin anticipates that there are 6.9 million people in Massachusetts. For every person uncounted in the census, Massachusetts loses $4,200 in federal support, funding that supports education, libraries, technology, roads, bridges, health care and many other programs we rely on. Libraries will be key to getting the word out about the importance of completing the census.

Although people will be able to respond to the census questions online, paper forms will still be sent out and accepted, and will be available in 12 non-English languages, with support materials in 59 other languages. People can also respond by calling one of twelve toll free numbers, one for each of the 12 non-English languages.

Two Census events were held in Massachusetts on April 1, a year out from the Census 2020 date. Framingham hosted a statewide event for state and local officials. Boston held its kickoff event at the East Boston Branch of the Boston Public Library. The second meeting of the state’s Complete Count Committee will be held at the State House at the end of April. More information will be distributed to the Commissioners and the Library community in the next few months.

The American Library Association is taking a lead role in the 2020 Census and has taken a position on the White House’s insistence on a citizenship question on the Decennial Census. From ALA:

“On April 1, ALA joined an amicus brief to the US Supreme Court opposing the last-minute addition of a citizenship question to the 2020 US Census. ALA joined the American Statistical Association, American Sociological Association, and the Population Association of America in support of the plaintiffs in Department of Commerce v. New York. The case was appealed directly to the Supreme Court after a federal district court ruled for the plaintiffs and ordered the Commerce Department to remove the question. Arguments in the case will be heard April 23, and the Supreme Court is expected to rule before June, when census forms are scheduled to go to press…”

**Consideration of approval for the FY2020 Plan of Service and Program and Budget for the Massachusetts Center for the Book**

In response to questions raised at the March MBLC meeting by new and continuing commissioners alike which prevented MBLC from approving the Massachusetts Center for the Book (MCB) projected FY20 budget, three members of MCB presented a 30-minute comprehensive report which addressed all questions forwarded to it by Director Lonergan.

Dr. Em Claire Knowles, speaking as Clerk of the MCB board as well as from the perspective of a former commissioner and former Chair of the BLC board, opened the presentation, reminding MBLC that the agency was one of the founders of MCB and that throughout her tenure on the board it had remained a steadfast champion of the work of MCB. She remains secure in saying that MCB provides public libraries and other community entities in the Commonwealth with resources to support reading, literacy and the appreciation of learning, and closed by saying that she cannot think of any state without a Center for the Book because of its rich capabilities to help libraries reach out to communities.

Dr. Knowles then introduced Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director of MCB, to make a presentation about the mission and activities of MCB, in response to a request from new commissioners. Ms. Shaloo used as the basis for her presentation the content of focus-group presentations she made in the library community during the previous fiscal year.

Sharon Shaloo:

MCB is one of 53 center for the book affiliates working in concert with the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress to do outreach programming in support of books, reading, literacy and libraries. There is a center in every state as well as in DC, USVI, and Puerto Rico, with cooperating organizations in American Samoa and Guam. Each state, district, or territory is responsible for funding its center.

43% of centers are funded by their state libraries

12% are funded by a metro library with statewide responsibilities

6% are housed in a state library association (and supported with LSTA funding)

19% are programming arms of their state humanities councils

10% are housed in and funded by state universities

10% of centers are forced to operate as independent entities and Massachusetts sits in this category

MCB was founded in 1999 by MBLC, BPL, UMass Amherst Libraries, American Antiquarian Society, Mass Humanities, and Five Colleges. These partners pooled a small amount of money from their various lines, advertised for and hired an Executive Director who was tasked with establishing programs and solving the budget problems. Funding remained a problem throughout the first years of the Center’s operations, and eventually MBLC Director Maier and MCB ED Shaloo sought to establish a line-item to support the work of the state center for the book in Massachusetts.

The text of the Line Item (7000-9508) articulates the mission for which MCB is being funded by this appropriation from the General Court:

*Massachusetts Center for the Book, chartered as the Commonwealth affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, is a public-private partnership charged with the development, support, and promotion of cultural programming to advance the cause of books and reading and enhance the outreach potential of Massachusetts public libraries.*

Modeled on the funding structure of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, MCB is to receive public funds to pay salaries and overhead while it commits to raising monies to pay for programs. All of its current activity, with the exception of one very large and currently unfunded program, fits into the mission codified in 7000-9508:

Programs/Activities to fulfill our LOC charter include, at present, National Book Festival (Massachusetts table in the Parade of States), *Letters About Literature*, a school-age reading/writing project, *Route 1 Reads*, a collaboration of the East Coast state centers for the book, and special activities and projects developed in collaboration with LOC.

Programs that fulfill our 7000-9508 state-based mission include the Commonwealth Events Calendar and Mass Book Trails and Tours, each of which was developed with a close eye to our capacity to maintain and carefully expand them.

Programs that we have been asked to consider by libraries and funders include a Massachusetts-based family literacy project, regional reading initiatives that bridge community lines, and visibility events/community art projects.

And then we have the Massachusetts Book Awards, a project that we were asked expressly to develop by representatives on our founding board from BPL and MBLC, neither of which organizations continues to fund the program. This project, which we have invested considerable time and treasure into and of which I think we are rightfully proud, commands a full 25% of our resources. We have been told by MBLC that we must continue the program even while the agency no longer helps to pay for it. We are addressing this concern in our planning because no program, no matter how important, can continue if it poses an existential threat to the organization which administers it.

These activities, while a contribution to literacy and book culture in Massachusetts, do not comprise the entire of what MCB intended to offer to the library community. As the commissioners will read in the December 2012 proposal, first presented to MBLC at its Dec 2012 monthly meeting, MCB was envisioned as a statewide programming service in the library community, a way to spread LSTA funds to the many small and rural communities without the capacity to administer LSTA grants on a regular basis, and as a way to bring communities together (such as the Gateway Cities) through programming that addressed their shared goals and needs. Since MBLC has not recognized this potential nor engaged with MCB in a meaningful way to discuss strategic goals that MCB could help MBLC meet, our Center has embarked on a new strategic planning process, one that will chart a course for MCB for the coming 5 years.

Krista McLeod next reported on the strategic planning process, which MBLC was concerned to see was going to take four months longer than MCB initially projected.

Krista McLeod:

“Massachusetts Center for the Book is currently engaged in the Long Range Plan process. While I was overly optimistic last summer when I reported to the Commissioners that we would be wrapping up the Plan this spring, we have made good progress and have continued to move forward in a steady fashion. I am sorry that I underestimated the time needed to complete the planning process and I know that the Commissioners have been unhappy that we are not finished with the plan yet. However, with a staff of 1.3 FTE, and a very busy group of Board volunteers we are pleased with our progress. As the Commissioners acknowledged earlier today, when you discussed simplifying the Planning process for small libraries, planning for small organizations can be very difficult and time-consuming given the pressure of other business.

This is the timeline so far:

August 2018 -- Once our funding from the state was secured the Board and the Executive Director began the work of crafting an RFP for a Planning Consultant. Had phone and email exchanges to set our criteria, budget, etc.

September/October 2018 -- The Board met to do a preliminary SWOT exercise and finalize the RFP.

November 2018 - We issued the RFP, advertising it on various library, cultural and non-profit websites and message boards.

December 2018 -- We received 3 Proposals, and reviewed them, interviewed, called references and hired Ann Donner as our Consultant. Ms. Donner had been referred to our RFP by the Director of the Brockton Public Library. She has extensive experience working with small non-profits, works in leadership training and has consulted on Long Range and Strategic Planning for many organizations.

January 2019 -- Our Executive Director worked with Ms. Donner to orient her to the Center, forwarded documents and notes from brainstorming and SWOT sessions to her.

February 2019 -- Ms. Donner developed a survey, which we vetted. We selected individuals for interviews by the consultant, and we mounted the survey.

March 2019 -- The survey is out and we are getting responses. The next step is for Ms. Donner to begin to set up interviews with stakeholders.

We anticipate that the Board will be meeting with Ms. Donner this spring to go over the survey and interview results; we will plan some additional information-gathering efforts if needed, and begin to refine our goals and objectives. Ms. Donner will then begin to work with us to write the plan, and we expect to have a completed plan by the end of the summer. We will then do an action plan for 2020, and use the plan to develop some publicity and fundraising materials. The Board is looking forward to working with Ms. Donner to write a realistic plan that also has vision and creativity.”

MCB thus concluded its 30-minute presentation. MCB then was questioned by MBLC commissioners for 1 hour and 15 minutes.

The Massachusetts Center for the Book, chartered as the Commonwealth Affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, is a public-private partnership charged with developing, supporting, and promoting cultural programming that will advance the cause of books and reading and enhance the outreach potential of Massachusetts libraries.

Massachusetts Center for the Book was initially organized as a collaborative project of six academic/educational/library organizations:  Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Boston Public Library, Mass Humanities, UMass Amherst Libraries, American Antiquarian Society, and Five Colleges, Inc., which served as the Center’s fiscal agent.  Chartered by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, the Massachusetts Center for the Book became the 38th state center for the book in a network that now sees centers in every state in the country as well as in the District of Columbia and the US Virgin Islands.  Mass Center for the Book became an independent 501(c)3 on July 1, 2005, and since July 1, 2014, has operated as a public-private partnership that develops programs with the potential for statewide impact in Massachusetts libraries.

Board of Directors

Moying Li, Marcus Capital Management, Boston

Em Claire Knowles, Simmons University, COCIS

Alexandra Marshall, Author, Boston

Krista McLeod, Nevins Memorial Library, Methuen

James Wald, School of Critical Social Inquiry, Hampshire College

Sharon Shaloo, ex officio

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners Board Liaison, N. Janeen Resnick, Library Commissioner, South Hadley

The Massachusetts Center for the Book, the Commonwealth affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, is organized as an independent 501c3, operating as a public-private partnership charged with the development, support, and promotion of cultural programing designed to advance the cause of books and reading and enhance the outreach potential of public libraries in Massachusetts. It is funded by an appropriation from the General Court, Line Item 7000-9508 which is under the purview of the Board of Library Commissioners. At present it has no capacity to do increased fundraising, and so relies only on minimal grants/allocations from the Library of Congress and Mass Cultural Council to supplement the line item allocation.

Given that the FY20 budget reflects a 5th year of level funding at 80% of the minimum amount projected to be necessary to run the Center in the Summer of 2013, we offer no new activity in FY20 and expect to have to reduce further our operations activity as we contend with rising rents, increasing professional fees, and the rising minimum wage. We shall have to continue to ask our one full-time staff person, the Executive Director, to work without healthcare benefits and to contribute, on average, 10 uncompensated hours of overtime per week during our busiest months, September through May, while we - once again - cannot offer any increases to her nor to her one permanent part-time staff person. Our ED has not had a raise in five years; our part-time staffer, not in three years.

Current Programs Continuing in FY 2020

* Massachusetts Letters About Literature (a Library of Congress program in which state centers participate)
* Massachusetts Book Awards (a statewide initiative being run without any Mass library community partners)
* Mass Book Trails (Literary Mapping/Literary Placemaking)
* Statewide Calendar of Events for Massachusetts Libraries
* Library of Congress Literacy Award: Massachusetts Nominator
* State Center for the Book and Library of Congress Network Participation

Spring Coordinators' Meeting @ LOC (a Library of Congress program in which state centers participate)

National Book Festival in DC (a Library of Congress program in which state centers participate)

Route 1 Reads (East Coast State Centers collaboration - all 17 East Coast state centers participate)

* Massachusetts/New England Festival/Conference Participation (Exhibits)

Boston Book Festival

New England Library Association

New England Independent Booksellers Association

Strategic Planning Currently Projected to Continue in FY20 (owing to our inability to allocate more than $5,000 to the process in FY19).

Commissioner Ball moved and Commissioner Abraham seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the FY2020 Plan of Service and Program and Budget filed on December 31, 2018 for the Massachusetts Center for the Book, with a bottom line of $200,000 as presented in agenda item 5.

***Voting Yes:, Roland A. Ochsenbein, Chairman; Deb Abraham; Les Ball; Philip Madell; Gina Perille***

***Voting no: Mary Ann Cluggish, Vice Chairman; Alice M. Welch***

***Abstaining: Mary Kronholm, Secretary***

**The Board voted approval.**

**Consideration of provisional Construction Grant Award to Grafton under the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program**

Lauren Stara, Library Building Consultant presented to the Commissioners a Provisional Grant Award for Grafton Public Library. Ms. Stara stated that Grafton is eligible for partial payment under 605 CMR 6.10(5), which states: In order to meet spending targets established in the five-year capital plan, the Board may offer a provisional grant award to a project further down the Waiting List if that project already has local funding in place or if that project is already under construction. Grafton happens to be the next library on the list that is ready to go so they will receive $460,000. Currently Grafton is number 11 out of 19 on the waiting list.

Commissioner Cluggish moved and Commissioner Ball seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves a partial provisional grant award totaling $460,000 to the Grafton Public Library construction project. The date by which the Town of Grafton must accept their award is April 30, 2019.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Report from the Massachusetts Library System**

Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director presented the following report:

Marlborough Office News

We continue to work with our broker to find a new home for the Marlborough office. We hope to have news soon.

Membership News

MLS welcomed 1 new member and 2 new directors in February

New Members

* Saint John School Library, Wellesley

New Directors

* Huntington Public Library – Heather Dunfee
* Warwick Free Public Library – Ivan Ussach

Delivery News

An Open House is being planned at Optima’s Plymouth sort site for May. We are confirming dates and will post soon. This is a great opportunity to see how the sort-to-light works, and you may even get to try the process out!

Advocacy Activities

Legislator Visits

Executive Board members met with two legislators late in February:

* Senator Jehlen
* Representative Crocker

Library Legislative Day

Several MLS staff members attended the MLA/MSLA Library Legislative Day on March 5, 2019 to support the library legislative agenda. Congratulations to MLA, MSLA and the entire library community on a great day!

MLS Spring Continuing Education

Our spring classes are filling up, but there are still spots available. Check out all of our learning opportunities on our calendar.

We also have some discussion groups coming up:

* Directors’ Roundtable Lunchtime Discussion: Staff Structure and Other Topics at the Hopkinton Public Library on April 30
* MLS Listening Tour at the MLA Conference on May 21 at the Sheraton Framingham
* Small Library Lunchtime Discussion at the Langley-Adams Public Library in Groveland on May 28.
* Small Library Lunchtime Discussion at the Mattapoisett Free Public Library in Mattapoisett on May 31.
* Directors’ Roundtable Lunchtime Discussion: Staff Structure and Other Topics at the Bushnell- Sage Public Library, Sheffield, MA on June 13

If you are interested in hosting a discussion group, please let us know. Contact Sarah Donnelly, MLS Event Coordinator at sdonnelly@masslibsystem.org

**Report from the Library for the Commonwealth**

Catherine Halpin, Collaborative Library Services Coordinator, Boston Public Library presented the following report:

Digital Commonwealth Update:

Fifty-seven linear feet of Morgan v. Hennigan case file (and potentially some other related case files) from the National Archives and Records Administration to be digitized at Harvard’s Widener Imaging lab using a high speed document scanner. This scanner was used extensively for the “Free the law” project at the Harvard Law School Library:

<https://lil.law.harvard.edu/projects/caselaw-access-project/>

The project will likely only take a few months compared to the several years it might have taken if we used our equipment or the Internet Archive. The collection will be hosted both at Harvard and NARA repository systems. Metadata will be harvested by Digital Commonwealth and also passed up to DPLA. The collection will be available as image files and full-text searchable OCR free to all. Harvard has agreed to do the imaging for this project at no cost and is open to doing other similar projects in the future.

Other items:

The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and the Boston Public Library have partnered for a Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec exhibition that opens this month. This exhibition, exploring the celebrity culture of Lautrec’s time and the artist’s fascination with the personal lives of the stars of the day, includes more than 80 Toulouse-Lautrec works on loan from the Boston Public Library’s Special Collections.

During the month of June anyone presenting a Boston Public Library card will gain free admission to the museum for two adults and up to six kids per visit.

The Boston Public Library’s complete collection of more than 350 works by Toulouse-Lautrec has been digitized and is available on Digital Commonwealth: [https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/collections/commonwealth:3j333b93h](https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/collections/commonwealth%3A3j333b93h)

**Standing Committee and Liaison Reports**

**COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES**

**Commissioner Welch**

* Friends Sharing with Friends will be May 4 at the Canton Public Library

**Commissioner Perille**

* Attended the Statewide Census Kickoff

**Commissioner Kronholm**

* Attended Amherst Legislative Breakfast
* Participated in the Executive Committee Call

**Commissioner Resnick** submitted her activities to Commissioner Ochsenbein before the meeting.

* 3/5/19   Legislative Day –  Follow up notes sent to Senators Hind, Comerford, Lesser and Carey.  ‘Sorry to miss you’ to Sen. Humason.
* 3/22/19             Amherst Legislative Breakfast.  All the new legislators were represented and they really seem to get it.  Notes sent to Senators Comerford, Blais, Representatives Carey (Aide Kelly O’Reilly), Domb, Mark, Sabadosa (Aide Laura Britton).
* 3/29/19             Erving Ground Breaking – very brief, but nice event.  Met Rep. Whipps for the first time.  Knew architects and builder from South Hadley contacts. Also got to speak with Erving’s Selectboard Assistant.  Met him at a breakfast a couple of years ago.
* Side note – Not an activity, Mitch and I went to vote early (3/27) and ran into Rep. Carey and Sen. Comerford’s aides at office hours, so stopped by to chat for a couple of minutes.

**Commissioner Cluggish**

* Participated in the Executive Committee Call
* Received a call from Rep. Alice Peisch’s aid the second week of March. Thanks to Paul Kissman and Steve Spohn James was able to get detailed write ups to her.

**Commissioner Abraham**

I would like to take a bit of your time to share what I think is an alarming development.

The city administration of the City Everett is proposing a number of ordinance revisions. One is the complete elimination of the Board of Library Trustees and a provision that the Mayor would appoint the Library Director for a term of not more than 3 years. The city would treat the Library like any other department….except for the School Dept.

The City Council was asked to vote on a package of ordinance revisions but has delayed any action for three reasons:

* The City Solicitor asked for more time to examine legal documents such as deeds and wills.
* One Councilor wanted more time for public input as the hearing was held with minimal notice.
* One Councilor wanted a presentation about each of the many requested revisions.

It was decided that a meeting be held solely on the ordinance revisions at a date to be determined.

My understanding is that once ordinance revisions are voted by City Council they must be sent to the Attorney General’s Office. They have 30 days to approve or request changes.

The Mass General Laws Chaper 78 that covers public libraries includes sections 10-12 that deal with trustees but another section states that 10-12 does not apply to cities. Massachusetts has only 20 cities but they serve more than half the state’s population. If successful this would make Everett the only community with a public library in the state to have no Board of Trustees.

I consider this alarming as it removes the primary opportunity for public input to the Public Library through the open meetings requirement. It removes the Trustees as an umbrella of protection from the political process. It also makes the library vulnerable in a number of areas:

* Reduces advocacy for the library in the budgetary process
* Censorship
* Freedom to read and privacy.
* Policies and rules of use
* Hiring by patronage rather than skills
* Use of endowments contrary to the intentions of donors
* Creates a revolving door of Directors

I am concerned not only with the present situation but for the other 20 city libraries and by extension all public libraries in Massachusetts. Though some might consider it a badge of honor to be “first”.

I’d like us to explore what we could do to head off this change and to prevent it in the future.

Some possibilities would be:

* Board member or staff member should attend the meeting and speak to the disadvantages of the change
* Contact AG’s office – encourage them to contact MBLC about this.
* Revision of the certification requirements
* Propose a change / new section to the MGL
* Requirements regarding governance in long range plans.

Perhaps those of us who have experience in other states might have some suggestions.

I’m wondering about the position of Mass. Municipal.

**Commissioner Ball**

* Spoke at Weymouth Groundbreaking

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Ball moved and Commissioner Cluggish seconded to adjourn the April 4, 2019 monthly business meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners at 1:10 PM.



Mary Kronholm

Secretary