MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

Date : August 2, 2018

Time : 10:00 A.M.

Place : Perkins School, Grousbeck Center for Students and Technology

Watertown, Massachusetts

Present : Roland A. Ochsenbein, Chairman; Mary Ann Cluggish, Vice Chairman; Mary Kronholm, Secretary; Deb Abraham; George T. Comeau, Esq.; N. Janeen Resnick; Gregory J. Shesko; Alice M. Welch

Absent : Carol B. Caro

**Staff Present:**

James Lonergan, Director; Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist; Kate Butler, Electronic Services Specialist; Tracey Dimant, Head of Operations and 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

**Observers Present:**

Tom Blake, Manager of Content Discovery, Boston Public Library (BPL); Kim Charlson, Library Director, Perkins Library; Anna Fahey- Flynn, Central Library Manager, Boston Public Library (BPL); James Gleason, Deputy Director, Perkins Library; Sarah Sogigian, Interim Director, Massachusetts Library System (MLS)

**Call to Order**

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

**Approval of Minutes: July 12, 2018**

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Cluggish seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the minutes for the monthly business meeting on July 12, 2018 as amended.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Chairman’s Report**

Chairman Ochsenbein presented the following report:

First of all, let me say that I am very honored to be in this chair, this my first board meeting as chair. It was a September evening in 2001 when my neighbor, Ann Hurd, then a trustee at our local library just up the street, knocked on the door at my home in Bolton. She asked if I’d be willing to serve on a Building Planning Committee, exploring the possibility/feasibility of renovating and greatly expanding our tiny gem of library in Bolton. It was just after 9/11. It would only be a one year commitment she said, hard work but only 1 year. Perhaps I should have known better. That of course turned into a nine year effort that culminated in the opening of our beautiful new facility in Bolton in February of 2010, thanks to the work of so many in Bolton and the invaluable assistance of the MBLC. Then there were five years as a library trustee, a couple of terms on SACL, two rounds of construction grant reviews, four years on this board. Even though there were frustrating times along the way, I don’t begrudge that knock on the door one bit. It is an honor to work on behalf of the libraries in Massachusetts. We are a leader and national example in so many ways and have an extraordinary reserve of goodwill in the bank, thanks to everyone in this great library community.

I’ve always believed in public service as a high calling if one has the capacity—whether one is volunteering to help at a bake sale, or raising money for a cause, or serving on a town board, or serving here. I have come to realize, after 17 years of volunteering on behalf of the betterment of libraries, that I can’t think of a better way to serve, a way that has such a wide impact across so many constituencies and demographics, across towns and cities, and for families and individuals. The positive impacts that public libraries can and do have are undeniable and substantial AND they ripple on through generations. It’s a wonderful thing and so I am very pleased to continue to work on behalf of our libraries in this new capacity.

Secondly, I’d like to acknowledge and thank Commissioner Mary Ann Cluggish for serving so effectively and inspirationally as chair for these past 2 years. Under her leadership the MBLC, library staff, and library users across the Commonwealth have benefited significantly. Last month Commissioner Cluggish listed some of the achievements that occurred during her tenure, and some of them I believe bear repeating: the completion of an agency strategic plan (the first in several years); the hiring of a great new Director; the initiation of a study that could have long-term implications regarding how we think about the connections between libraries and how we allocate resources; a number of successful construction projects; and this year, for the first time in recent memory, a successful budget season. And as vice chair I’m sure she will be continuing to contribute in important and meaningful ways.

Thirdly, I am happy to report that I can now say that I’m not the newest Commissioner any more, at last. Please welcome Commissioner Deborah Abraham from Needham. Commissioner Abraham comes to the board with impressive credentials, having worked in libraries for 30+ years, 20+ years as director of the Everett Public Libraries (Frederick E. Parlin and Shute Memorial Libraries). She has managed a renovation/expansion project while there, and she has been in leadership roles in a number of professional and support organizations. Commissioner Abraham, would you like to say a few words---- Thank you.

Finally, a few words about priorities. As we move forward, my sense is that staying the course is the best course at this time. Advocacy should continue to be a top priority for the board and the community. The advocacy efforts of the board and the broader library community have had good results these past few years, especially this year. Yes the revenue picture is brighter, but I think we’ve also made our voices heard in more effective ways than ever before on Beacon Hill. We will shortly be discussing the legislative agenda for FY2020. Our successes this year position us well for leveraging those gains. We still have a long way to go to recoup the fiscal ground that has been lost over the past 20 or so years, but we’ve turned a corner and have hopefully established a better trend. We should continue to work on the strategic plan implementation goals and to that end I’d like to work on moving forward with the board development pieces and the exploration of setting up a foundation. There are many other things on our plate as well for sure, but I think that advocacy and implementation of the strategic plan are good things to key on.

As far as activities this month—

I attended a meeting organized by Commissioner Cluggish after the last board meeting on July 12 to discuss recurring issues around charter commissions/town government study committees. She may report on that later in this meeting. I met with Director Lonergan over lunch on July 16 to get better acquainted and get up to speed on various things related to the new role. I participated in the Executive Committee meeting via phone on July 24.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Lonergan presented the following report:

Meetings/activities since the last Board meeting:

* July 16—Lunch with Commissioner Ochsenbein, Marlborough
* July 16—MLS Executive Board meeting, Marlborough
* July 17—Library Ecosystem Study Community Meeting, Plymouth Public Library
* July 20—MLS Executive Board Executive Director Search conference call
* July 25—MBLC Orientation for Commissioner Abraham
* July 25—Retirement Event for Gregor Trinkaus-Randall, Massachusetts Archives
* July 31—Library Ecosystem Study presentation at Boston Public Library
* August 1—Meeting at Department of Elementary and Secondary Education with Commissioner Riley and representatives of the Massachusetts School Library Commission

**State Budget Update:**  Very good news on the FY2019 state budget. Mary Rose will provide an update during her report.

**New Commissioner Orientation**: Tracey, Mary Rose, Rob, Celeste, Rachel, and I welcomed Commissioner Abraham at the MBLC on July 25 for an orientation session. Rachel has created a Commissioner Orientation LibGuide (<http://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/c.php?g=854014>) primarily based on the contents of previous orientation manuals. We invite the Commissioners to review the LibGuide and to suggest needed additions/revisions.

Representatives of the **Special Commission on School Library Services in Massachusetts** and I met with the new Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, Jeff Riley, on Wednesday, August 1 to discuss areas in which we can work together--including exploring joint funding of statewide databases, e-books/e-text books, and/or other e-content.

**Public Library Ecosystem Study**: Lauren Stara has provided notes from the Tewksbury and Plymouth community meetings that were not covered previously or discussed as fully:

* The loss of the regions was brought up in every meeting. A new comment is that the loss of regional service centers caused the strengthening of the networks in some ways
* If extra state support is given to struggling libraries, why wouldn’t other towns cut funding to their libraries, anticipating that the state will close the gap?
* We need to take community wealth into account (similar but not exactly the same as EQV)
* There is a strong perception that MLS is not doing what was promised when they were formed. How will they participate in implementation?
* The reinstating of net lender funding came up again; and there is a desire to include circulation of digital collections in the calculation of this
* It’s essential to retain local identity & individuality while equalizing services – there is no one size fits all solution (this came up again and again – no cookie cutter solutions will work)
* The recommendations for Seasonal networks seemed to miss the mark. Libraries are jam packed in the winter because many other services shut down and locals use the library heavily. CLAMS was described as a Resource network with a Seasonal overlay
* The concept of “magnet” could apply not just to libraries as a whole but to individual programs or specialized services – “Centers of Excellence” in a particular area that serve as magnets and/or prototypes for others across the state
* The idea of merging networks to standardize ILS technology and network-based services across the state came up; but there was discussion of how to retain personal/regional services if that should happen. What would the MBLC’s role be in this? Would it make a statewide library card more feasible?

**Trustee Handbook**: Maura and Celeste have been working to finalize the layout of the MBLC Trustee Handbook. The goal is to have an official version posted on the MBLC website, with a PDF version available for printing. We are also planning to print some bound, paper copies.  At the same time, several small edits will be made to the Pocket Guide.

**LAD Staff Outreach Highlights:**

* Shelley will continue her participation in the DESE Internal Family Engagement Stakeholder Coalition. This will be ongoing for the next four months with two more meetings scheduled
* Paul and Shelley continue with their involvement in the Access to Justice Commission
* Shelley delivered a training session at the Carroll Center for the Blind (at the request of Brian Charlson) to demonstrate how visually impaired students who will be entering college in the fall can access online databases. This training was “team taught” along with two staff at Carroll since the students were using JAWS software to access the computer and there were issues around how to navigate the screen
* Maura has had a table talk session accepted by NELA for their upcoming Annual conference. Her talk is titled “Building Strong Relationships with Boards of Trustees.”

**MLS Executive Director Search Committee**: After a thorough process, which included several rounds of interviews and feedback from MLS staff and members, the MLS Executive Board was not able to fill the position. The Board will be meeting in Northampton in a few weeks to discuss next steps. In the meantime, Sarah Sogigian will be serving as Interim Director.

**Staff News**:

Preservation Specialist Search--the first round of phone interviews will take place on August 1. We are hoping that the interviews will be successful and will be followed by in-person interviews to take place beginning the second week of August.

Library Building Specialist Search--the first round of interviews has been completed and second interviews will be held on August 14 and 15.

The reception to honor Gregor Trinkaus-Randall on his retirement as the MBLC’s Preservation Specialist hosted at the Massachusetts Archives was a big success. The MBLC management team catered the event. Thank you to Commissioner Shesko for his thoughtful remarks on behalf of the Commissioners and MBLC staff. Other speakers included Michael Comeau, Director of the State Archives, former MBLC Directors Rob Maier and Dianne Carty, and Andy Dowd from the Massachusetts Town Clerks Association. After brief remarks of my own, former Directors Maier, Carty and I presented Gregor with a certificate from the Massachusetts House of Representatives signed by Speaker DeLeo, Representative Hogan, and Senator Eldridge. Approximately 40 people attended, including current and former MBLC staff members, MLS staff, and members of the library, archival, records and preservation communities.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

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

The Governor signed the $41.7 billion FY 2019 state budget on July 26, vetoing $48.9 million from the spending plan voted by the House and Senate the previous week. The House and Senate, in separate votes, overrode the Governor’s vetoes including $490,000 in earmarked funds for seven individual local library projects before the July 31 deadline which marked the end of formal sessions for the year; $250,000 of the earmarked funds were part of the State Aid to Public Libraries line, 7000-9501 while the remaining library earmarks were part of a local economic development projects earmark. The earmarks, for the most part, were approved for library repair and deferred maintenance projects.

Library Related Earmarks on the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget:

On MBLC Budget Lines

7000-9501 State Aid to Public Libraries

For accessibility planning and design Stoneham Public Library $ 50,000

For the Hispanic American Library, Inc. Springfield (not a library or public) $ 50,000

For interior construction and repairs Salem Public Library $150,000

On Non-MBLC Budget Lines

1410-0012 Veterans Oral History Project Morse Institute Library Natick $ 30,000

7008-1116 For the Commonwealth’s local economic development projects:

For the Development and Maintenance of a Local History Database at the BPL $ 35,000

For Technology at the East Forest Park Library Branch (Springfield) $ 75,000

For repairs to the Hubbardston Public Library $100,000

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Total amount for Library Earmarks in the FY 2019 State Budget **$490,000**

Overall, the FY 2019 budget approved by the Legislature and signed by the Governor funds five of the seven MBLC budget lines at the Legislative Agenda requested amounts; Technology and Resource Sharing (7000-9506) received an increase of $718,598 for a total of $2,815,928 and Mass Center for the Book received level funding at $200,000. The FY 2019 budget is $1,777,324 above the FY 2018 for a 6.98% increase to the MBLC budget lines. When the earmarks for both years are factored out, the increase is still 6.2%.



Preliminary revenue totals for FY 2018 total $27,769 billion which is $1,135 billion or 4.3% above the annual benchmark and $2,192 billion or 8.6% above FY 2017 figures. With significant increases from year to year, the Budget Conference Committee members added funding beyond the amounts approved by either the House or Senate and both Chambers were comfortable overriding all of the Governor’s vetoes which totaled close to $49 million. Revenue figures for June totaled $3.19 billion which is $257million or 8.9% above the monthly benchmark and is $461 million or 17.1% over last June. According to the report issued by the Department of Revenue (DOR) Commissioner Harding, “Fiscal Year 2018 revenues exceeded the benchmark mainly because of non-withheld income and corporate taxes. Non-withheld income tax was $688 million over benchmark, driven by quarterly estimated payments. Corporate tax was $298 million over benchmark. Other taxes, including higher estate tax collections, contributed another $89 million. Together, these three categories account for nearly 95% of the revenue over benchmark. Each of these categories is highly volatile on a year-to-year basis. Fiscal 2018 is highly unusual in that all three categories had positive growth in significant amounts.”

**Discussion and consideration of the FY2020 Legislative Agenda**

Commissioners received spreadsheets with very preliminary budget numbers to begin the discussion of the FY 2020 Legislative Agenda. The Commissioners, Director, and the Head of State Programs identified a number of budget lines that remain underfunded and began discussion about priorities or areas of focus and possible budget requests for each of the line items. Director Lonergan noted that a survey would be sent to the library community asking for their input. Affiliates, Networks, and the Massachusetts Library Association will be asked for their feedback as well and will be invited to attend the September Board Meeting. The Affiliates will also be encouraged to update the Budget Fact Sheets from last year. The Affiliates in attendance at the August Board Meeting, Perkins, MLS, and LFC were invited to participate in the Board discussion.

**7000-9401 State Aid to Regional Libraries  
Massachusetts Library System (MLS)**MLS provides statewide delivery of Interlibrary Loan items patrons request through library networks. This gives residents access to more than 53 million items statewide, saves libraries a total of $55 million each year, and ensures that no matter where a person lives he/she has equal access to library resources.

Without increased funding some delivery stops will be eliminated, hampering efforts to maintain equal access to resources.

**Library for the Commonwealth (LFC)**  
The Boston Public Library (BPL) acts as the Library for the Commonwealth (LFC) and provides all Massachusetts residents with a Boston Public Library card for unrestricted borrowing privileges. Residents have instant access to online services with a BPL e-card, including a broad selection of eBooks, electronic databases, downloadable audio books, music, video, and digital magazines.

Lack of funding to LFC has resulted in:

* An inability for LFC to meet the demand for eBooks and audiobooks. 67% of BPL’s eBook and audiobook usage is from outside of Suffolk County.
* The elimination of vital online resources that benefit the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
* No new outreach and programming efforts to reach those who need the services the most.

**7000-9501 State Aid to Public Libraries**About 98% of the Commonwealth’s libraries participate in this voluntary program which makes statewide sharing of materials possible due to its guarantee of reciprocal borrowing. Libraries can use state aid funds in any way that supports the library.

Lack of State Aid funding is affecting local libraries:

* State funding has not kept up with municipal funding making state aid awards only a fraction of what libraries receive from their local governments.
* Rising costs and lower funding have forced libraries to use state aid funding to simply keep the doors open instead of improvements that benefit their patrons and allow the library to keep pace with changing technologies.

**Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP)**

The MBLC is seeking $200-300million in new bond funding for this successful program. Without it 18 projects that are currently on the MPLCP waitlist will not move forward. The funding would also be used for a new planning and design grant round for an estimated XX communities and a new construction grand round.

The MPLCP provides funding for major capital projects for public library buildings throughout the Commonwealth. More than 200 communities have completed projects with the help of the MPLCP.

**Draft Budget Numbers for Discussion-Preliminary**



+State Aid figure based on 2018 population figure of 6,895,917. <http://worldpopulationreview.com/states/massachusetts-population/>

**Marketing Plan Update**

Matt Perry, Outreach Coordinator presented the following report:

We’ve taken the most visited poster and turned it into social media graphics singling out one popular spot and saying that libraries are visited more. An example I handed out is of the one for Disney World, it says “Busier than the Happiest Place on Earth”. We have several others as well and they have been very popular with libraries.

Summer Reading is in full swing, we have 4 more summer reading visits. Thank you to Commissioner Resnick who came to the events in Lee and Hampden. We’ve also had legislative staff attend the visits in Lee and Attleboro, and we had Representative Brian Ashe attend the event in Hampden.

We are doing the “What’s Your Four” Campaign again this year, and our featured readers are Lt. Governor Polito and Governor Baker.

Governor Baker’s four books are:

* Factory Man: How One Furniture Maker Battled Offshoring, Stayed Local - and Helped Save an American Town by Beth Macy
* Big Blue Days: The Story of a Small‑Town Football Dynasty in Swampscott by Robert E. Jauron
* Montana 1948: A Novel by Larry Watson
* Tangerine by Edward Bloor

Lt. Governor Polito’s four Books are:

* When Character was King by Peggy Noonan
* John Adams by David McCullough
* Boys in the Boat by Daniel James Brown
* The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett

Celeste and I have been assisting with the transition of the eBook program. We’ve created graphics, a webpage, a press release, and blog posts. Conversations are beginning now about how to promote the new platform.

We have a phone call coming up with the JFK library about next summer’s program about the moon landing. We are currently creating posters, booklists, and a web page for this collaboration.

We are also working on a construction fact sheet for the upcoming meetings about the bond renewal.

For the National Book festival, we are sending the Bruins materials, but we’ve also created this poster about immigration because Sharon is having the theme of the booth be about immigration and inclusion. This year, we want to tell an immigrant success story in Richard Michelson's picture-book biography of Leonard Nimoy, FASCINATING.

**Consideration of Certificate of Commendation for Cynthia Dadd, Library Director, Newburyport**

Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs/Government Liaison presented the certificate of commendation for Cynthia Dadd who is retiring after more than forty years with Massachusetts Libraries. Her retirement is August 10, 2018.

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Resnick seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners presents Cynthia Dadd with this certificate in appreciation for more than forty years of exemplary dedication to the public libraries of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, most notably as the Director of the Newburyport Public Library, we hereby offer our most sincere thanks and appreciation for your leadership and service and our congratulations upon the occasion of your retirement.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Consideration of reappointment of Statewide Public Relations Advisory Committee members**

Charlotte Canelli, Director of the Morrill Memorial Library in Norwood; Linda Stetson, Director of Morse Institute Library in Natick; Kirsten Underwood, Head of Reference Services at the Nevins Memorial Library in Methuen, Jason Homer, Assistant Director of the Morse Institute Library in Natick, and Olivia Melo, Director of the New Bedford Public Library, would like to be reappointed to serve on the statewide Public Relations Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Cluggish moved and Commissioner Shesko seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners reappoints: Charlotte Canelli, Director of the Morrill Memorial Library; Linda Stetson, Director of Morse Institute Library; Kirsten Underwood, Head of Reference Services at the Nevins Memorial Library, Jason Homer, Assistant Director of the Morse Institute Library, and Olivia Melo, Director of the New Bedford Public Library to serve on the statewide Public Relations Advisory Committee for a two-year term ending in June, 2020.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**REPORT FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS LIBRARY SYSTEM**

Sarah Sogigian, Interim Director and Consulting and Training Services Director, (MLS) presented the following report:

**Best wishes, Greg!**

MLS Executive Director Greg Pronevitz retired on July 5, 2018. Members and staff sent him off with a farewell celebration graciously hosted by our friends at the Harvard Public Library. Greg received citations from the House of Representatives, the State Senate, and the MA Board of Library Commissioners acknowledging his outstanding commitment to Massachusetts libraries. Congratulations and thank you, Greg!

**MLS Executive Director Search**

After a thorough process, which included several rounds of interviews and feedback from our staff and our members, the Executive Board was not able to successfully fill the role.

While the board is disappointed with the outcome, we are committed to finding the best candidate for this position.

The Executive Board will be meeting in August in Northampton to discuss next steps in this process. In the meantime, we are very fortunate to have Sarah Sogigian acting as Interim Director of MLS.

Sarah’s contact info: 508-357-2121 x311 | sarah@masslibsystem.org

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact a member of the board. Board member contacts are available on our website.

**MLS Annual Meeting**

MLS will host its eighth Annual Meeting on November 5, 2018 at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA. Details and registration information are forthcoming.

**State Minimum Wage Increase**

On June 28, 2018, Governor Baker signed a new bill that will increase the minimum wage to $15.00, in annual increments over the next five years. The first increase will go into effect on January 1, 2019. MLS is currently evaluating the impact that this increase will have on MLS operations.

**Thank you for your support!**

Governor Baker approved the FY19 state budget last week. MLS is pleased to see a modest 2.6% increase to our funding. Many thanks go to our member advocates for helping bring this about.

**Report from Library for the Commonwealth**

Anna Fahey-Flynn, Central Branch Manager submitted the following report:

## Electronic Resource Update

* ​Canceled Career Transitions and Gale Courses due to low usage
* Added Sage’s CQ Researchers, which is similar to Opposing Viewpoints
* Added LawDepot, which allows patrons to create, modify and save hundreds of every-day person and business legal documents

## Manuscript Inventory

* BPL has completed an inventory of the Prints and Rare Book collections and has now started an inventory of BPL’s manuscript collection

## New Hire

* Lisa Pollack, Chief of Communications

## Retroconversion Pilot

* Creating records in the ILS for items in BPL’s stacks has been going on for years with no end in sight. We think this project needs to be a capital project.
* Instead of working from cards, we want to try working directly from the books
* In the pilot we want to measure:
  + Average time needed to catalog book
  + Skill level needed to create simple catalog records
  + Physically count books to get an accurate number of how many items we own

**Standing Committee and Liaison Reports**

Chairman Ochsenbein stated that the List of Liaisons and Standing Committees needs to be updated especially since some committees no longer exist. He asked Commissioners to contact him or Director Lonergan to indicate their interest in serving as liaisons or on a committee.

**COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES**

**Commissioner Kronholm**

* Participated in the Executive Committee Call
* Distributed summer reading prizes with WMLA Board

**Commissioner Resnick**

* Attended Summer Reading Events in Lee and Hampden
* Distributed summer reading prizes with WMLA Board

**Commissioner Cluggish**

* Participated in the Executive Committee Conference Call
* Spoke at the North Dartmouth Groundbreaking.

Commissioner Cluggish received a thank you letter from Lynne Antunes, Dartmouth Director of Libraries.

Commissioner Cluggish read a line from the letter:

“This outcome would not have been possible without the support provided by the MBLC. The town is benefitting from not only the financial support of a Library Construction Grant, but also from the framework put in place by the MBLC and the guidance supplied by MBLC staff members.”

**Commissioner Shesko**

* Attended Gregor Trinkaus-Randall’s Retirement Party at the Archives

**Commissioner Abraham**

* Attended Commissioner Orientation at the MBLC
* Sworn in as a Commissioner

**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 August 2, 2018 monthly business meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners at 12:20 A.M.



Mary Kronholm

Secretary