MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

Date : January 3, 2019

Time : 10:00 A.M.

Place : Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners Offices

Boston, Massachusetts

Present : Roland A. Ochsenbein, Chairman; Mary Ann Cluggish, Vice Chairman; Deb Abraham; Les Ball; Gina Perille; N. Janeen Resnick

Absent : Mary Kronholm, Secretary; Gregory J. Shesko; Alice M. Welch

**Staff Present:**

James Lonergan, Director; Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist; Celeste Bruno, Communications Director; Andrea Bunker, Library Building Specialist; Kate Butler, Electronic Services Specialist; Tracey Dimant, Head of Operations & Budget; Maura Deedy, Library Advisory Specialist; Rob Favini, Head of Library Advisory and Development; Paul Kissman, Library Information Systems Specialist; Evan Knight, Preservation Specialist; 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:**

Colleen Anderson, Library Director, Millville Free Public Library; Colleen Curis, Trustee Chair, Millville Free Public Library; Catherine Halpin, Collaborative Library Services Coordinator, Boston Public Library (BPL) ; Paul Ouellette, Deputy Moderator, Town of Millville; Sarah Sogigian, Interim Director, Massachusetts Library System (MLS)

**Call to Order**

Chairman Ochsenbein called the meeting to order at 10:02 A.M.

**Approval of Minutes: December 6, 2018**

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Abraham seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the minutes for the monthly business meeting on December 6, 2018.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Chairman’s Report**

Chairman Ochsenbein presented the following report:

It’s the start of a new year, a new state legislature was sworn in yesterday, and that means the start of a new legislative budget season. The Governor will file his recommendations for FY 2020 with the House by the end of this month and the process will officially begin, and so from now to end the of June it will be busy.

We have two focus areas this year: our annual operating expenditure requests, and a multi-year capital construction bond request. Agency staff have been busy preparing a series of excellent supporting documents and resources for us and all the library community to use in our advocacy efforts. We have a Legislative Agenda overview sheet that highlights our two operating budget priority requests and also provides a brief overview of the construction program and bond request; we have additional fact sheets for each budget line item; we have an overview fact sheet for the MPLCP construction program; we have project sheets with detail on each construction project currently on the waitlist; and we have a page of talking points about the construction program and bond reauthorization. All of these are available in print or electronic form.

Regarding the construction bond, we are asking selected Commissioners to contact library directors at libraries on the waitlist in an effort to engage supporters in helping with advocacy efforts-by asking the Director, Trustees, Friends, and municipal officials in that community to contact their legislators and the Governor’s Office to let them know how critical passage of the bond is to their community. Those contacts should happen in the next several days and I should think will result in a powerful voice. In December, we sent informational letters and project sheets to all legislators with construction projects in their districts (35 legislators), not only asking for their support directly but providing them background if/when they hear from Library Directors, Trustees, Friends and others on this issue. We also sent a letter and packet of info to Lt. Gov. Polito (who spoke at the 2016 grand opening of the Shrewsbury Public Library, her home town), and Michael Heffernan, Secretary of the Executive Office for Administration and Finance.

Tomorrow, the first Legislative Breakfast of the season is set to be held at Spencer, MA. There are a total of 18 such events scheduled through the end of February, culminating with Legislative Day at the State House set for March 5. Conveniently, many if not most of the breakfasts are to be held at libraries that have been built or expanded under the construction program! I think there are still breakfasts not covered by a Commissioner if you are interested/available.

And so it is a busy time. In other activities, I attended the MLS board member orientation on December 10, and the MBLC Executive Board meeting on the 18.

Finally, on behalf of the Board, I’d like to offer best wishes to Commissioner Shesko for a full and rapid recovery. As many of you know, Commissioner Shesko suffered injuries from a fall early on Christmas morning. After several days in the hospital, he is now home and on the road to recovery. We wish him a speedy return.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Lonergan presented the following report:

Meetings/activities since the last Board meeting:

* December 10—Presented as part of the orientation for new MLS Executive Board members and attended MLS Executive Board monthly meeting
* December 13—MLS Executive Director Search Committee meeting (virtual)
* December 14—MLA Executive Board meeting, Shrewsbury Public Library
* December 14—Retirement event for Debby Conrad, Executive Director of SAILS, Ames Free Library, North Easton
* December 20—COSLA Member Update & Discussion (virtual)

The FY2020 Legislative Agenda and budget line/affiliate fact sheets have been posted to our website: <https://mblc.state.ma.us/about-us/legislative-agenda.php>. Each fact sheet explains why our affiliates and partners are important to the Massachusetts library ecosystem, how lack of funding has affected them, and what they would do with increased funding. Links to the Construction Program fact sheet and the MLS Value of Service webpage are also available at the link above. Fact sheets for each of the projects on the construction waitlist are available on MBLCAware at: <https://awarehouse.mblc.state.ma.us/collateral/official-docs/construction/?format=14>

Internal Control Plan: We have updated our Internal Control Plan to comply with the Office of the State Comptroller’s requirements. We will update the plan annually. A special thanks to Tracey for all her work on this and for keeping managers and staff on task for completing the update by the end of the calendar year.

We were contacted by Rep. Carlos Gonzalez’s office regarding payment of the FY2019 earmark for the Hispanic American Library, Inc. of Springfield from the State Aid to Public Libraries line (7000-9501). The organization is not a public library and is not affiliated with the Springfield City Library or the City of Springfield. In addition, its website doesn’t include information on a program of service or members or officers, and its annual filings with the Secretary of State’s office appear to be out-of-date. The language in the budget for 7000-9501 is specific to public libraries: “…that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, any payment made under this item shall be deposited with the treasurer of the city or town and held in a separate account and shall be expended by the public library of that city or town without appropriation.”  We have been researching how we would provide funding to the Hispanic American Library, since they have no municipal connection.  We contacted Department of Revenue staff and our House and Senate analysts to see if they had any guidance, but they haven’t provided any to date. We will work with Rep. Gonzalez’s office and others to resolve the issues related to this earmark as soon as possible.

The MLSA (Museum and Library Services Act) reauthorization was passed in the Senate and the House and was signed into law by the President on December 31. The revised language includes an increase to the minimum Grants to States allotment from $680K to $1 million, expands eligibility for tribal libraries, and supports disaster preparedness. IMLS has already been funded for FY2019, so it isn’t subject to the current partial federal government shutdown.

The Massachusetts Library Association’s Executive Board has voted to endorse both our FY2020 Legislative Agenda and COSLA’s “$1 Per Capita” initiative. They provided letters of support for both efforts, which I forwarded to the Commissioners on December 17.

We have submitted our FY2017 State Program Report (SPR) to IMLS with detailed narrative, financial, and performance information on how the MBLC and our grantees spent our $3,196,237 FY2017 LSTA Grants to States allotment. Thank you to the many staff members who contributed a great deal of time and effort to preparing the 45 project reports in this year’s SPR.

The Stoughton Public Library held their grand opening on Saturday, December 15. Commissioner Ball, a former Stoughton resident, spoke at the event. Stoughton renovated and expanded the original 22,000 square foot 1969 library building to over 38,000 square feet. The new library was completed with a $6,875,844 construction grant from the MBLC, which was roughly half the $14.5 million total project cost.

LSTA: We received 50 letters of intent for the new Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant round. We updated “Health Literacy” and renamed it “Health and Wellness” to better reflect the grant’s scope. This year we introduced one new grant, “Strength in Families.” Here is the breakdown:

* Civic Hub – 6
* Health and Wellness – 6
* Idea Lab – 6
* Citizenship Corner and Expanded English Language Services – 4
* Financial Literacy for All Ages – 4
* Preservation Assessment – 4
* Go Local – 3
* Serving Tweens and Teens – 3
* Access for All – 2
* Anytime STEM Learning – 2
* Conserving and Digitizing Library and Archival Material – 2
* Mind in the Making  - 2
* Strength in Families – 1

The amount of funding requested totals $518,300; we have budgeted $500,000 for the grant round.

This year’s LSTA grant writing workshops have been announced. Library Advisory and Development consultants will be holding 3 in-person sessions (Lakeville 1/9; Boxborough 1/10; and Springfield 1/17) and one virtual meeting (TBD). These sessions are an important first step in the LSTA grant application process. The sessions will review procedures and best practices in LSTA grant writing and grant management.

Maura Deedy has secured our keynote speaker for the upcoming Trustee Institute.  Kathi Kromer, Head of ALA’s Washington Office will speak on the topic of advocacy. The institute is scheduled for Saturday, April 27 and will take place in Central Massachusetts. We are finalizing arrangements with a venue; once that is set promotion will begin.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

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

The 191st General Court was sworn in on January 2, 2019. Karen Spilka was again elected Senate President and Robert DeLeo was reelected Speaker of the House, making him the longest continually serving Speaker in state history. The Governor, Lt. Governor, and state wide officers will be sworn in later today (January 3). According to the Speaker, the Ways and Means Chairmanship and other House Leadership positions will not be settled for several weeks.

Total Tax collections for the December mid-month-to-date period were $965 million, up $128 million or 15.3% versus the same period in December 2017. Income Taxes totaled $641 million, up $114 million or 21.6% versus the same period in December 2017. Sales & Use Tax collections were $80 million, up $4 million or 6.0% versus the same period in December 2017. Corporate & Business Taxes were $175 million, down $4 million versus the same period in December 2017. Other Taxes totaled $70 million, up $14 million versus the same period in December 2017.

State budget leaders agreed on their fiscal year 2020 budget figures on the assumption that state tax revenues will grow by 2.7 percent over the current fiscal year. The estimate of $29.299 billion in tax revenues for fiscal 2020 amounts to $770 million more in revenue than the updated projection for the current fiscal year. The projected growth rate will serve as the basis for the Governor’s budget, which is due on Jan. 23, and budget-building exercises this spring and summer in the House and Senate. The 2.7 percent growth figure assumes the state income tax rate will drop from 5.05 percent to 5 percent on Jan. 1, 2020. The reduction will have a $175 million impact on the state over a complete fiscal year. The state budget, which totals about $41.7 billion this fiscal year, is supplemented by federal revenues along with non-tax revenues like fees. Neither the fiscal 2019 revenue estimate adjustment nor the fiscal 2020 estimate includes projections of marijuana revenue. The Department of Revenue is still predicting that Massachusetts will collect between $44 million and $82 million in marijuana taxes this fiscal year and could see as much as $172 million in fiscal year 2020.

There are eighteen Legislative Breakfasts scheduled between January 4 (Spencer) and March 22 (Amherst), including one lunch (Mashpee). MBLC handouts include the Legislative Agenda, Construction fact sheet with the waitlisted libraries, and the funding organizational chart. The Fact Sheets for the lines and affiliates and a link to the Project Sheets for the waitlisted libraries can be found on the MBLC Legislative Page.

MBLC Commissioners and Staff will be meeting with the Legislative Library Caucus Co-Chairs after the breakfasts in their Districts. Representative Brian Murray will be speaking at the breakfast in Webster, Representative Natalie Higgins will address her hometown library in Leominster, and Senator Eric Lesser will host the breakfast in Longmeadow. The Caucus co-chairs have received an Agenda, the Construction Fact Sheet and an example of the project sheet to a library close to their respective districts along with a letter explaining our operating and capital budget needs for 2020.

In the next several days, Commissioners on the Construction Committee, and those with construction projects in their areas, will be reaching out to library directors with waitlisted projects to discuss with them the next steps in their outreach to legislators, local officials, trustees and Friends, and the Governor’s office. Each Commissioner has received talking points and a spreadsheet with the names and contact information for the Library Director and Trustee Chair for each of their respective waitlisted libraries. The Library Project Sheets, the Bond Bill Fact Sheet, and the other materials related to the 2020 Legislative Agenda can be accessed through links on the MBLC Legislative Agenda page.

The Massachusetts Municipal Association Trade Show and Convention is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, January 18 and 19. This is a great opportunity to speak with local officials about statewide services and programs benefitting their local libraries, especially Construction and State Aid. For the Commissioners who will be contacting the waitlisted libraries, please have the library director invite their municipal officials to visit the MBLC booth at the Convention to discuss the Construction Program in more detail.

MLA/MSLA Legislative Day is scheduled for Tuesday, March 5. The Library Caucus Co-Chairs will be asked to speak at the two briefing sessions and at the first time attendee event.

**Consideration of approval of municipalities meeting the requirements for the FY2019 State Aid to Public Libraries Program based on eligibility established in The FY2019 Municipal Appropriation Requirement and in the FY2018 for the minimum standards**

Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist presented for certification 22 municipalities meeting the requirements for FY2019 State Aid to Public Libraries program.

Ms. Babbitt 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 $210,329.19.

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Cluggish seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners certifies that the communities presented in agenda item six have met minimum standards of free public library service and awards each a FY2019 Library Incentive Grant, a FY2019 Municipal Equalization Grant and a FY2019 Nonresident Circulation offset in the indicated amounts, totaling $210,329.19, and authorizes any additional FY2019 State Aid to Public Libraries disbursements that may be possible toward the end of the grant cycle.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Review of municipalities requesting waivers for the fy2019 municipal appropriation requirement in the fy2019 state aid to public libraries program within the 5% threshold**

Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs presented 17 libraries that were petitioning the Board for a Waiver of the MAR that were below the five percent threshold set by the Board for not being disproportionately cut in relationship to other departments within their municipality. These 17 municipalities are Adams, Attleboro, Fairhaven, Fall River, Greenfield, Haverhill, Lawrence, Longmeadow, Malden, Millville, Newbury, North Adams, Palmer, Somerset, Ware, Warren, and Yarmouth.

Board will vote on waivers at the February 7, 2019 meeting.

**Review and presentation of petition for a waiver of the municipal appropriation requirement for the FY2019 State Aid to Public Libraries Program above the 5% threshold**

Paul R. Ouellette, Town of Millville presented the following report:

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my plea on behalf of the Millville Library. The request for waiver is due to the financial crisis that had been plaguing Millville for many years. There was not one particularly defining moment in the downturn of the town’s budget, but more of a slow bleed over the last decade or more. With back to back recessions leading to insufficient growth in state aid, as well as an archaic school funding formula, it led to the spending down of Millville’s reserves.

Millville has worked closely with the DOR over the last few years to identify inefficiencies and following a DLS report began to institute these changes. The DOR has confirmed that we are moving in the right direction to repair the damage.

If I had to identify a specific catalyst to the reduction of funding to the library, I would say it was the defeat of a Proposition 2 ½ override vote. The finance committee, of which I was the chairman at the time, in the early spring, presented two budgets to the townspeople. Our budget that was contingent upon the passage of the override was fiscally responsible and included plans to build stabilization, work towards funding outlying liabilities and maintain the level of services that the taxpayers expect and are accustomed to. As the finance committee, we had multiple public meetings and information sessions to reinforce the point the override was prudent to the survival of the town and its services. Our second budget was never intended to be anything other than ‘how bad it will get otherwise’. The non-override budget removed all stipends to boards and committees, town wide trash collection, senior center and library funding , half of the streetlights, and showed reductions to town hall staff, fire department staff, and police staff.

Unfortunately the Library was collateral damage in all this drama, as there are a majority of townspeople, due to non-use, that do not see the value that the library adds to the community.

While I understand that removing certification would be a tool to encourage the townspeople to reinstate the funding to the library, it places us in a difficult situation because appropriation to any budgetary items can only happen at one of our semi-annual town meetings.

I would be remiss if I did not plead to the Commissioners for a reprieve from decertification at least equal to the time between now and our next town meeting. Millville has never received a waiver of any kind in the past, and while I understand the optics of the situation if one is granted, I believe tabling the decision until we attempt to get our house in order would not jeopardize your board’s credibility in any way.

This year is a speedbump for Millville. With the departure of our town administrator of two years, resignation of many of our various board and committee members, and the loss of many of our services, the townspeople are looking for changes and improvements to be made. We have a brand new Finance Committee that has not been in place long enough to understand how our budget is derived, nor have they developed the value judgement necessary for municipal budget recommendations. Once again the town was forced to use one-time revenue to balance our budget, even with the drastic cuts. The Selectmen, and hopefully Town Administrator at some point, have the authority and responsibility to set another override election in the hopes of raising our revenue to cover our current deficit and reinstitute our lost town services. Our anticipated economic development, currently in the works, once it takes effect, will carry us forward with sustainability into the future.

I love this little town. I have raised my children here, and my grandchildren are avid users of the Library in town. I have seen a great outpouring of support from the townspeople of Millville over the last few months. I was honored to come before the Board of Library Commissioners to advocate for this valuable service.

Colleen Anderson, Director, Millville Free Public Library submitted the following Petition for a Waiver of the FY2019 Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR):

* **What efforts were made to meet the MAR?**  
  The town administration put forth an override proposal in May 2018 to continue funding for critical town departments including the library, the senior center, and the police/fire departments. Despite efforts by the librarians and library trustees to show their support for the override, it was defeated.
* **Are there any extenuating circumstances about which the Commissioners should be aware?**

No, this was the result of a gradual spending down of the town’s financial reserves.

* **Why should your municipality be granted a waiver of the FY2019 MAR?**

Despite the citizen’s lack of support for the override, strong library support has developed as shown by the formation over the past 6 months of a strong Friends of the Library group that has already raised $3,500 for the library. This group is led by a very dynamic leader and there is promise that the Friends group will be an ongoing source of financial and service support. Also, Millville’s elementary school does not currently have a librarian to run their library. Students are sent to pick out a book at their teacher’s discretion. The Millville Free Public Library has an extensive children’s collection and a librarian to assist children visiting the library. The public library provides strong literacy support for Millville’s elementary school students.

* **How have library services been affected by reductions in the library’s budget? In particular, hours of service and expenditures of materials, programs, and staffing.**

The library hours worked by the Director have been reduced from 15 to 8 hours (2 afternoons) and the library’s evening hours (Wed, 6-8) have been eliminated. This is particularly distressing because most of our patrons work and appreciated having one day when the library was open to them after work. Also, all of the salaries (librarian and 2 staff members) have been paid for by the non-tax based revenues & savings from the library’s reserve fund. Materials purchased have been slashed and paid for out of the same non-tax based revenues & savings from the reserve fund. We also had 2 groups of children who raised over $400 out of lemonade stands to help us purchase materials! Lastly, the only library programs we have been able to hold have been paid for from funding from the Millville Cultural Council and the library’s new Friends group.

* **Is the library currently meeting the hours open requirement and will the library be able to meet the materials expenditure requirement during this fiscal year?**The library has been careful to keep the library hours at 13.5 to meet the hours open requirement. We have stretched staff to make this happen. The library will not be able to meet the materials expenditure requirement during this fiscal year, despite help from the Friends and taking funds out of the non-tax based revenues & savings from the library’s reserve fund.
* **Is the library planning to increase library funding in the next year to meet the MAR? If not, what are the short and long term funding goals for the library over the next 2 to 3 years?**

The town accountant has asked the Library Director for our funding requests for the 2020 budget as if the library will remain open. The final decision will be in the hands of the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee. The library Trustees and Director are both hoping that the Municipality will increase library funding in the next year to meet the MAR. If the funding does not come through, the library will continue to spend down money in the non-tax based revenues & savings reserve fund and draw on funding from the library’s Friends group to keep the library open as long as possible.

**Consideration to establish a state aid advisory group to provide ongoing input and recommendations to mblc staff on the state aid to public libraries program**

BACKGROUND

The State Aid Unit is in the process of implementing the changes to the State Aid to Public Libraries Program recommended over the last couple of years by the State Aid Review Committee that reviewed the Program as a whole and by the Task Force that followed which focused on the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR) Waiver statute, regulations, policies, and procedures.

The MBLC typically only conducts a complete review of the State Aid to Public Library Program every five to seven years. However, changes to the library landscape are ongoing and occur more frequently than can be addressed by our current periodic review schedule.

Rather than wait several more years to review the Program in its entirety, the State Aid Unit requests that the Board establish an Advisory Committee, somewhat similar to SACL, made up of library directors from across the state that will provide advice and make recommendations on the various components that make up the State Aid to Public Libraries Program.

This advisory committee will give the MBLC and the State Aid Unit the opportunity to review, on an ongoing basis, those parts of the State Aid Program (regulations and policies) that have not kept pace with the rapid changes in library technology, programs, services, and collections.

The State Aid Advisory Committee will not take the place of the Board /Staff Committee, but rather, will work as an adjunct to the Committee. This new group will advise the State Aid Unit on current trends in public libraries and will review, with Unit Staff, the regulations, policies, and procedures that support the Program.

**CHARGE:**

The State Aid Advisory Committee will:

* Advise the State Aid Unit on current trends in Public Libraries in Massachusetts and across the country
* Review statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures regarding the Minimum Standards of Free Library Services (605 CMR 4.00) including the Certification and training of librarians (605 CMR 3.00)
* Provide input to MBLC Staff on data collection with regard the Annual Report (ARIS) and to outputs and outcomes reporting generated from the data gathered
* Review, test, and provide feedback on new forms, survey questions and definitions, surveys, reports, procedures, and programs used and generated by State Aid prior to distribution to the library community
* In this advisory role, the Committee is expected to make recommendations that assist the MBLC in maintaining a Program that is fair, flexible, and relevant.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP: (Confirmed)**

NAME POSITION LIBRARY

Deb Kern Director Northfield, Dickinson Memorial

Sharon Kelleher Director North Reading Public Library, Flint Memorial

Patrick Marshall Director Bourne, Jonathan Bourne Public Library

Susan Edmonds Director Milford Public Library

Cynthia Cullen Director Dennis Public Library

Ann Wirtanen Director Winchester Public Library

Beth Kramer Director West Tisbury Public Library

Jessi Finnie Director Scituate Public Library

Jim Keenan Library Applications Supervisor, CW-MARS

Mary Kronholm MBLC Commissioner, MBLC Board Liaison

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Cluggish seconded to establish a State Aid Advisory Committee and to approve the Charge for the Committee and its Membership as detailed in agenda number eight as amended.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Consideration of approval for the FY2020 Plan of Service and Program and Budget for the Massachusetts Library system and Monthly Report**

Commissioner Perille moved and Commissioner Resnick seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the FY2020 Plan of Service and Program and budget filed on November 14, 2018 for the Massachusetts Library System, with a bottom line of $7,675,756 as presented in agenda item 9.

Sarah Sogigian, Interim Executive Director presented the following report:

**Annual Meeting**

145 MLS members and guests attended the MLS 2018 Annual Meeting at the College of the Holy Cross. Thank you for joining us!

At the Annual Meeting, the Council of Members approved our FY 2020 Budget and Plan of Service and elected the following new board members:

* Anne Meringolo, New England Historic Genealogical Society
* Joseph Rodio, South Hadley Public Library
* Kathryn Geoffrion Scannell, Merrimack College

Our keynote from Lisa Lucas, Executive Director of the National Book Foundation, remarks by Rep. Natalie Higgins (Library Caucus Co-Chair) and our Project SET presentations were very well received.

Selected comments from our event evaluation:

“HOORAY MLS! Lisa Lucas is a dynamo mover and shaker in the book world, and I was thrilled to hear from her. She is brilliant, witty, wonderfully opinionated and passionate about books. Thank you so much for bringing such a NAME to the Annual Meeting. I could have listened to her all day long.”

“[Natalie Higgins], the library co-chair legislator from Leominster, was terrific and inspiring.”

“This year's [Project SET] presentations were really excellent. They triggered all sort of

good ideas for me to bring back to my library.”

Attendees also appreciated hearing from MBLC and MLA Legislative Committee.

Project SET participant information, presentations, and general program info is available in our Resource Guide.

**Outgoing MLS Board Members**

The MLS staff and executive board extends our gratitude and best wishes to outgoing board members:

* Henry Toromoreno, Manuel Epstein Library Media Center, Haverhill High School (MLS Past President)
* Ellen MJ Keane, O’Leary Library, UMASS Lowell
* Jackie Rafferty, Paul Pratt Memorial Library, Cohassett

**Membership News**

MLS welcomed two new members, three returning members and four new library directors in October. No membership changes occurred in November:

**New Members**

Marathon Elementary School, Hopkinton

Swallow Union Elementary School, Dunstable

**Returning Members**

Florence Roche Elementary School, Groton

Lowell Community Charter Public School, Lowell Point

Webster Middle School, Quincy

**New Directors**

Jane Buchanan, Buckland Public Library, Buckland

Van Pervaiz, Charlestown High School, Charlestown

Jeanne McCullough, Friends Academy, North Dartmouth

Stephanie Maher, Palmer Public Library, Palmer

**Advocacy Committee Activities**

Committee members Will Adamczyk, Amy Lewontin and Stephen Spohn met with Representative Jonathan Hecht and his counsel in October and Senator John Keenan in December.

**Emerging Online Products RFI Task Force Update**

In October, the task force met to review submissions to (1) the Digital Library Products IFB released by MHEC and (2) the Emerging Online Products RFI released by MLS. The task force has completed its recommendations for the new MHEC contract awards, and MHEC plans to have the new contracts in place by January 2.

In addition, the task force brainstormed possible projects related to the RFI responses. MLS is following-up with the following vendors/products to discuss:

* Credo Reference
* Niche Academy
* Recorded Books (Hoonuit)
* Scholastic Library Publishing
* SimplyAnalytics

**Commonwealth eBook Collections Content Transfer**

MLS staff is following-up with publishers that either did not authorize transfer of content from Axis 360 to OverDrive or who failed to respond to OverDrive’s initial outreach. 1,491 items did not transfer, roughly $45,000 in value. So far, MLS has successfully restored access to 151 items through this effort, with an additional 58 in process.

So far, we have had two requests denied, from Capstone and Rosen. MLS has discontinued purchasing titles from those publishers as we will do for any publisher that denies content transfers.

There are many more publishers left to approach in this effort. Once completed, we will prepare a report for the board and share information nationally with other partners so they are aware of the outcomes of our efforts to reach out to publishers and especially aware of publishers that do not authorize content transfers.

**MVLC Collection Development Project Plan**

MLS Consultant Anna Popp worked with staff at the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC) on a weeding project that served all MVLC libraries. This collaboration is a fine example of how MLS and the networks, operating independently and in parallel for the benefit of shared members, can combine forces to achieve goals that are beneficial to MLS, MVLC, and the library members of both organizations.

**MLS Listening Tours**

Join MLS and your colleagues for lively discussion and updates, and to lend your voice to MLS priorities at one of our listening tour stops this January. Participants will learn about MLS in this year’s library legislative agenda and how to access materials that showcase the value of MLS to their libraries and their municipalities.

Full details, including dates and locations, can be found on our event calendar.

**Legislative Breakfasts**

Legislative Breakfasts are once again being planned across the state. Check the MLA calendar for updated information. Thank you to the libraries, groups, and sponsors of this year’s breakfasts!

**Presentation and discussion of the FY2020 Plan of Service and Program and Budget for the Library for the Commonwealth and Monthly Report**

Catherine Halpin, Collaborative Library Services Coordinator presented the Program and Budget.

The budget we are submitting is level-funded at $2,606,384. A significant increase in our budget can be seen in the Contractual Services line. This is due to our new hosted website at www.bpl.org. The new website is helping our patrons find programs and book lists that were hidden in the old website, therefore increasing patron engagement and circulation of materials. The website also highlights educational resources that the Library for the Commonwealth program helps to fund.

We strongly support MBLC FY20 legislative agenda to support the approval of the proposed 12% increase. An increase to this budget would allow us to maintain access to online research and educational resources for residents across the Commonwealth, increase the hours of operation for remote reference, and continue the work started in our FY19 retro-conversion pilot, which works to make hidden collections visible and accessible by the public.

As in recent years, we do request that the personnel costs for the two developer positions and the Statewide Metadata Coordinator working on the Digital Commonwealth project be over and above the 50% personnel costs allowed in the LFC budget.

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

* The Content Discovery team, led by Tom Blake, began preliminary work to import Rare Books inventory data into BPL’s Polaris ILS. (BPL completed inventory last year in preparation for Rare Books renovation.) When project is complete, over 237,000 items in the Rare Books collection will have brief records in the online catalog. These will be very simple MARC records initially.
* On December 12 we launched one-on-one research appointments. Even with academic break and holidays, we have had 8 people sign up. We are hoping if there is interest, that research appointments will be made via telephone and are exploring other remote appointment options.
* The Interlibrary Loan team hosted an idea sharing day with the Interlibrary Loan staff from the Massachusetts Library System. They spent time sharing resources and best practices and toured the Digitization Lab at the Central Library.
* First Night – thousands of people came for events at the Central Library on the afternoon of New Year’s Eve. Children’s puppet theatre, arts & crafts activities, dance & music performances, improv comedy, and ice sculptures were all very popular and lots of families were in attendance.

**Standing Committee and Liaison Reports**

**COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES**

Commissioner Resnick

* Attended the WMLA Board Meeting

Commissioner Cluggish

* Attended MLTA Meeting in November in Shrewsbury

Commissioner Ball

* Spoke at Stoughton’s dedication
* Met with Scituate’s Board of Trustees
* December 17 attended honorary swearing in at the State House

Commissioner Perille

* Visited the Coolidge Corner Branch of Brookline Public Library

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Perille seconded to adjourn the January 3, 2019 monthly business meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners at 12:08 PM.



Mary Kronholm

Secretary