MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

Date : August 1, 2019

Time : 10:00 A.M.

Place : Perkins School for the Blind, Grousbeck Center

Watertown, Massachusetts

Present : Roland A. Ochsenbein, Chairman; Mary Ann Cluggish, Vice Chairman; Mary Kronholm, Secretary; Deb Abraham; Les Ball; Stacy DeBole; Philip Madell, Esq.; Gina Perille; N. Janeen Resnick

**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; Lyndsay Forbes, Project Manager and Grants Specialist; Paul Kissman, Library Information Systems Specialist; Evan Knight, Preservation Specialist; Rachel Masse, Assistant to the Director; Shelley Quezada, Consultant to the Unserved; Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs / Government Liaison; Lauren Stara, Library Building Specialist

**Observers Present:**

Kim Charlson, Library Director, Perkins School Library; Anna Fahey- Flynn, Central Library Manager, Boston Public Library (BPL); Catherine Halpin, Collaborative Library Services Coordinator, Boston Public Library (BPL); Scott Kehoe, Senior Manager for Resource Sharing, Massachusetts Library System (MLS) Krista McLeod, Board Member, Massachusetts Center for the Book (MCB); Lisa Pollack, Chief of Communications, Boston Public Library (BPL); Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director, Massachusetts Center for the Book (MCB)

**Call to Order**

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

**Approval of Minutes: July 11, 2019**

* Page 6, line 22 eliminate the first “the”
* Page 2- Princeton is misspelled

Commissioner Madell moved and Commissioner Ball seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the minutes for the monthly business meeting on July 11, 2019 as amended.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Chairman’s Report**

Chairman Ochsenbein presented the following report:

It is so nice to be here for our annual visit to Perkins! Thank you for the hospitality.

Yesterday, Governor Baker signed off on the FY2020 budget with no changes or vetoes. This is great news for libraries in Massachusetts! Six of the seven MBLC FY2020 budget lines were funded at or greater than the legislative agenda request amounts. I don’t believe this has ever happened. A huge thank you to all of the library community for your advocacy and informational efforts­—fellow Commissioners, MLA Legislative Committee, MLA membership, library administrators, trustees, friends groups, all who have pushed for adequate funding for our libraries. Thank you to the governor and legislators for recognizing the value of libraries to communities throughout the Commonwealth, large and small. Thank you especially to the library caucus and co-chairs Representatives Natalie Higgins and Brian Murray, and Senator Eric Lesser. Finally, thank you to Director Lonergan and the MBLC staff for all the guidance, informational communications, and support materials critical to the effort.

That was yesterday. Today we begin work on preparing our FY2021 legislative agenda!

Following the July Board Meeting, I attended a meeting of the Construction Team to review the status of a requested new bond authorization and to discuss a course of action with regard to both the amount of the authorization (we have requested $250 million and the current draft includes $100 million) and the cap (we have requested an increase from $20 to $25 million for the annual cap). We will be discussing this in detail in the Director’s Report and Legislative Report sections of today’s agenda. It does appear that we will have need for a legislative effort that will take the form of either: 1) pushing for an amendment to the amount in the current draft authorization; or 2) submitting an additional request possibly next year. As you know, a $100 million authorization will likely only allow us to complete those projects on the current waiting list and conduct a planning and design grant round. We would not be able to conduct another construction grant round until additional funds were available. Libraries in more than three dozen cities and towns have expressed interest in applying for construction funds in the next grant round. We also discussed the possibility of making modifications to the program to address concerns heard from the Executive Office For Administration and Finance.

Finally, on behalf of the Commissioners, Director Lonergan, and all the staff of the MBLC, I’d like to congratulate our host today, Kim Charlson, Executive Director of the Perkins Braille and Talking Book Library, for receiving the **Francis Joseph Campbell Award**. This award was presented by the Association of Specialized, Government, and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASGCLA) on June 22, 2019, at the ALA Annual Conference in Washington. The award recognizes Ms. Charlson’s “strong commitment to inclusion and empowerment, her tireless efforts on the passage of the Marrakesh Treaty for the Visually Impaired, and her life-long passion for bringing the joy of reading to all.” Congratulations, well deserved!

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Lonergan presented the following report:

Meetings/activities since the last Board meeting:

* June 11—Construction Team meeting, MBLC Office
* July 15—MLS Executive Board meeting, Northampton
* July 23—Meetings with IMLS Senior Program Officer Michele Farrell and staff, MBLC Office
* July 24—COSLA webinar: “The Year Ahead for the ALA Office of Public Policy and Advocacy”
* July 25—MBLC/IMLS Site Visit to Reading Public Library for Town-wide Preservation Assessment project team meeting
* July 29—Summer Reading events at Memorial Hall Library in Andover and Melrose Public Library

While not yet final, we received excellent news from the House/Senate Conference Committee regarding our **FY2020 operating budget**. The Committee chose the higher of the House or Senate numbers for our budget lines that were in conference, and added $1 million to line 7000-9506 Library Technology and Resource Sharing, despite both chambers having already agreed on funding this line at our legislative request level. The Center for the Book received level-funding for FY2020. The Governor has until this Friday to either approve or veto the entire budget or specific line items, after which the legislature may consider overrides.

We have been told that a member of the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight has placed a hold on **H.3687**, which includes $100 million for public library construction. Once the bill is no longer being held, we will work with Reps. Higgins and Murray and their colleagues to have the bill amended to include a higher amount for the MPLCP. If we are unsuccessful in amending the current bond bill, we will work with the Library Legislative Caucus co-chairs to file a bond bill during this fiscal year.

**IMLS Site Visit**: Michele Farrell, our IMLS program officer, conducted an official monitoring site visitto the MBLC from July 22-25. IMLS program officers conduct visits to each state/territory at least once in a five-year cycle to review program procedures, documentation, and financial activity, and to visit IMLS-funded projects and highlight exemplary grants. We’d like to thank the following libraries/library directors and staff for hosting visits with Michele and MBLC staff:

* Boston Public Library (David Leonard): David and colleagues gave an update on digitization services and the Digital Commonwealth and provided a tour and discussion of the recent Johnson Building renovations.
* Shrewsbury Public Library (Ellen Dolan): Ellen and staff discussed their very successful Memory Café program that brings together dementia and Alzheimer patients and their caregivers for weekly programming at the library. Michele and MBLC staff also met with participants of the program.
* Bellingham Public Library (Bernadette Rivard): Michele and MBLC staff were able to take part in the library’s Camp Millionaire game targeted to pre-teen participants. This was just one of many LSTA funded programs designed to increase the financial literacy of all ages in the community.
* Reading Public Library (Amy Lannon): We observed the wrap-up meeting for the participants in their Town-Wide Preservation grant. The Library coordinated the assessment of collections from the library, town hall and local historical cultural institutions. The meeting consisted of a review by a preservation specialist from the Northeast Document Conservation Center who performed the assessments.
* Somerville Public Library (Cathy Piantigini): Michele and MBLC staff visited the centerpiece of Somerville Public Library’s Food for Thought Urban Gardening Initiative: two raised gardens on the library’s lawn. This grant brought together a number of community partners to build the garden and provide a number of programs relating to food literacy.

The **Fall 2019 Trustee Orientation** schedule is as follows (all from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.):

* Wednesday, September 25, 2019  
  Sudbury, Goodnow Public Library
* Wednesday, October 9, 2019  
  Westfield Athenaeum
* Wednesday, October 16, 2019  
  Chelmsford Public Library
* Wednesday, October 30, 2019  
  Williamstown, David and Joyce Milne Public Library
* Tuesday, November 5, 2019   
  Middleborough Public Library

Planning is underway for the **Massachusetts Library Trustees Association** annual meeting and program that will take place on November 16 at the Shrewsbury Public Library. The program will feature a panel on roles and responsibilities among directors, trustees, friends and foundation with crowd sourced scenarios for panelists to discuss. Another topic will be the role for libraries in the 2020 Census.

**Summer Reading**: We are in the final stretch of our summer reading events with the Bruins. On Monday we held events at the Memorial Hall Library in Andover in the morning and at the Melrose Public Library in the afternoon, and are holding an event with Martha’s Vineyard’s public libraries on Wednesday. Special guests included Senator Barry Finegold and Rep. Frank Moran in Andover and First Lady Lauren Baker, Zach Senyshyn of the Providence Bruins, and Commissioner Cluggish in Melrose. A big thank you to the Bruins, to the libraries that hosted our summer reading events and to Celeste, Matt, Rachel, Lyndsay, Lauren, Andrea, Liz, and any other staff and Commissioners who helped organize and have participated in the summer reading program events this year.

**MPLCP**: The Monterey Public Library has set their dedication for Saturday, August 17at noon. Commissioner Kronholm is scheduled to speak at the event.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

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

Great news for the MBLC budget lines in the Final FY 2020 budget. The Ways and Means Conference Committee completed its work on July 22, reporting out a $43.3 billion budget which was approved in the same week with separate votes by the House and Senate. Governor Charlie Baker signed the budget on July 31 without vetoes. The FY 2020 State Budget funds four of the seven MBLC lines at the level requested in the Legislative Agenda\*, level funds one line, and increases two lines above the MBLC requested amounts. State Aid to Regional Libraries, State Aid to Public Libraries\*, and the Talking Book Libraries at Worcester and Perkins lines were funded to the Legislative Agenda request and the Center for the Book was level funded again this year. While the Agency administration line received a slight increase over the requested budget, the Technology and Resource sharing line was given an additional $1 million above the MBLC request. The MBLC budget lines (without earmarks) total $30,332,228, an increase of $3,353,339 over FY2019 and only $4.3 million below the 2001 high.

The following chart provides the figures for all MBLC budget lines as approved by the House and the Senate and signed by the Governor.

  
\* State Aid to Public Libraries included $158,000 in local project earmarks above the Legislative Agenda funding totals.

FY2020 State Budget, the General Appropriations Act (<https://budget.digital.mass.gov/b>) is summarized in the chart below. The MBLC budget is included with the independent agencies.

| **GOVERNMENT AREA** | **FY2017 GAA** | **FY2018 GAA** | **FY2019 GAA** | **FY2019 Projected** | **FY2020 GAA** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [**Judiciary**](https://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2020/app_20/sect_20/hh030.htm) | 859,851 | 878,145 | 985,143 | 1,009,865 | 1,034,263 |
| [**Independents**](https://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2020/app_20/ga_20/hhnon.htm) | 4,553,442 | 4,520,049 | 4,645,961 | 5,713,975 | 4,792,652 |
| [**Administration and Finance**](https://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2020/app_20/sect_20/hh110.htm) | 3,314,937 | 3,496,093 | 3,504,890 | 3,332,111 | 3,592,440 |
| [**Tech Services and Security**](https://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2020/app_20/sect_20/hhtss.htm) | 16,676 | 13,863 | 36,259 | 36,179 | 37,460 |
| [**Energy & Environmental Affairs**](https://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2020/app_20/sect_20/hh200.htm) | 236,135 | 236,684 | 257,915 | 261,631 | 293,966 |
| [**Health and Human Services**](https://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2020/app_20/sect_20/hh450.htm) | 21,024,779 | 21,690,283 | 22,592,445 | 22,961,186 | 23,304,835 |
| [**Transportation**](https://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2020/app_20/sect_20/hh600.htm) | 607,781 | 520,146 | 583,315 | 590,231 | 573,482 |
| [**Housing & Economic Development**](https://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2020/app_20/sect_20/hh920.htm) | 505,660 | 523,634 | 570,305 | 586,154 | 618,311 |
| [**Labor & Workforce Development**](https://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2020/app_20/sect_20/hh931.htm) | 47,154 | 46,869 | 51,516 | 57,036 | 68,824 |
| [**Education**](https://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2020/app_20/ga_20/hhed1.htm) | 6,949,763 | 7,101,123 | 7,451,791 | 7,493,352 | 7,929,886 |
| [**Public Safety**](https://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2020/app_20/sect_20/hh800.htm) | 1,063,902 | 1,100,828 | 1,133,798 | 1,175,845 | 1,268,116 |
| [**Legislature**](https://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2020/app_20/sect_20/hh950.htm) | 69,182 | 69,182 | 69,970 | 70,957 | 75,701 |
| **TOTAL** | **39,249,262** | **40,196,899** | **41,883,308** | **43,288,522** | **43,589,938** |

In addition to the funding available to support libraries in the MBLC budget lines, the Secretary of the Commonwealth, Bill Galvin, has $2.5 million available to assist the 2020 Census through grants to libraries and other organizations. Details about the grants will be available through the Secretary’s office in the fall. MBLC staff met with Mass Voter Table to discuss this funding and to share ideas about promoting the importance of the Decennial Census.

The Construction Bond Bill, [H.3687](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H3687) An Act financing the general governmental infrastructure of the Commonwealth, remains in the Joint Committee on State Administration and Oversight which is chaired by Rep. Danielle Gregoire and Sen. Mark Pacheco. The MBLC will be working with the Library Caucus Co-Chairs, the House Leadership and appropriate Committee Chairs, and the Massachusetts Municipal Association to determine next steps to secure additional funding for the Construction Program through an amendment to H.3687.

In addition to the $100 million for library construction funding, the Bond Bill includes $20 million for municipalities to improve fiber connectivity in their buildings, $10 million for municipality grants through the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD), and $30 million for municipal IT grant programs “to assist communities with modernizing their technology systems so that they may deliver services to their residents more effectively.”

Preliminary revenue collections for June totaled $3.184 billion, which is $46 million or 1.5% more than the actual collections in June 2018 and $151 million or 5.0% above the June benchmark. For Fiscal Year 2019 that ended in June, revenue collections were $29.693 billion, $1.1 billion or 3.8% above benchmark. This is an increase of $1.916 billion or 6.9% over the actual amount collected in Fiscal Year 2018. Fiscal Year 2019 revenues exceeded the benchmark mainly because of volatile non-withheld income such as corporate taxes, estate taxes, and capital gains. Most of the additional revenue has already been transferred into the rainy day fund.

**Planning for Library Accessibility: A Guide for Meeting the Needs of Patrons who are Blind or Visually Impaired**

Kim Charlson, Library Director, Perkins School Library and Shelley Quezada, Consultant to the Unserved presented the Planning for Library Accessibility Guide.

Since July 26 , 1990, when the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law, U.S. public libraries have had an obligation to provide access to the physical library building, and to the programs and services within , to people with all types of disabilities , including those with vision loss or blindness. Today, the public expects that when individuals with a disability visit a library and ask about a particular service, they will be assisted. But, how can a librarian know all the answers for all types of disability questions and accommodations? Of course, they can't, and that's why this handbook has been developed - to assist librarians in providing appropriate services and information for all community members.

*Planning for Library Accessibility: A guide for meeting the needs of patrons who are blind or visually impaired*, has been designed to answer many questions about providing library services to people with disabilities. All partners in the creation of this handbook and its accompanying outreach materials have considerable expertise with disability-related resources and have been providing a wide variety of accessible services for people with vision loss.

The goal of this guidebook is to share the numerous resources with library staff to help libraries flexibly and creatively develop a unique program with services to meet the needs of community members with disabilities, in particular, blindness and low vision.

We also want to convey that it is okay not to have the answers to all disability-service questions , but that through this guidebook you will have the knowledge and resources to know where to turn to gain the most informed answers to questions , which you can share with your library patrons. The resources in this text were compiled by staff from Perkins Library, Brooks Free Library and Perkins Solutions, who work daily with assistive technology and materials to meet the needs of people with vision loss or other disabilities. We hope that you will utilize the collective expertise of these partners to help you as you navigate this enriched path of service delivery.

**Preliminary Discussion of the FY2021 Legislative Agenda**

Mary Rose Quinn presented the Preliminary Legislative Agenda Totals

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **FY 2020** | **FY 2020** | **FY 2020** | **FY 2020** | **FY 2020** | **FY 2021** | **FY 2021** | **FY 2021** |
| **Legislature Budget** | **Legislative Agenda Request** | **Legislative Agenda Request Increase amount** | **increase/ decrease 2019-2020** | **Legislature Budget** | **Legislative Agenda Request** | **INCREASE OVER FY 2020** | **% Increase** |
| $1,322,130 | **$1,313,250** | **$38,250** | increase of $47,130 | $1,322,130 | $1,579,876 | $257,746 | 3% plus rent incr. |
| $11,516,000 | **$11,516,000** | **$1,233,860** | increase of $1,233,860 | $11,516,000 | $11,861,480 | $345,480 | 3% |
| $468,217 | **$468,217** | **$13,251** | increase of $13,251 | $468,217 | $482,264 | $14,047 | 3% |
| $2,665,800 | **$2,665,800** | **$77,645** | increase of $77,645 | $2,665,800 | $2,745,774 | $79,974 | 3% |
| $10,059,081 | **$9,901,081** | **$538,381** | Increase of $538,381 w/o earmarks | $10,059,081 | $11,000,000 | $1,098,919 | 11% |
| $4,259,000 | **$3,259,000** | **$443,072** | increase of $1,443,072 | $4,259,000 | $4,386,770 | $127,770 | 3% |
| $200,000 | **$206,000** | **$6,000** | level funded | $200,000 | $225,000 | $25,000 | 13% |
| **$30,490,228** | **$29,329,348** | **$2,350,459** | **$3,353,339** | **$30,490,228** | **$32,281,164** | **$1,948,936** |  |
| **-$158,000** |  | **-$250,000** |  | **-$158,000** |  |  |  |
| **$30,332,228** |  | **$2,100,459** |  | **$30,332,228** |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Line item** | **3%** | **Rent incr. (est)** | **Total** |  |  |  |  |
| **7000-9101** | $39,664 | $218,082 | $257,746 |  |  |  |  |

**Report from the Massachusetts Center for the Book**

Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director and Krista McLeod, Board Member spoke for the Center for the Book:

MCB is at present drafting its strategic plan.

We held a board retreat in July and reviewed the results of our survey of the field.

Our planning consultant, Ann Donner, crafted a survey that we used to complement meetings we had already completed in service of planning. The summary results are attached to this memo.

Ann Donner also completed interviews with Library Leadership.

The Board of the Center for the Book completed a SWOT analysis of its own.

The Executive Director, supported by board members, held the following focus group meetings:

* Librarians from South Shore and Cape/Islands (Falmouth)
* Librarians from the Greater Boston Area (Dedham)
* Librarians from Western Massachusetts (Amherst)
* Librarians from North of Boston (Beverly)
* Gateway City Librarians (two virtual meetings)
* Literary Cultural Leaders (Boston)
* Publisher of Beacon Press (publisher)
* Executive Director of Boston Book Festival (executive director)
* Creative Director at Grub Street
* Editor of The Horn Book (editor)
* Literary Agent at Kneerim and Williams (literary agent)
* Two former judges at Mass Book Awards
* Senior Staff Member at Mass Cultural Council
* Executive Director at Mass Humanities
* Executive Director at Mass Poetry (executive director and co-founder)
* Co-founder at Mass Poetry
* Executive Director at New England Independent Booksellers Association
* Senior Vice President of Children's Publishing at HMH (retired)

We expect to have a complete draft of the document prepared for board review before our annual meeting, which we will hold on 17 September, in conjunction with a massive Mass Book Awards celebration of the last three years of Massachusetts Book Awards winners,

in the Great Hall of the State House. We intend to adopt a plan that we can distribute in late Fall 2019.

Massachusetts Center for the Book, which will celebrate its 20-year anniversary in 2019- 2020, is undertaking a strategic review and developing a new long-range plan. As we complete that process, we produced our normal schedule of events/activities, summarized in the following bullets.

* National Book Festival 2018. We featured Richard Michelson’s picture book biography of Leonard Nimoy (a Boston native), *FASCINATING*. We had more men of a certain age stop by to take a selfie with Spock than even I might have anticipated.
* Library of Congress Literacy Awards. We presented the 2018 award to Reader to Reader in Amherst, Massachusetts, and announced the 2019 award to Beacon Press. (We'll be presenting that award in September 2019 at the Massachusetts State House.)
* Letters About Literature 2019. We had a stellar awards event at the Massachusetts State House in late May. This year, our number of participants held steady, largely owing to our decision to allow paper submissions (which accounted for half of our entries). As always, parents and teachers were enthusiastic about our focus on the primacy of reading, and students were thrilled to be noticed for what they say.
* Mass Book Trails and Tours. We added the Gateway Cities Library Trail to our app and worked with several libraries (Edgartown, Wilbraham) to post walking tours of their communities. Coming this month: Salem Architectural Tour, produced by the Salem Public Library, and coming soon is the Gloucester Literary Trail.
* Commonwealth Events Calendar. We continue to host a collaborative calendar of cultural events in libraries throughout Massachusetts.
* Route 1 Reads. We collaborated with the East Coast Centers for the Book on a Cookbooks theme, selecting *FLOUR*, by Joanne Chang, as our Massachusetts selection and working with our print designer to create the promotional materials to present to the collaborators at our June coordinators meeting.
* Boston Book Festival. We sponsored a panel that featured Gish Jen, Margot Livesey, and Christopher Castellani, all former fiction award winners in the Mass Book Awards who had recently published works of criticism, moderated by Sven Birkerts.
* Massachusetts Book Awards. We played catch up this year and announced both the 18th and 19th Awards. All of the authors, along with our Literacy Awardee, Beacon Press, will be celebrated in September. The entire list is available at our website. Here are the award winners :

FICTION:

19th Award: The Unmade World by Steve Yarbrough (Unbridled)

18th Award: The Chalk Artist by Allegra Goodman (Dial Press)

NONFICTION:

19th Award: These Truths: A History of the United States by Jill Lepore (W. W. Norton) 18th Award: The Written World by Martin Puchner (Random House)

POETRY:

19th Award: The Wall by Ilan Stavans (Pittsburgh)

18th Award: Noon Until Night by Richard Hoffman (Barrow Street)

MIDDLE GRADE/YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE:

19th Award: Mapping the Bones by Jane Yolen (Penguin Young Readers)

18th Award: The Care and Feeding of a Pet Black Hole by Michelle Cuevas (Penguin Young Readers)

PICTURE BOOK/EARLY READER:

19th Award: A Big Mooncake for Little Star by Grace Lin (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers)

18th Award: Windows by Julia Denos (Candlewick) -- selected as our Great Read for NBF 2019.

**Report from the Massachusetts Library System**

Scott Kehoe, Senior Manager for Resource Sharing presented the following report for MLS:

FY2020 Budget

The Mass. Library System thanks the Commissioners for their support on the FY2020 state budget. The MLS will be able to meet its commitment to state-wide delivery and the goals of the Legislative Agenda.

Annual School Recertification

The MLS has completed its annual school recertification process. The MLS Executive Board voted to drop membership for twenty-five schools. This was due to the schools’ failing to reply to multiple attempts at updating their membership qualifications. The final notice of removal from MLS membership rolls inevitably elicits a response from the effected schools. It is expected that several schools will most rejoin the MLS in the fall.

Marlborough Office Move

Construction is underway for the new MLS office (33 Boston Post Road (Rt.20W), Marlborough). Due to setbacks in getting the required permits, the scheduled move from our current office has been pushed back to September 18. We have received a one-month extension from our current landlords.

New MLS website

A new MLS website with an updated contemporary look will be rolled out August 5. A vast improvement over the current website. The new site will help members find the information they need in a quicker and more logical manner. A preview can be seen at:

https://www.masslibsystem.org/sandbox/

Featured upcoming workshops

Registration and descriptions online at: calendar.masslibsystem.org

* Sept. 13 - Building Your Leadership Toolbox, Marlborough.  
  A daylong event on library leadership and forging community relationships.
* Oct. 3 and 4 - Copyright Bootcamp, Devens Common Center
* Nov. 15 - Communities in Crisis: Responding to the Opioid Epidemic, Devens Common Center. *A daylong event co-hosted with the MBLC.*

**Report from the Library for the Commonwealth**

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

Boston Public Library provides reference services both in person and remotely.

Midway through FY2019, our Research Services department began a new service by offering one-on-one, scheduled research appointments.

In FY2020, we will implement the use of Springshare’s application, LibAnswers, to manage our electronic reference requests. The launch of a new chat reference service will follow after the successful transition to LibAnswers from our current email workflow.

Patron email requests will be continue to be sent to [Ask@bpl.org](mailto:Ask@bpl.org)

In FY2019, we saw 18% growth in downloadable and streaming ebook and audiobook checkouts over FY18. We also saw increased circulation in several world language collections, including Arabic, Hindi, Chinese, Japanese, Irish, Portuguese, Hebrew, and Spanish Easy Readers.

In an effort to control costs, we removed cost-per-circ audiobooks from our collection (Hoopla Digital) and added a price cap per checkout on streaming video (less than 2.50 per checkout). We began offering audiobooks from RB Digital, a platform we already used for digital magazines. We also had a 41% increase in checkouts of these digital magazines over FY18.

BPL was pleased to add Kanopy, a streaming video service in FY19 after much patron demand.

The digitization team was without a second developer for a large part of the fiscal year. Once this position was filled, progress was made on much-needed critical upgrades to the repository technical infrastructure, servers, and applications to address security, performance, and other issues.

For the Digital Commonwealth repository, a big challenge is storage space. We’re rapidly exhausting the available storage capacity/infrastructure, and are exploring options, such as cloud-based storage, in the very near future. That will bring a new set of challenges and costs that will need to be taken in account.

In FY19 BPL’s digitization team conducted a newspaper pilot. We began sending newspapers to be microfilmed, which is still the best way to preserve newspaper content. After the newspapers have been microfilmed, that film is sent to our partner My Heritage to be digitized. An FY20 challenge will be figuring out the best way to deliver this content to the public.

**Standing Committee and Liaison Reports**

**COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES**

**Commissioner Madell**

* Presented at the Topsfield Friends of the Library about what the MBLC does

**Commissioner Resnick**

* Attended Western MA Advocates Meeting to pull prizes for summer reading
* Attended Summer Reading Visits in East Longmeadow and Easthampton

**Commissioner Cluggish**

* Participated in Executive Committee Conference Call
* Attended Melrose Summer Reading Visit
* Attended Construction Team Meeting

**Commissioner Kronholm**

* Participated in Executive Committee Conference Call
* Attended Western MA Advocates Meeting to pull prizes for summer reading
* Attended the Summer Reading Visits in Pittsfield and Sheffield

**Commissioner Abraham**

* Attended Construction Team Meeting

**Commissioner DeBole**

* Attended Cyber Security Conference at Encore

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Cluggish moved and Commissioner Madell seconded to adjourn the August 1, 2019 monthly business meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners at 11:55 P.M.



Mary Kronholm

Secretary