MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

Date : December 5, 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; Stacy DeBole; Gina Perille; N. Janeen Resnick

Absent : Mary Kronholm, Secretary; Philip Madell, Esq.

**Staff Present:**

James Lonergan, Director; Celeste Bruno, Communications Director; Andrea Bunker, Library Building Specialist; Kate Butler, Electronic Systems Specialist; Maura Deedy, Library Advisory Specialist; Tracey Dimant, Head of Operations and Budget; 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:**

Catherine Halpin, Collaborative Library Services Coordinator, Boston Public Library (BPL); Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director, Massachusetts Library System (MLS)

**Call to Order**

Chairman Ochsenbein called the meeting to order at 10:03 A.M.

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

* Page 2, lines 41, add the word “to”
* Page 2, line 26, the correct date for the MLS Annual Meeting is November 4
* Page 6, line 23, add LEA materials
* Page 7, line 9, change statement to “staffed the booth”
* Page 10, line 43, add the word “item”

Commissioner Cluggish moved and Commissioner Resnick seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the minutes for the monthly business meeting on November 7, 2019 with corrections.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Chairman’s Report**

Chairman Ochsenbein presented the following report:

Activities

* Attended Bylaw Committee initial meeting, November 7, at the Fitchburg Public Library.

Next steps: Commissioner Madell offered to produce a draft of suggested revisions for review. These were circulated to the committee on November 26.

* Participated in Executive Committee call on 11/26.
* Attended visitation hours preceding the funeral of former Commissioner Francis R. Murphy.

I would like to acknowledge the passing of former Commissioner Francis R. “Frank” Murphy this month. Commissioner Murphy served with distinction on the MBLC for 11 years, including a two-year term as Chair. Frank was extraordinarily generous of his time and talent in support to libraries at both the local and state level. He was a great asset to this board and one of the nicest people you could ever meet. The family was very appreciative of the many current and former commissioners, management and staff who paid their respects. The following is excerpted from the November 20, 2019 MBLC press release:

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners is mourning the loss of its former Chair Francis R. (Frank) Murphy. “Frank’s leadership shepherded the MBLC through some challenging years. He will be remembered by us all as a person of integrity, vision, and kindness,” said current Board Chair Roland Ochsenbein.

Appointed by Governor Deval Patrick in 2007, he served on the Commission until 2018 including a two-year term as Board Chair.

As an MBLC Commissioner he served on the Resource Sharing Committee which made recommendations that led to the first statewide effort to share eBooks across the Commonwealth. This effort was one of the first of its kind in the nation. He was also on the State Aid Review Committee and helped develop changes that strengthen the State Aid program and encourage more communities to fully fund their public libraries. He was a forceful advocate for public libraries, often speaking at the state house and at legislative events about the importance of libraries and advocating for funding for the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program which resulted in a $150 million bond bill for the program.

Murphy was an Information System/Network consultant to NATO and MITRE before retiring and beginning his volunteer work with libraries.  He became a Robbins Library (Arlington) Friends Board member and in 2001 was appointed to the Robbins Board of Trustees where he served a term as Chairman. In addition, Murphy served as a Board member of the Massachusetts Library Trustees Association.

Looking ahead this month, I am pleased to be representing the board at the grand opening of the new East Forest Park Branch of the Springfield City Library System on December 19, 2019. This brand new library represents the capstone of a series of strategic investments to help rebuild and strengthen this Springfield neighborhood following a devastating tornado incident in 2011.

This month we will also begin the process of reviewing, updating and extending our agency strategic plan.

Finally, we will be convening our Construction Team shortly to plan our future efforts with regard to the Construction Program. More detail on this in the Director’s Report and Legislative Report portions of the agenda today.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Lonergan presented the following report:

Meetings/activities since the last Board meeting:

* November 7—Bylaws Committee meeting, Fitchburg Public Library
* November 8—Phone call with Steve Kfoury, Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth re: MPLCP regulations (605 CMR)
* November 8—Office space site visit, Boston
* November 13—Meeting with House Library Caucus co-chairs Reps. Higgins and Murray
* November 15—“Communities in Crisis: Libraries Respond to the Opioid Epidemic,” Devens Common Center
* November 19—Meeting with new House Ways & Means Analyst, Ana Girón Vives
* November 22—MLA Legislative Committee conference call
* November 26—Meeting with Debbie Russell, Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM), and staff re: office lease
* December 2—Conference call with Abby Straus, Maverick & Boutique
* December 3—Conference call with David Leonard and Sarah Sogigian to discuss statewide strategy

Mary Rose and I met with House Library Caucus co-chairs Reps. Higgins and Murray and their aides to ask for their guidance regarding next steps for H.4154, *An Act Financing the General Governmental Infrastructure of the Commonwealth,* which has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee (of which they are both members) and now includes $150 million for the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP). Rep. Murray told us that Rep. Cabral, chair of the House Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures, and State Assets, personally amended H. 4039 (a previous version of H.4154),toinclude an additional $50 million for the MPLCP. Rep. Murray recommended that we focus on solidifying support for the $150 million now included in H.4154 rather than seeking an amendment to our requested level of $250 million, particularly given that Rep. Cabral indicated in our meeting with him that he supported additional funding for our program, but not up to $250 million.

Strategic Plan 2021-2025: We have selected Abby Straus/Maverick & Boutique as the facilitator for our next strategic plan (we received three proposals to our RFR). The management team held our first call with her on Monday, December 2, and we have scheduled a call with her and the Executive Committee and management team for Wednesday, December 18. We will be discussing the project scope/timing and identifying stakeholders.

MPLCP: The Springfield East Forest Park branch will be dedicated on December 19; Commissioner Ochsenbein is scheduled to speak. The Dartmouth North branch is having their soft opening in December, but we don’t have a date yet. Their dedication will be in January.

Trustee Orientations: The final Trustee Orientation session of the fall 2019 season was held on November 5 at the Middleborough Public Library. The following is a summary of sessions:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Location | Attendance | Registered |
| Wednesday, September 25, 2019 | Sudbury | 24 | 26 |
| Wednesday, October 9, 2019 | Westfield | 24 | 30 |
| Wednesday, October 16, 2019 | Chelmsford | 14 | 17 |
| Wednesday, October 30, 2019 | Williamstown | 8 | 10 |
| Tuesday, November 5, 2019 | Middleborough | 12 | 14 |
| **TOTAL** |  | **82** | **97** |

Communities in Crisis: Libraries Respond to the Opioid Epidemicat Devens Conference Center

The Opioid symposium was a great success. The event attracted 140 attendees, including speakers and exhibitors. Presentations included perspectives from a medical researcher, a journalist, social workers, a psychologist, and Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan. In addition, the library perspective was delivered through a series of Ignite talks by librarians from across the state. The day concluded with a discussion exercise exploring library policies and next steps.

The MBLC is offering mini grants to attendees to keep the conversation and momentum around this issue going. We are currently accepting applications and will be awarding grants next month.

The event was made possible through the vision, passion and hard work of Shelley Quezada and Michelle Eberle from MLS.

Initial feedback based on evaluation surveys:

* I am more aware of issues related to the opioid epidemic.: Of 48 responses – 30 strongly agreed, 10 agreed
* I feel more confident about becoming involved to respond to the opioid epidemic: Of 48 responses – 27 strongly agreed, 20 agreed
* I intend on engaging in a community partnership to respond to the opioid epidemic: Of 48 responses – 20 strongly agreed, 15 agreed

Comments included:

* The range and scope of the information presented. The different POV's were very helpful. The presentations were clear and concise. I found it very valuable as a topic to expand my answers to people who ask “who needs libraries anymore.”
* I really liked that the breadth of topics encompassed all sectors of the opioid crisis in our communities, and, that the Ignite sessions demonstrated concrete, supportive roles libraries play as responders. The hands-on approach of all presenters was the common thread that kept the packed-day an eye-opener. Libraries, too, are places of awareness and response -- they are as vital to the prevention, treatment and healing within communities as their municipal counterparts.
* Keep holding programs like this, which address issues and problems in society as they relate to libraries.
* Keep doing what you can to dispel the widespread notion that topics like [this] don't pertain to public libraries. It's rather demoralizing to hear that attitude from people day after day when you and your co-workers are literally saving lives. Thank you for listening and acting!
* Thank you for putting together such an informative and engaging symposium! Strong work, Shelley and Michelle!!

Martha’s Vineyard Outreach:Maura and Rob visited the libraries, trustees and friends of Martha’s Vineyard Libraries on Wednesday November 20 and Thursday November 21.

They spoke to the trustees about policy development, with conversation centering around meeting room policy and tutors. They also discussed going “fine free.” With the Friends, they spoke about the role of a Friends group for library support and working with other groups. Maura led the Friends in an elevator pitch exercise, as part of a larger way of thinking about marketing the Friends group to help drive membership.

Rob and Maura also spent time with the directors of the Chilmark and Aquinnah libraries and heard about the challenges of life on the Vineyard as it relates to the library. Directors talked about staff members who are leaving the Island, due to the high housing costs. Affordable housing is a concern across all industries on the Vineyard, due to the limited housing stock, protected land, and the desirability of second homes.

2020 CENSUS:Maura spoke at the MLS Annual Meeting on 11/4 about the Census, focusing on a high level overview about the challenges and opportunities for libraries. She also gave a brief presentation to the C/W Mars, Inc. membership on 11/19.

Maura also presented as part of the MLS/MBLC Census 2020 Webinar on 11/26. The webinar included Vatsady Sivongxay, Statewide Complete Count Committee Coordinator and Ray Bennett, Senior Partnership Specialist at the Census Bureau, who talked about the impact of the census and operations, respectively. There were 92 people signed up, and 45 people on the call.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

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

Legislative Breakfast season has already begun with informal “coffees” in the SAILS network where Legislators and Directors meet in District to discuss library issues. Most breakfasts are scheduled for Fridays between January and March. Commissioners will be asked to speak at these events to present the MBLC Legislative Agenda. Currently, Commissioner Cluggish has agreed to speak at the CLAMS network legislative luncheon at Brewster Ladies Library on January 10, 2020 which is planned from 12:30pm until 2:00pm. We will need a Commissioner to speak the following week at the North Dartmouth Library on January 17. Commissioners Resnick and Kronholm will speak at the Annual Berkshire Breakfast which will be held at the Monterey Library on January 31 this year. Commissioner Ball has already agreed to attend and speak at the Plymouth Public Library cocktail social on February 7. Chairman Ochsenbein will speak at the Dudley Library Breakfast on February 28. The Leicester Library has scheduled a Breakfast on February 7 (the morning of the Plymouth social) and the Bigelow Library in Clinton has scheduled a Breakfast on March 6. In addition, there will be breakfasts in Monson, Southborough, and Hingham. Commissioner Ball has agreed to attend the Hingham Breakfast. Commissioners will receive updates on these events and any new breakfasts as soon as they are confirmed and shared on MLA’s website.

The Massachusetts Municipal Association’s Annual Conference and Trade Show is Friday and Saturday, January 24 and 25. The MBLC staffs a booth each year with Commissioners and staff members, usually from the Construction Team and State Aid Unit. This annual event is the best opportunity for MBLC Commissioners and Staff to reach out to municipal officials. On Friday, January 24, we are looking for two Commissioners to staff the booth from 11am to 1pm and one Commissioner from 1pm to 3pm and 3pm to 5pm. Commissioner Kronholm has agreed to work the booth Friday afternoon and Saturday. Commissioner DeBole will help staff the booth on Saturday as well.

The House and Senate still have not reached agreement on the supplemental budget that will allow the state to close the books on FY 2019. The new State Comptroller has urged law makers to come to an agreement so that he is not forced to close the state’s fiscal books without legislative approval. From State House News: “House and Senate lawmakers have been unable to agree on a spending bill that would close the books on the fiscal year that ended June 30. Comptroller Andrew Maylor, who wanted the closeout budget passed by the end of October, has told lawmakers that if they do not pass the bill by Dec. 11, he plans to close the books himself by sweeping all surplus revenues into the state's reserves and leaving underfunded accounts deficient.”

As of the November mid-month report, revenues continue to remain strong. Total tax collections for the month-to-date were $866 million, up $72 million or 9% over November 2018. The full report for November is expected by the end of the week. Tax collections over the first five months of fiscal 2020 exceed the state's benchmarks by $271 million, and are up 5.4% over the same period in fiscal 2019. Nearly 60% of the over benchmark revenues are associated with estate taxes.

The Joint Committee on Ways and Means and the Executive Office of Administration and Finance held their annual consensus revenue hearing to determine the revenue available to build the FY 2021 state budget. Economists are predicting slower growth in Fiscal 2021, more in line with revenues collected in FY 2017 than 2018 or 2019. The state will see additional tax revenues from the new tax on short term rentals, the tax on marijuana, and the revenues from casino gambling. Governor Charlie Baker is due to file his fiscal year 2021 budget proposal by Jan. 22.

At a recent meeting with Reps. Natalie Higgins and Brian Murray, the Legislative Library Caucus Co-Chairs recommended that the Board focus its construction advocacy efforts on convincing the Executive Office of Administration and Finance and the Governor to increase the annual bond spending cap from $20 million to $25 million. They were pleased with the Legislative Agenda, overall, and the emphasis on increasing State Aid funding to local communities.

**Consideration of approval of municipalities meeting the requirements for FY2020 State Aid to Public Libraries based on eligibility established in FY2020 for the Municipal Appropriation Requirement and in FY2019 for the minimum standards**

Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs, presented for certification 145 municipalities meeting the requirements for FY2020 State Aid to Public Libraries program.

Ms. Quinn reminded the Commissioners that these awards are half payments. The remainder is paid at the end of the grant cycle. The total first half payments for the first group of municipalities is $1,815,103.19.

Commissioner Ball moved and Commissioner Resnick seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners certifies that the communities on the provided list have met minimum standards of free public library service and awards each a FY2020 Library Incentive Grant, a FY2020 Municipal Equalization Grant and a FY2020 Nonresident Circulation offset in the indicated amounts, totaling $1,815,103.19, and authorizes any additional FY2020 State Aid to Public Libraries disbursements that may be possible toward the end of the grant cycle.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Consideration of approval for the Library eBooks and Audiobooks (LEA) Content Grants**

FY2020 Library eBooks and Audiobooks (LEA) Content Grant

Program Abstract:

The LEA program creates a statewide eContent system more closely approximating how books and other physical materials are shared. However, the current marketplace for digital books bears little resemblance to that for physical books and media. Prices and license periods for eContent are in constant flux, and often trend in ways harmful to library budgets. The LEA Content Grants funding, available for the first time in FY20, will significantly supplement networks’ own collection development purchases, will help reduce hold queues and patron wait times, and increase the breadth of the collection.

For FY20, each network has provided MBLC with title and holdings counts of their shareable OverDrive collection, and both the network spending and individual library spending on shareable content for the previous fiscal year. Items which are not shareable via LEA -- eMagazines, simultaneous use products, and OverDrive Advantage copies -- were not eligible for inclusion. Awards were calculated with a common base amount of $10,000 for each network, with the remaining funds apportioned based on their provided data: 50% for total spending and 50% for holdings.

Commissioner Cluggish moved and Commissioner Resnick seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the following eight LEA Content Grants totaling $500,000 for FY2020.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Network** | **Municipality** | **Award** |
| CLAMS | Barnstable | $44,170.27 |
| CW MARS | Worcester | $70,440.13 |
| MBLN | Boston | $116,139.94 |
| Minuteman Library Network | Natick | $103,834.19 |
| MVLC | North Andover | $32,938.49 |
| NOBLE | Danvers | $33,519.82 |
| OCLN | Braintree | $47,434.00 |
| SAILS | Lakeville | $51,523.49 |
| **$500,000** | | |

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Presentation and discussion of the FY2021 Plan of Service and Program and Budget for the Massachusetts Library System and Monthly Report**

Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director presented the following report for MLS:

The MLS Executive Board unanimously approved the budget at its September 16, 2019 meeting and the MLS Council of members approved it unanimously on November 4, 2019.

The priorities of the plan of Service and our Strategic Plan will continue with our Executive Board approving an extension to our Strategic Plan through 2020. This plan of service calls for the development of a new plan to launch in 2021. In keeping with our current Strategic Plan, we will continue to develop a co-creator culture to actively engage our members through discussion groups around the State; MLS will continue its involvement in advocacy efforts and building resources for the community. We will continue to develop services so all libraries and MLS staff can manage change and become future ready.

MLS will continue to focus on our three strategic goals; co-creator culture, future readiness and marketing, communication and advocacy.

The budget is based on our current annual budget figure: $8,637,000.

**Update on Census Action Plan Activities**

Maura Deedy, Library Advisory Specialist presented the following report:

To recap: MBLC’s role is to raise awareness among libraries that (1) the 2020 Census is coming, (2) that libraries have an important role in it and (3) to facilitate access to census materials and information that libraries can use with patrons. MBLC’s message to them will be consistent with ALA messaging, in that “libraries are essential partners in achieving a complete count”.

MBLC’s activities will include informational resources and campaigns, limited training and in person events, advisory services, and promoting engagement in local complete count committees.

Recent activities include:

* Monday, November 2, 2019: MLS Annual Meeting, focused on a high level overview about the challenges and opportunities for libraries. Around 150 people were in attendance.
* Tuesday, November 19, 2019: Presentation to CW/Mars membership about the census to about 50 directors.
* Tuesday, November 26, 2019: Organized a Census webinar, facilitated by MLS with involvement of the Statewide Complete Count Committee and a Census Bureau Senior Partnership Specialist who talked about the impact of the census and operations, respectively. There were 92 people signed up, and 45 people on the call.
* In the past two months we’ve sent out 8 emails to the discussion lists, which have generated increased traffic to the Resource Guide and direct emails.
* The Resource guide has been updated to include information about the census questions, support for transgender patrons, news items and technology information.
* Held the first library subcommittee conference call yesterday, will hold these monthly moving forward.

Feedback we’ve received has been positive and appreciative. For example, an academic library director said she was meeting with the VP for student affairs to discuss on campus collaborations. Several public libraries reported joining their complete count committees after these emails. An urban library is planning on making at least one computer dedicated to census in every branch. We are seeing increased engagement at the local level, either through job fairs and recruitment events, scheduling of programs and events, and building relationships with partnership specialists.

One hot off the press development from the library subcommittee call is a census discussion list, as requested by several librarians to share ideas and communicate directly with each other. We will announce this in the next email on Friday.

Our framework for communication was to be regular, topical and easy to read, and after these two months of communication, there is now the opportunity to develop more topical content around technology, or children, or schools

**Report from the Library for the Commonwealth**

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

* Laura Irmscher, Chief of Collections, attended the Charleston Library Conference and presented on a panel with the Internet Archive (IA) and Better World Books (BWB) to discuss their new partnership to get more books digitized and linked on Wikipedia. BWB will now work with IA to identify and supply books that do not yet exist in digital form. Those books will go into a pipeline for future digitization, preservation and access. Part of their goal is to preserve citations on Wikipedia pages and provide access by linking to a digital copy where researchers can preview up to 2 pages of the cited work online. A great example of this comes from earlier this year, though not from Wikipedia, but an enhanced version of the Mueller Report prepared by IA and Digital Public Library of America which has 747 clickable links to citations in this public document. BPL partners with IA and adds material there, but we also send weeded materials to BWB.
* Finalized license agreement and launched new electronic resource: American Indian [Newspapers](http://www.americanindiannewspapers.amdigital.co.uk/). *American Indian Newspapers* aims to present a diverse and robust collection of print journalism from Indigenous peoples of the U.S. and Canada over more than 9,000 individual editions from 1828-2016.

The newspapers include national periodicals as well as local community news and student publications. They include bi-lingual and Indigenous-language editions, such as Hawaiian, Cherokee and Navajo languages.

This collection provides exciting research opportunities into subjects including the self- determination era and American Indian Movement (AIM), education, environmentalism, land rights and cultural representation from an Indigenous perspective.

* Digital Commonwealth:

After exploring several options, the digital repository developers have chosen to use Microsoft Azure for cloud based storage of Digital Commonwealth files. Other options from major providers that were looked at included Amazon and Google, and also a local option, Wasabi.

Storage has become a major issue as the repository grows and we look toward the future. Cloud storage offers a few advantages: the ability to scale quickly, built-in infrastructure of cloud storage, and flexible monthly pricing as opposed large up front expense, meaning we pay for what we need when we need it.

Between July and mid-November:

46 applications were received

20 site visits took place

24 bound material collections were added to Internet Archive

31,209 items were added to the repository (15,246 hosted, 15,963 harvested)

**Standing Committee and Liaison Reports**

**COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES**

**Commissioner Ball**

* Spoke at the Valente Branch, Cambridge Public Library Grand Opening

**Commissioner Resnick**

* Attended WMLA Meeting in Sunderland
* Attended Opioid Symposium in Devens

**Commissioner Cluggish**

* Participated in Executive Committee Conference Call

**Commissioner Perille**

* Attended Bylaws Committee Meeting after the November Board Meeting

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Cluggish moved and Commissioner Resnick seconded to adjourn the December 5, 2019 monthly business meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners at 11:45 A.M.



Mary Kronholm

Secretary