MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS

Date : February 6, 2020

Time : 10:00 A.M.

Place : Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners Offices

Boston, Massachusetts

Present : Roland A. Ochsenbein, Chair; Deb Abraham; Les Ball; Stacy DeBole; Philip Madell, Esq.; Gina Perille; N. Janeen Resnick

Absent : Mary Ann Cluggish, Vice Chair; Mary Kronholm, Secretary

**Staff Present:**

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

**Observers Present:**

Catherine Halpin, Collaborative Library Services Coordinator, 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 10:02 A.M.

**Approval of Minutes: January 2, 2020**

* Page 3, line 32- His name is Clayton Cheever
* Page 3, line 33- It is the Thomas Crane Public Library, Quincy
* Page 9, line 36-38- Facts are repeated on page 10, line 8-10- Delete one of them

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Perille seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the minutes for the monthly business meeting on January 2, 2020 with corrections.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Chair’s Report**

Chair Ochsenbein presented the following report:

Meetings/activities since the January report:

* Construction Team meeting – January 2
* Strategic Plan planning session – January 8
* Executive Committee Call – January 28
* Ecosystem Committee Kick-Off at MLS Marlborough offices – January 30
* Strategic Plan meeting with MBLC staff team – February 4
* Bylaw Committee meeting – February 6

This month the MBLC kicked-off a strategic planning process with the goal of having a new, updated five-year plan in place this summer. I am impressed with the organization and thought that has gone into the planning for this important review. One of the goals for this iteration is to make an effort to have broader engagement in the creation of the plan. A variety of opportunities for engagement are planned, including a series of workshops, interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

The Ecosystem Committee kick-off was also an important event for January. This is a large and broadly representative committee that has a complicated but important task ahead of it. In reviewing the Ecosystem study data and documents, I was again struck by how increasingly connected public libraries are to each other and to the broader regional and statewide networks, and how increasingly interdependent public libraries are in this regard.

The budget season has begun in earnest with the January release of the governor’s H2 FY 2021 proposed budget. More on that will be in the Director’s report and the Legislative report. The annual round of Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) organized legislative breakfasts have started and I understand those that have so far occurred have been well and enthusiastically attended. Several Commissioners have signed up to speak at these events this year, and I would encourage all Commissioners to either speak or attend as they are able. I am scheduled to speak at Groton tomorrow morning February 7, Southborough on March 2, and Clinton on March 6.

In addition, following our Construction Team meeting on January 2, we have begun executing an outreach plan to the library community to help support our efforts in seeking passage of H.4154, a bond bill that includes $150 million in funding for the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP), and in seeking an increase in our annual construction program spending limit in order to shorten wait list times and avoid additional years of construction cost increases for those communities on the wait list.

Director Lonergan and I will be presenting testimony in support of our FY 2021 Legislative Agenda before the Joint Committee on Ways and Means on February 24 at Roxbury Community College.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Lonergan presented the following report:

Meetings/activities since the last Board meeting:

* January 2—Construction Team Meeting
* January 8— Strategic Planning Team first in-person meeting
* January 9—Springfield Library Foundation call (with Rob Favini)
* January 10—Legislative Luncheon at Brewster Ladies’ Library
* January 13—MLS Executive Board meeting, Marlborough
* January 14 & 28—Strategic Planning administrative calls with Abby Straus
* January 24— Chief Offices of State Library Agencies (COSLA) event at National Constitution Center, Philadelphia
* January 25 and 26—ALA Midwinter, Philadelphia; presented as part of IMLS panel: “Meeting Communities at Their Point of Need: Libraries as Trusted Spaces”
* January 30—Library Ecosystem Committee meeting, MLS office, Marlborough
* February 3—ALA/Grow with Google Tour meeting/conference call
* February 5—Call with Maria McCauley, Cambridge Public Library to prepare for her visit to DC as part of ALA’s Congressional Fly-in advocacy efforts

Governor Baker has released his House 2 FY 2021 Budget recommendation. The entire proposal, which totals $44.6 billion, can be found at: <https://budget.digital.mass.gov/govbudget/fy21/>

The Governor has proposed a 17.7% increase for 9101, our Admin line (which was requested due to our impending office move and significant rent increase) and 1% increases for 9401, 9501, and 9506. While it may look like 9501 is getting a cut, this is due to the artificial inflation of the line in FY2020 with $158,000 in earmarks. If we take the earmarks out, the base amount for this line ($9,901,081) is also getting a proposed 1% increase. The Governor is proposing level funding for 9402, 9406, and 9508.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Account** | **Description** | **FY 2020 Spending** | **FY 2021 House 2** | **Comment** |
| [7000-9101](http://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/h1/fy19h1/brec_19/act_19/h70009101.htm) | Board of Library Commissioners | 1,322,130 | 1,555,909 | “Increased funding to meet projected need.” |
| [7000-9401](http://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/h1/fy19h1/brec_19/act_19/h70009401.htm) | Regional Libraries Local Aid | 11,516,000 | 11,631,160 |  |
| [7000-9402](http://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/h1/fy19h1/brec_19/act_19/h70009402.htm) | Talking Book Program Worcester | 468,217 | 468,217 |  |
| [7000-9406](http://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/h1/fy19h1/brec_19/act_19/h70009406.htm) | Talking Book Program Watertown | 2,665,800 | 2,665,800 |  |
| [7000-9501](http://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/h1/fy19h1/brec_19/act_19/h70009501.htm) | Public Libraries Local Aid | 10,059,081 | 10,000,092 | FY2020 included $158K in earmarks |
| [7000-9506](http://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/h1/fy19h1/brec_19/act_19/h70009506.htm) | Library Technology and Automated Resource-Sharing Networks | 4,259,000 | 4,301,590 |  |
| [7000-9508](http://budget.digital.mass.gov/bb/h1/fy19h1/brec_19/act_19/h70009508.htm) | Center for the Book | 200,000 | 200,000 |  |

Our FY2021 budget hearing with the Joint Committee on Ways and Means has been scheduled for Monday, February 24 at Roxbury Community College. Commissioner Ochsenbein and I will be testifying at the hearing.

**H.4154**, *An Act Financing the General Governmental Infrastructure of the Commonwealth,* which includes $150 million for the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP), is still in the House Ways and Means Committee. We are regularly monitoring the bill’s status.

Regarding the MPLCP annual cap, the Board’s Construction Team met immediately after our monthly board meeting and discussed the following: the status of the cap, including recent communications with A and F; potential changes to the MPLCP; an advocacy plan for working with the library community to support our bonding and annual cap goals for the MPLCP; and a small library pilot project.

**Strategic Plan 2021-2025:** The Strategic Planning Team has added staff representatives and is considering candidates for interviews and focus groups. We have scheduled six Community Stakeholder Workshops:

Morning Sessions- 9:30 A.M. - 11:30 A.M. (9:00 A.M. light refreshments/ registration)

Afternoon Sessions- 1:30 P.M.- 3:30 P.M. (1:00 P.M. light refreshments/ registration)

**Day 1- Tuesday, February 18, 2020**

Morning Session- Mashpee Public Library, 64 Steeple Street, Mashpee

Afternoon Session- Boyden Library, 10 Bird Street, Foxborough

**Day 2- Wednesday, February 19, 2020**

Morning Session- Minuteman Library Network, 10 Strathmore Road, Natick

Afternoon Session- Shrewsbury Public Library, 609 Main Street, Shrewsbury

**Day 3- Thursday, February 20, 2020**

Morning Session- Lawrence Public Library, 51 Lawrence Street, Lawrence

**Day 4- Wednesday, March 11, 2020**

Afternoon Session- MLS, Northampton, 241-243 King Street, Northampton

**Opioid Symposium Social Infrastructure Grants:** Wrapping up our Libraries Respond to the Opioid Crisis initiative with MLS, 14 mini grants (out of a pool of 24 applicants) were awarded in early January ranging from $500 to $1000. Geographically libraries are represented from the Pioneer Valley through Central Mass, Metro West and the metropolitan Boston area. Libraries will be using grants for programming on mental health, first aid, homelessness awareness, understanding trauma, and the teaching of LGBTQ cultural competencies for health care professionals. Kudos to Shelley Quezada and Michelle Eberle for their hard work and vision around the event and grant program.

**LSTA Direct Grants:** Members of the LAD team (Shelley Quezada, Lyndsay Forbes, Maura Deedy, and Evan Knight) delivered grant writing workshops to libraries who submitted letters of intent. Workshops took place in Holyoke, Middleborough and Sudbury. Many thanks to Lyndsay for coordinating the meetings. The next deadline in the process is February 20, when draft grant applications are due.

**Trustee Orientations**

Maura has begun scheduling Spring 2020 Trustee Orientations. The schedule to date includes the following, with more dates and locations to be added:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Time | Location |
| Tuesday, April 7, 2020 | 6:00 P.M. | Monterey Library |
| Wednesday, April 15, 2020 | 6:00 P.M. | Hopkinton Public Library |
| Wednesday, May 27, 2020 | 6:00 P.M. | Falmouth Public Library |
| Wednesday, June 3, 2020 | 6:00 P.M. | Leominster Public Library |

Shelley Quezada attended ALA Midwinter in Philadelphia at the request of the Association of Specialized Government and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASGCLA) to participate in a pre-conference “Deaf Culture and Libraries Forum: Awareness, Understanding and Action”. It provided an opportunity to learn more about the deaf cultural heritage and programming for the deaf community. There she shared what we are doing in Massachusetts including our work with the Mass. Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and our LSTA Access for All grant program.

Evan Knight has been appointed and sworn in as member of the Massachusetts Archives Advisory Commission (AAC) for a one-year term. Members and alternate members of the AAC comprise the Massachusetts State Historical Records Advisory Board (MA SHRAB), a federal program of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), the grant making affiliate of the National Archives.

At ALA Midwinter, Maura Deedy was elected as a Board Member at Large for ALA’s United for Libraries. Maura’s nomination was made by United for Libraries Board member, Libby Post. Congratulations to Maura on this appointment to an important organization that impacts library trustees, friends groups and foundations.

MBLC Professional Library: On 1/15 Maura launched an MBLC Professional Development Collection on Overdrive with 3 titles. Two of the titles have already circulated twice. These titles are available to all card holders in NOBLE and across the state. Maura gives a thank you to Kate Butler, who suggested this idea at a LAD meeting to unanimous support.

One of the benefits to an Overdrive Advantage account is that we are able to create curated lists based on titles available in NOBLE. The first one is New Director Support with titles on management and leadership. Future curated lists can be developed topically to support programs or grant rounds, highlight Bruins players’ favorite books, support events like the Opioid Symposium and more. We welcome all ideas. You can see our landing page and collection here: <https://noble.overdrive.com/noble-mblc/content>

**MPLCP**: Throughout the month of January, the construction team conducted a total of six focus groups in every region of the Commonwealth to review the construction program. The focus groups consisted of survey respondents who indicated a desire to be involved in the process and included Directors, Trustees, Architects, Owners Project Managers, and Building Consultants. In each focus group, participants were asked to elaborate on survey responses and respond to potential MPLCP changes and their possible impact on libraries and municipalities.  A final focus group for respondents unable to attend in their region will be held in mid-February, completing this step in the evaluation of the program.

The **Communications Team** completed the new MBLC magazine (fall/winter edition) which highlights the important work libraries do in providing services for everyone in the Commonwealth. The magazine was mailed with a letter to Massachusetts state and federal legislators. Libraries will each receive a copy through MLS delivery. The team plans a spring/summer edition for publication in July.   
  
The team also launched the legislative agenda website and #StateAidinMA social media campaign. The feedback from librarians on both has been positive.  
  
The team is partnering with First Lady of the Commonwealth Lauren Baker and the Boston Bruins for a new summer reading challenge. Information and materials for the new challenge will be available to libraries in the spring. Over the past several months, the MBLC communications team worked closely with a focus group of librarians and colleagues at MLS to develop this new initiative. The team is also working on new materials for summer 2020 and will participate in a series of summer workshops with colleagues from MLS.  
  
The team is also working with Mrs. Baker, the Boston Bruins and two students from Project 351 to coordinate reading events in libraries for Department of Children and Families (DCF) kids and their foster/adoptive parents this spring.  
  
The Boston Bruins PJ Drive that benefits DCF Wonderfund and Cradles to Crayons has started. The MBLC communications team develops materials for the drive, coordinates library participation and runs the PJ Drive kickoff. The goal is to collect 13,000 pajamas for kids in need. The kickoff will be held at East Forest Park Branch of Springfield City Library. Mrs. Baker will participate in the event along with Commissioners Resnick and Kronholm.  Over 120 libraries have registered for the drive.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

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

The Governor’s House 2 budget, released on January 22, 2020, increased funding to the MBLC bottom line by $490,540, with nearly half of the total going to the Agency line, 7000-9101, to cover the move and anticipated significant rent increase. State Aid (7000-9501), the focus of this year’s Legislative Agenda, received a one percent increase, as did the Regional line (7000-9401), and the Technology and Resource Sharing line (7000-9506). The Perkins and Worcester Talking Book Programs (7000-9406 and 7000-9402) and the Massachusetts Center for the Book (7000-9508) were level funded in the Governor’s proposal. The Governor’s overall budget includes $44.6 billion in state spending for FY 2021. The MBLC represents 0.007 or 0.07% of the state budget.

Since the last Board meeting, the Legislative Breakfast/events calendar has continued to expand. Advocates have added two school events, a breakfast in Danvers, and have just announced a breakfast in Framingham, for a total of twenty legislative activities through the end of March. We need two Commissioners to speak at breakfasts on February 21 in Cohasset and Leicester and three to speak on February 28 in Danvers, Dudley, and Whitman. Commissioner DeBole has agreed to attend and speak at the Danvers breakfast, Commissioner Ball has volunteered to attend and speak at the breakfast in Whitman, and Commissioner Abraham will represent the Board at the Framingham breakfast.

The MBLC will testify before the Joint Committee on Ways and Means at Roxbury Community College on Monday, February 24, 2020. The Hearing begins at 11 A.M. Chairman Ochsenbein and Director Lonergan will have an opportunity to present the Agency’s funding request for FY 2021 ahead of the House budget proposal scheduled to be released mid-April.

The Massachusetts Library Association/ Massachusetts School Library Association Legislative Day is scheduled for Thursday, April 2 at the State House. Library Advocates from across the state are expected to participate.

A number of Census related activities have been added to the MBLC Calendar, including Train the Trainer events. Thanks go to Maura Deedy who has continued to develop the LibGuide with library related Census programs and information and who has established a Census email list where librarians can share ideas and ask questions.

The Construction Bond Bill remains in House Ways and Means. It includes $150 million which will cover the remaining 17 waitlisted libraries. Commissioners on the Construction Team have two lists of libraries to contact and two sets of Talking Points, one for the waitlist and one for the potential applicants for the next round.

January tax collections were $2.959 billion, up $172 million or 6.2% over January 2019 but $35 million below benchmark. In the first seven months of FY 2020, tax receipts are up 4.9% or $794 million over the same time period last year. The Governor has raised the anticipated revenue benchmark for FY 2020 from $30.099 billion to $30.289 billion.

In the major tax categories in January, only the Withholding tax figures were above the monthly benchmark. The complete report can be found at the Department of Revenue’s website: <https://www.mass.gov/news/january-revenue-collections-total-2959-billion>.

Thank you to Commissioners Kronholm, Cluggish, Abraham, and DeBole and staff members Andrea Bunker, Matt Perry, Rob Favini, Rachel Masse, Maura Deedy, Liz Babbitt, and Lauren Stara for helping staff the MBLC booth at the Massachusetts Municipal Association Convention at the end of January. The MBLC made a number of good contacts and had great feedback on our programs and services, especially Construction and State Aid.

**Consideration of approval of the municipality 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**

Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist presented for certification the Duxbury Public Library which meets the requirements for FY2020 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 this municipality is $10,216.16.

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Ball seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners certifies that the community on the attached list has met minimum standards of free public library service and awards it a FY2020 Library Incentive Grant, a FY2020 Municipal Equalization Grant and a FY2020 Nonresident Circulation offset in the indicated amounts, totaling $10,216.16, 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 of municipalities requesting waivers for the FY2020 municipal appropriation requirement in the FY2020 State Aid to Public Libraries Program within the 5% threshold**

Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs/Government Liaison presented the 16 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 16 municipalities are Adams, Clarksburg, Fairhaven, Fall River, Greenfield, Haverhill, Lawrence, Longmeadow, Malden, Montgomery, Newbury, North Adams, Somerset, Ware, Warren, and Yarmouth.

FY2020 marks the first year of the new five-year State Aid to Public Libraries Waiver Plan which aims to help municipalities and their libraries meet the MAR after being granted a waiver. Historically, some libraries have received MAR waivers for a decade or more leading to chronic underfunding and potentially putting pressure on surrounding communities that fully fund their libraries to serve an influx of residents from the underfunded community.

Libraries that received a MAR waiver for FY2020 are in year one of the plan. In year two, libraries that apply for a waiver will submit a financial plan written by the municipality in conjunction with library trustees and the director and signed by library officials as well as a senior municipal official. The library and municipality may also be required to appear before the Commission. Should the library continue to need a waiver in subsequent years, it will submit an updated financial plan that describes the progress that has been made toward meeting the MAR and may need to appear before the Commission.  The new plan was recommended to the MBLC by the State Aid Review Committee which began a periodic review of the program in 2015.

Commissioner Ball moved and Commissioner Abraham seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners grants a waiver of the FY2020 Municipal Appropriation Requirement and certifies that the communities listed above have met minimum standards of free public library services and awards each a FY2020 Library Incentive Grant, a FY2020 Municipal Equalization Grant and a FY2020 Nonresident Circulation offset in the indicated amounts, totaling $352,643.73, 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 of the FY2021 Plan of Service and Program and Budget for the Library for the Commonwealth**

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

The budget we are submitting is level-funded at $2,879,000. In the coming year, we are looking to expand our role as a leader in digitization services by creating a historical Massachusetts newspaper repository to share the Commonwealth’s shared cultural heritage. Our budget shows an additional Developer for this project as well as an increase in contractual services to account for the rise in cloud storage costs. We do not expect to request over and above the 50% personnel costs allowed in the LFC budget. In addition, we are exploring new opportunities to establish partnerships to develop the connection between communities and library resources. BPL has been piloting workshops and trainings around the themes of Education, Civic Engagement, and Personal Success.

Our e-book collection continues to be our most popular resource, as it recently surpassed over 10,000,000 total checkouts through OverDrive. 2,000,000 of those checkouts were in calendar year 2019, which saved Massachusetts taxpayers over $30,000,000.

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Perille seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the FY2021 Plan of Service and Program and Budget filed on December 20, 2019 for the Library for the Commonwealth, with a bottom line of $2,879,000 as presented in agenda item 7.

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Presentation and discussion of the FY2021 Plan of Service and Program and Budget for the Massachusetts Center for the Book and Monthly Report**

Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Center for the Book provided the Board with a background of the Center for the Book.

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

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

Our proposed F21 budget based on the amount of funds that were appropriated for Massachusetts Center for the Book (MCB) in FY2020. The amount in question, $200,000, represents 80% of the baseline funding we set in FY14, and thus we are presenting a limited and inhibited program of service that falls short of the vision for our state center for the book as an outreach and programming organization which supports the programming activities of Massachusetts libraries while it fulfills its responsibilities as the Commonwealth affiliate of the Library of Congress.

Most unfortunate in this proposed budget is the continued requirement we are placing on staff to work with no pay increases. The ED salary has not moved since FY16. Part-time staff have received no raises in three years, this at a time of rapid increase in the minimum wage, which creates pressure on all hourly rates. There continues to be no health insurance and no retirement program for employees.

In FY 21,the personal sacrifices of our staff will no longer bridge the gap. In FY21, we will have to curtail our programs dramatically, threatening our organizational status by this decline in capacity:

**Massachusetts Book Awards**- This program was intended to be a large outreach and promotional program for the Massachusetts library community. Unfortunately, the partnership has dissolved and MCB has been left holding the (book) bag on the program. In a FY 21 $200K budget, there will be no promotional materials created for libraries. We shall endeavor to post downloadable materials if we can control quality statewide. Otherwise, we will issue printable pdfs created in Word.

The State House awards event will be dramatically cut back in the coming year, barring a new partnership outside of the library community that will radically alter the mission of the program to bring writers and readers together in libraries.

**Letters About Literature**- We have dramatically cut this program in FY20, and so we will maintain that level of service in FY21 while we consider the implications of sunsetting the project.

**Mass Book Trails**- We will maintain the offering in FY21, but no new trails will be developed in partnership with Massachusetts libraries. We will consider the implications of sunsetting (or "selling") the project in FY22.

**Commonwealth Events Calendar**- We will maintain the current service for 6 months while we consider expanding access eligibility or cancelling the initiative.

**Other Programming Initiatives**

* National Book Festival- We can no longer spend more than our portion of the IMLS grant for NBF and will work with MBLC to recalibrate the partnership and apportion the limited funds in such a way that the cost of the booth is calculated into the distribution.
* Route 1 Reads- We shall continue to work with our East Coast state center colleagues on this collaborative reading program, but will no longer be able to produce promotional materials for Massachusetts. As with the book awards, we shall endeavor to post downloadable materials if we can control quality statewide. Otherwise, we will issue printable pdfs created in Word.
* Festivals- We shall continue our partnerships with state-based festivals (currently, Boston Book Festival, Mass Poetry Festival, Martha's Vineyard Book Festival, Newburyport Literary Festival, Nantucket Book Festival) so that MCB visibility is maintained while our own activity is curtailed.

**Board Activity**

The Board is finalizing a theory of change document that MCB shall work from as it looks for new partnerships and hosting arrangements. We have identified four key issues for the board:

1. Where should MCB reside in the constellation of statewide literary/literacy services?
2. What new partnerships will MCB need to develop in order to ensure its stability and success?
3. What board/staff organizational model will help MCB best to succeed?
4. What fundraising strategy should MCB adopt based on data from its peer organizations in the Data Arts community?

**Conclusion**

We hope that we shall not have to implement the attached budget because our survey of our constituents demonstrates that our programs are welcome and valued throughout the Commonwealth. It is demoralizing to all of us who have worked on this project for 20 years.

The Board will vote on this Program and Budget at the March 5, 2020 meeting.

**Sharon Shaloo presented the following quarterly report to the Board.**

From October through December of 2019, Mass Center for the Book activity included the following:

**Boston Book Festival**

As a nonprofit partner of BBF, Mass Center for the Book sponsored two sessions, one on Saturday in Copley Square, and a second on Sunday in Dudley Square.

The Saturday session:

*Writing (or reading) the great American novel and wondering about the fate of the short story are much discussed topics. But as storytelling now runs from the intensely personal spoken word to the sweeping look at current, or past, times, authors seem less content with one form for fiction. This panel looks at the many ways stories come to authors, considering fictions in their long and short forms. Mira T. Lee, Brendan Mathews, and Steve Yarbrough will consider the creative and productive tensions that inspire writing (and reading) both novels and short stories. Moderated by Jessica Keener, herself a novelist and story writer and sponsored by Massachusetts Center for the Book, the Commonwealth affiliate of the Library of Congress and administrator of the Massachusetts Book Awards.*

The Sunday session:

*Maybe you eagerly await each week’s New Yorker to peruse the fiction selection there; or perhaps you haven’t picked up a short story since high school. Either way, you’ll find something new to appreciate in this session showcasing the work of three exciting practitioners of the form. Chaya Bhuvaneswar’s collection White Dancing Elephants focuses largely on the experiences of immigrant women of color in stories that are both visceral and, at times, harrowing; NPR’s review says, “Yes, reading this will be painful, but you will enjoy every page.” Mandeliene Smith’s Rutting Season presents characters on the cusp of sometimes surprising decisions; in a starred Kirkus Review, the collection is praised as “at once powerful and delicate, compassionate and cleareyed.” And Dariel Suarez sets the eleven stories in A Kind of Solitude in his native Cuba after the Soviet revolution; Kenyon Review praises the stories as “full- bodied and confident, and read like the work of a seasoned master.” Hosting this session of short fiction readings is Nakia Hill, educator, facilitator, and author of the poetry collection Water Carrier. Sponsored by Massachusetts Center for the Book.*

Both sessions worked wonderfully to bring writers and readers together for great conversations about writing and, too, about reading.

**Massachusetts Book Awards**

We launched the call for submissions to the 20th annual awards program on Oct 1. Submissions closed on Dec 31. We have a bumper crop of submissions in all five categories that began shipping to lead jurors in each of the 5 award categories during December.

**Holiday Dozen Events**

Emerging from the Book Awards, our new program coordinator organized two Holiday Dozen Events, one in Amherst and one in Cambridge.

The Amherst “edition” was held in the Jones Library and was co-hosted by the three State Representatives, Mindy Domb, Natalie Blais, and Lindsay Sabadosa. The event was very well received and there were many requests for annual programming.

The Cambridge “edition” was a bit more low-key but generally successful. We will evaluate this project in Eastern Mass to determine if we should try it again next year there or in another part of the Commonwealth.

**Letters About Literature**

We launched the call for entries in the 20th annual reading/writing program on Nov 1. Submissions were extended into Q3 and will be reported on in our next quarterly update.

**Other Projects**

“Literary Salem” Walking Tour launched at Mass Book Trails.

The Center worked with WGBH to create a virtual book club that will follow the Sanditon series that begins mid-January. Group includes 38 librarians.

**Strategic Plan**

In support of the process of drafting a new direction for the Center, our Executive Director attended three training sessions:

* Using Data to Support Fundraising Strategies
* Board Development and Training
* Small – Shop Convening: Strategic Plans vs Theory of Change Documents

A draft of our new direction is with our Executive Committee for review.

**Office Space**

MCB was able to move back into its offices in earnest on December 1. We continue to play catch-up after the disruption.

**Report from Massachusetts Library System (MLS)**

James Lonergan, MLS Executive Board, ex officio member, presented the report:

**New Databases**

The MBLC announced the addition of 4 databases. More details are in the Resource Sharing Update below. MLS is pleased to continue our work with MBLC to offer these additional titles to the membership. MLS is currently planning trainings to assist members in the promotion and use of these titles.

**Consulting and Training Services Update**

January Continuing Education Opportunities:

* An Introduction to the Whole Book Approach (January 10) – Early Literacy Webinar Series
* Get to Know Gale in Context: Opposing Viewpoints (January 14 and 22) – Gale Webinar
* Get to Know Gale’s Career Transitions (January 15 and 22) – Gale Webinar
* The Future is Queer (January 16) – Teen Webinar Series
* ProQuest HeritageQuest (January 16) – ProQuest Webinar
* Girls Who Code (January 21) - Teen Webinar Series
* Gale Literature Resource Center (January 21) - Gale Webinar
* ProQuest Science (January 23) - ProQuest Webinar
* ProQuest Research Companion (January 23) - ProQuest Webinar

**Census 2020:** MLS has been supporting MBLC’s efforts to engage libraries in preparation for Census 2020. In the fall, MLS hosted a webinar with the Massachusetts Complete Count Committee Coordinator and a Census Bureau Partnership Specialist. A recording of this program is now available online, along with resources from the speakers, at <https://vimeo.com/378584498>.

**Climate Resilience Hubs:** Communities Responding to Extreme Weather (CREW) invites Massachusetts libraries to serve as Climate Resilience Hubs. To serve as a hub, libraries must offer at least one program on climate preparedness each year, provide educational materials created by CREW, and display a Climate Resilience Hub decal. Libraries can also provide other optional services. In collaboration with CREW, UMass Amherst, and MBLC’s COSTEP (Coordinated Statewide Emergency Preparedness for Cultural Heritage in Massachusetts), MLS will host a 3-part webinar series starting in February.

**Small & Rural Library Management Webinar Series:** MLS and three other state library systems have teamed up with ALA Publishing to provide webinar series focusing on management skills for small and rural libraries. This series is free for Massachusetts library workers, sponsored by a grant from the Manton Foundation. The link to register for the events is https://bit.ly/359u0Pp. The webinars are:

* Supervising Library Staff: A Guide for the Rural Library Manager (Jan 24)
* Balancing Library Management with Day-to-Day Responsibilities: A Guide for the Rural Library (Jan 31)
* Hiring and Recruiting Library Workers: A Guide for Small and Rural Librarians (Feb 7)
* Building Community Partnerships: A Rural Library’s Guide (Feb 14)
* Library Security for Small and Rural Libraries (Feb 21)

**Small Library Forum:** The 2020 Small Library Forum will be held on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at the Hogan Center, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester. More information will be forthcoming.

**Word of Mouth Marketing:** Cohort 2 of the immersive Word of Mouth Marketing program has wrapped up. That cohort was a four-month immersive program. Four libraries participated: Newbury Town Library, Reading Public Library, Worcester Talking Book Library, and Libraries of the College of the Holy Cross. WOMM campaigns addressed local funding, onboarding new cardholders, outreach, and digital archives. Applications will open in January for Cohort 3, which will take place through the spring.

**Resource Sharing update**

**New databases available state-wide as of January 6, 2020.**

*Opposing Viewpoints (Gale)*

covers timely issues, from capital punishment to immigration to marijuana. This cross-curricular resource supports science, social studies, current events, and language arts classes. Informed, differing views help learners develop critical-thinking skills and draw their own conclusions.

*Career Transitions (Gale)*

provides guidance and essential activities for job seekers and those investigating new career options, including students, soon to be graduates, and adults new to navigating the modern job market.

*HeritageQuest Online (ProQuest)*

provides access to more than 4.4 billion records. It delivers an essential collection of genealogical and historical sources—with coverage dating back to the 1700s—that can help people find their ancestors and discover a place’s past.

*Science Database (ProQuest)*

is a growing resource of 7.3 million full text articles from over 1,600 sources. In full-text format, researchers have access to all the charts, diagrams, graphs, tables, photos, and other graphical elements so vital to scientific and engineering literature. Supports the needs of students studying applied and general sciences.

*Research Companion (ProQuest)*

helps students do more effective scholarly research and supports educators as they teach the core information literacy principles of finding, evaluating, and using information.

**UPCOMING WEBINARS**

In-person Gale sessions will be happening later on in the spring. All sessions will be recorded.

Please sign up to get the recording, even if you cannot attend: https://calendar.masslibsystem.org/

*Opposing Viewpoints (Gale)*

*HeritageQuest Online (ProQuest).*

* Tuesday, Jan. 14, 3-3:30PM · Thursday, Jan. 16, 2-2:30PM
* Wednesday, Jan. 22, 11-11:30AM · Tuesday, Feb. 4, 10-10:30AM

*Career Transitions (Gale)*

*Science Database (ProQuest)*

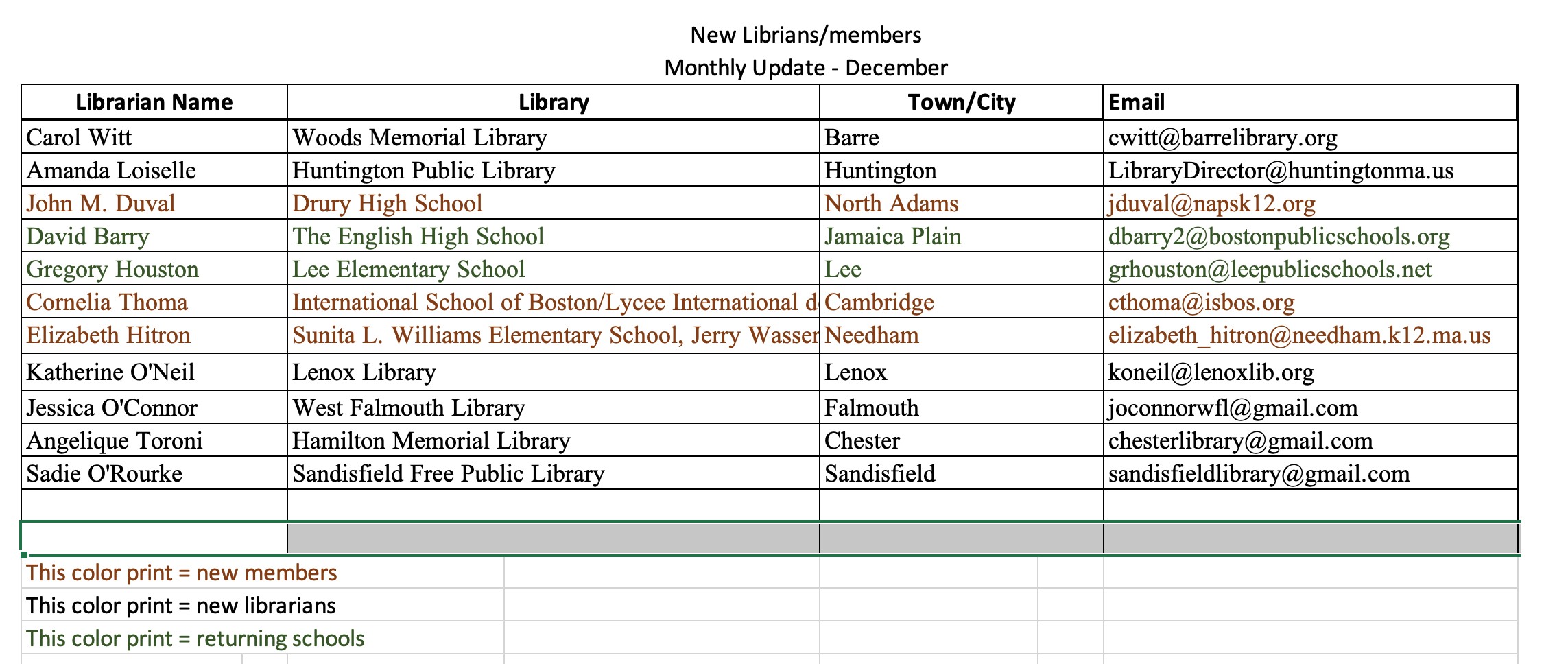
· Wednesday, Jan. 15, 11:00-11:45AM · Thursday, Jan. 23, 10-10:30AM

* Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2-2:45PM · Wednesday, Feb. 5, 11-11:30AM

*Research Companion (ProQuest)*

* + Thursday, Jan. 23, 3-3:30PM
  + Tuesday, Feb. 4, 3-3:30PM

New and Returning Members



**Report from the Library for the Commonwealth (LFC)**

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

**Census 2020, Activity and Planning**

Promotion and communication amongst staff:

* Communications will be designing some buttons. Staff are welcome to wear these in support of the Census.
* Making sure staff knows where to find free promotional materials, in different languages and focused on different target audiences.

Promotion amongst the public:

* At the end of February, the City of Boston will be sending 11x17 posters to all BPL branches to post for Census awareness.
* Communications will be designing table-top tents that will be posted at public computing stations, inviting patrons to fill out the Census online. It should take no more than 10 minutes for a person to fill out the Census form.

Events:

* Several branches have hosted, or will host, workshops with the Census Bureau or other community partners to prepare potential applicants. 10 events so far and through end of February.
* One of our Research Librarians, with a specialty in Government Information, will be teaching some Census-related workshops that combine a little bit of the history of the Census and how it has changed, into 2020.
* We will be doing small info-sessions with the ESL Volunteer groups about the Census; these are very popular groups in the library and it’s a great way to do some outreach to patrons who regularly come to the library for the Conversation Groups.

Other:

* We will set up computer terminals (no more than 30 minutes max per session) in additional places in the Central Library that get increased foot traffic.
* Exploring: setting up Census Corners, or separate stations in branches.
* Exploring: outreach visits with Boston Housing Authority to public housing sites.

**OverDrive User Improvement**

Starting Friday, February 7, patrons who update or replace their library barcode number will no longer need to contact BPL or OverDrive to have their old library card and new library card numbers merged. Our Web Services team worked with Overdrive to find a solution to this ongoing problem. OverDrive will now use the Patron ID field in Polaris to allow all the patron checkouts, hold requests, and reading history to be accessed instantly with the new library card number.

**Standing Committee and Liaison Reports**

**COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES**

**Commissioner DeBole**

* Attended the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) Conference at the Hynes Conference Center

**Commissioner Ball**

* Attended subcommittee meeting on construction

**Commissioner Resnick**

* Attended legislative listening tour with WMLA, MLA, MLS, MBLC, and four legislators
* Attended the Berkshire Breakfast with Commissioner Kronholm at Monterey

**Commissioner Perille**

* Discussed Census in Columbia Point which includes UMass Boston, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Edward M. Kennedy Institute, Mass Archives. Goal is to talk to students about the Census. Goal is to reach 30,000 students. Plans to connect Maura Deedy with contact at JFK Library

**Commissioner Abraham**

* Attended the MMA Conference at the Hynes Conference Center
* Plans to visit Former Commissioner Greg Shesko who is in hospice care.
* Attended subcommittee meeting on construction
* Attended Focus Group with Andrea Bunker

**Commissioner Madell**

* Attended Ribbon Cutting in Lawrence to celebrate regaining Saturday Library Service

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Ball moved and Commissioner Perille seconded to adjourn the February 6, 2020 monthly business meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners at 12:10 P.M.



Mary Kronholm

Secretary