**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS monthly regular meeting**

**Date:** Thursday, April 1, 2021

**Time:**  10:00 A.M.

**Place:**  Zoom Meeting

**Present:** Mary Ann Cluggish, Chair; Les Ball, Vice Chair; N. Janeen Resnick, Secretary; Deb Abraham; Vicky Biancolo; George Comeau, Esq.; Debby Conrad; Stacy DeBole; Mary Kronholm

 Deb Abraham joined meeting at 10:16 A.M.

 Stacy DeBole joined meeting at 10:46 A.M.

 George Comeau left meeting at 11:55 A.M.

**Staff Present:**

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

**Observers Present:**

Ron Gagnon, Executive Director, North of Boston Library Exchange (NOBLE); Catherine Halpin, Collaborative Library Services Coordinator, Boston Public Library (BPL); Marie Letarte, Library Director, Bigelow Free Public Library, Clinton; Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director, Massachusetts Center for the Book; David Slater, Network Administrator, Old Colony Library Network (OCLN); Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director, Massachusetts Library System (MLS)

**Meeting called to order by Chair Cluggish**

Chair Cluggish called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

Chair Cluggish stated that she is required to take a roll call of Commissioners to comply for the Open Meeting Law for remote meetings.

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| Commissioner Abraham- Joined meeting at 10:16 A.M.  | Commissioner Cluggish- Yes | Commissioner DeBole- Joined Meeting at 10:46 A.M. |
| Commissioner Ball- Yes | Commissioner Comeau- Yes | Commissioner Kronholm- Yes |
| Commissioner Biancolo- Yes | Commissioner Conrad- Yes | Commissioner Resnick- Yes |

Chair Cluggish explained that she would be making a motion for a consent agenda. A consent agenda is a board meeting practice that groups routine motions into the consent agenda. If there are no objections, the Chair can declare a motion passed, rather than counting votes for each motion separately.

Chair Cluggish moved to adopt a consent agenda for this meeting for agenda item #2, approval of minutes, agenda item #7, approval of SACL appointment, and item #14 to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Comeau seconded.

Chair Cluggish took a roll call of Commissioners for the consent agenda.

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| Commissioner Abraham- Wasn’t present at time of vote | Commissioner Cluggish- Yes | Commissioner DeBole- Wasn’t present at time of vote  |
| Commissioner Ball- Yes | Commissioner Comeau- Yes | Commissioner Kronholm- Yes |
| Commissioner Biancolo- Yes | Commissioner Conrad- Yes | Commissioner Resnick- Yes |

**The motion passed.**

**Approval of Minutes from the regular monthly meeting: March 4, 2021**

Chair Cluggish asked for a motion to approve the minutes under the consent agenda.

Commissioner Ball moved and Commissioner Resnick seconded to approve, with minor edits, the minutes from the March 4, 2021 Regular Monthly Meeting under the consent agenda.

**Hearing no objection, Chair Cluggish declared the motion passed under the consent agenda.**

**Chair’s Report**

Chair Cluggish presented the following report:

In the past month I participated in or observed the following Virtual Events:

* MLA Legislative Committee meeting
* Informational Advocacy Retreat
* Legislative Day Technology check
* Executive board meeting

Advocacy! Advocacy!Advocacy! That's what should should be foremost in Commissioners' minds right now. It's our most important responsibility.

Going hierarchically from the larger perspective to the more local; I hope you all received the American Library Association funding libraries email last Friday calling for action on the[**FY2022 #FundLibraries Campaign**](https://cqrcengage.com/ala/app/thru?ep=AAAAC2Flc0NpcGhlcjAxnH6G-sp2y0RnS6EYnvKypgp3Sc9tobVnWKvwKHGB1nvXcEhBCCTykyqMrDx7hgPRjN2QwRAL2XwAXcp7LAWjSwKxJzVJShs_ycZJ1lliK-4XThRE9nsEqlkxG6d11Luw8zCm-CoqeghCebITTe3UMmPHPAPbK4V85kvQfLGSe3I&lp=0)**.** ALA provided a one-page introduction to federal library funding and state by state library fact sheets. Dear Appropriator letters have begun circulating in Congress and that is the primary focus at this time. The email provided handy links that you can use to contact the Massachusetts delegation. I find the links handy in that the sample email provides ideas to rework and personalize for Massachusetts. In general, this is when we ask the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation to sign-on to the Dear Appropriator letters.

Here in Massachusetts, instead of multiple Legislative Breakfasts this year, we'll be Zooming in to the MLA Legislative Day ordinarily held live at the State House. As you know, you have a choice of four 45-minute Legislative Day sessions. MLA is asking you to invite your local legislators to register for the event. James and I will be speaking at each session; I'll be doing the Call to Action at the end...which happens to be my favorite part, so I am delighted that it's my role.

Last week, Mary Rose emailed to Commissioners what over the years, have fondly been called the “green sheets”. She included funding data for Library lines since 2001; it is interesting to see how our state funding has fluctuated over the last 20 years. For those of you who are new to this, some of the figures around 2009 and 2014 – 2016 are shocking in the level of cuts library lines were getting. I still find it shocking. There were a couple of years when we Commissioners went door to door at the State House leaving personal signed messages for each legislator. It was exhausting but satisfying action to take.

As we've discussed, Commissioners are responsible for two kinds of advocacy. Direct advocacy with legislators and also convincing others to contact legislators and advocate for libraries. When we speak at Legislative Breakfasts, we must play this dual role. Mary Rose recently mentioned that even if we know that our legislators will be supporting libraries, it is still important to contact them because they themselves need talking points and local information to use when advocating with their peers.

When Director Lonergan and I testified at Joint Ways and Means, we were asked why local libraries needed more State Aid, and how libraries would use it. I mention this in hope that when people are preparing to call or write to legislators about State Aid to Public Libraries, that people personalize their communication with how they will use State Aid at their library. Libraries can use State Aid for any legitimate library need. For instance, I suspect that library mobile Wi-Fi hot spots may be on the list this year.

This year, 347 libraries applied for State Aid, the largest number in 60 years. Since many cities' and towns' budgets are being squeezed financially, it's clear that local library appropriations are also under pressure.

Don't forget to ask your Selectmen, Mayors, or Town Managers to ask the Mass Municipal Association (MMA) to support the Library Legislative Agenda, with State Aid to Public Libraries as a priority.

Jan Resnick got a very good reception from some advocacy emails and she'll tell you about them in Commissioner Reports. Also, Jan will be offering a motion of support for the ALA statement on solidarity with the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association.

**Commissioner Reports**

**Commissioner Ball**

* March 22, 201- Participated in the Advocacy Retreat.
* March 23, 2021- Participated in the Executive Committee meeting.
* Sent messages to Scituate Library Foundation and Trustees encouraging contacting Senators and Reps.

**Commissioner Biancolo**

* March 11, 2021- Met with Jan Resnick and Mary Kronholm in preparation for the WMLA Legislative Breakfast since it was my first as a commissioner.
* March 12, 2021- Attended the WMLA/Berkshire-Franklin-Hampshire-Hampden Legislative Breakfast
* March 23, 2021- Attended “Building Support for the Build America’s Libraries Act" webinar from ALA United for Libraries
* March 24, 2021- Attended "Rethinking How We Measure the Impact of Libraries" from Bibliotheca (on how we measure and communicate the impact of libraries today and future: “Library statistics demonstrate the *use* of a library, but not the *value* of a library.”) I highly recommend that all watch this webinar.
* March 30, 2021- Attended MLS Live: “MLS Delivery”
* March 31, 2021- Attended SACL orientation/refresher by Rob Favini & staff

**Commissioner Conrad**

* March 8, 2021- Attended MLS Board Meeting
* March 22, 2021- Participated in the Advocacy Retreat
* March 23, 2021- Attended the ALA Building Support for Build America's Library Act webinar
* March 30, 2021- Participated in the MLS Live Meeting - Delivery
* March 31, 2021- Attended the SACL Orientation
* Reaching out to local library trustees and Friends. Conversations with local reps.

**Commissioner Comeau**

* Stated that his home library in Canton is moving to full service

**Commissioner Kronholm**

* March 22, 201- Participated in the Advocacy Retreat.
* Stated that advocacy has to happen on a daily basis. Say hello to legislators. Show up at events like Massachusetts Municipal Association annual meeting.

**Commissioner Abraham**

* March 5, 2021- It took a Pandemic: Reinventing Libraries in an Era of Change

New England Chapter of the Association for Information Science and Technology (NEASIS&T)

 Lessons learned from the experience. Encompassed various kinds of libraries.

* March 22, 2021- Advocacy Retreat
* March 24, 2021- Rethinking how We Measure the Impact of Libraries

Bibliotheca

 Getting beyond the usual statistics to reflect the impact and value of libraries.

* March 25, 2021- Trustee Deep Dives - Recruiting Trustees with Maura Deedy

Fine job by Maura – I attended with our own board in mind. Maura used a matrix to map out current boards, that can be used to point out skills and perspectives that would strengthen boards. I wonder if it makes sense for us to fill out the matrix with the goal of recruiting people to volunteer and of making recommendations to the Governor.

* March 25, 2021- Leveraging Partnerships – ALA Hosted by Julius Jefferson Jr.

Impact of state and national partnerships on libraries and included some success stories working together to protect equity, diversity and inclusion and intellectual freedom – as well as to advocate for libraries during these challenging times.

**Commissioner Resnick**

* March 8, 2021- Participated in the special WMLA Board meeting to prep for the 4-county Western Mass Legislative Breakfast.
* March 11, 2021- Conversation with Commissioner Biancolo on what to include in her Legislative Breakfast introduction and the format of the meeting and role of Commissioners in these kinds of events.
* March 12, 2021- Attended the breakfast, introduced Commissioner Biancolo and Commissioner Kronholm who presented the MBLC Legislative Agenda for 2022.  24 Legislators attended the breakfast.  Some libraries delivered breakfast to their legislator’s offices. Sent thank you notes for attending to Legislators
* March 16, 2021- Attended Mass Center for the Book quarterly Board Meeting.
* March 18, 2021- Alerted by Lauren Stara and Andrea Bunker to a possibly incorrect construction comment from one of our area legislators, I drafted an email including information and links to our construction program information.  Lauren provided the amounts for construction project awards in his district and fact checked my draft.  Sent the email.
* March 22, 201- Participated in the Advocacy Retreat.
* March 23, 2021- Participated in the Executive Committee meeting.
* March 23, 2021- Sent COVID data sheet (prepared by Matt Perry) in emails to 18 of the legislators I know who attended the Legislative Breakfast.  Received 6 responses in the first 2 days.
* March 29, 2021- Sent 9 personal invitations to area legislators for the MLA Legislative Day (April 6).  Registered 5 legislators so far.  The WMLA Board contacted each of their legislators to invite and register them.  Another Board member and I invited the remainder.

**Commissioner Resnick, liaison to the Mass. Center for the Book, also provided a report on the Mass. Center for the Book meeting - March 2021**

The Mass Center for the Book Board met on March 16 from 3-5.  Among the items addressed by the Board:

* The need for more appropriate, yet affordable, office space.
* To sign the agreement in affiliation with the Library of Congress; agreements are on a two-year renewal cycle.
* The Board voted to add two new directors to the Board.  They are also exploring additional members to the Board.
* Sharon presented a draft invitation to Council membership, a group that will serve in an advisory capacity to the Board.
* Update on programs which are moving along.  Route 1 Reads is featuring Poetry this year.
* The Center began the process of establishing an archive at the UMass - Amherst Library.

**Statement Against Violence and Xenophobia Faced by Asian Communities**

Last June, as a Board, we issued a statement standing with all who condemn racism and work for racial justice.  As part of that statement, we said that “We stand unequivocally for equity, justice, and opportunity.” In the light of what has been happening to our Asian neighbors and friends, I move the following statement:

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Biancolo seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners stands in solidarity with the American Library Association (ALA) and the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA), and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American Committee in recognizing and condemning anti-Asian hate crimes. Any type of racism or xenophobia against Asian and Asian/Pacific American communities cannot be tolerated.

The MBLC affirms the statements made by [ALA](https://urldefense.com/v3/__http%3A/www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2021/03/ala-executive-board-supports-apala-recognizing-and-condemning-ongoing-anti__;!!CUhgQOZqV7M!0a7z7aZzbCI9Ic7mPrtBJ5AAAreDPEwBeA_64EPgBQcYmboyStYB2F4AqDj6vnjaSulUNQ$) and [APALA](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/www.apalaweb.org/apala-statement-against-anti-asian-violence/__;!!CUhgQOZqV7M!0a7z7aZzbCI9Ic7mPrtBJ5AAAreDPEwBeA_64EPgBQcYmboyStYB2F4AqDj6vnjG3-OP9g$), and by the [Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American Committee](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/twitter.com/AACommission/status/1372563171131658243/photo/1__;!!CUhgQOZqV7M!0a7z7aZzbCI9Ic7mPrtBJ5AAAreDPEwBeA_64EPgBQcYmboyStYB2F4AqDj6vng1CONm_A$), supports their efforts to advance racial justice in our communities, and continues to work toward racial and social justice within our own agency and in the library community.

Chair Cluggish asked for a roll call of the Commissioners for this motion.

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| Commissioner Abraham- Yes | Commissioner Cluggish- Yes | Commissioner DeBole- Wasn’t present at time of vote  |
| Commissioner Ball- Yes | Commissioner Comeau- Yes | Commissioner Kronholm- Yes |
| Commissioner Biancolo- Yes | Commissioner Conrad- Yes | Commissioner Resnick- Yes |

**The motion passes.**

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Lonergan presented the following report:

Meetings/activities since the last monthly Board meeting:

* March 4—IMLS Public Library Survey 2021 State Ballot Process Information Session, virtual
* March 8—MLS Executive Board meeting, virtual
* March 9—Testified with Chair Cluggish during Joint Committee on Ways and Means budget hearing
* March 10— Council of State Library Agencies in the Northeast (COSLINE) meeting, virtual
* March 10— Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) Nominating Committee meeting, virtual
* March 12—WMLA/Berkshire-Franklin-Hampshire-Hampden Legislative Breakfast, virtual
* March 12—MLA Legislative Committee meeting, virtual
* March 16—CWMARS Users Council, virtual
* March 18—COSLA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Engagement Group meeting, virtual
* March 18—COSLA & IMLS Conversation on American Rescue Plan Act, virtual
* March 22—Information Advocacy Retreat
* March 30 & 31—2021 IMLS Grants to States Virtual Conference

Commissioner Cluggish and I testified virtually regarding the **FY2022 Legislative Agenda** in front of the Joint Ways and Means Committee on Tuesday, March 9 as part of their Economic Development/Housing/Labor hearing. We were asked questions about State Aid to Public Libraries as well as the reopening process for public libraries.

MLA and MSLA will be holding four virtual **Library Legislative Day** events for different regions of the Commonwealth on **April 6-8** (during National Library Week). Members of the legislature’s Library Caucus have been invited to speak at each session. I will be giving the legislative agenda briefings and Commissioner Cluggish will issue a call to action at the end of each session.

As mentioned last month, ALA will not be having a Fly-in or **National Library Legislative Day** this year. However, the Public Policy and Advocacy office (PPA) is organizing some targeted outreach with members of Congress. Maria McCauley, the Cambridge Public Library director (and a member of the ALA Executive Board) and I have been invited to meet with Senator Markey and Rep. Clark (and/or their staff) virtually next Tuesday, April 6 and with Rep. Auchincloss (and/or his staff) the following Tuesday, April 13. I believe those are the only meetings we will have with our delegation. Celeste and Matt are preparing some materials for the meetings that detail how we use IMLS funds in Massachusetts.

IMLS will be awarding the MBLC $3.5 million in **American Rescue Plan Act** (ARPA) funds in April. COSLA hosted a call with IMLS Director Crosby Kemper and IMLS staff on March 18, at which they shared initial guidance on spending priorities. The priorities include:

1. First, to enable libraries to reach residents with internet hotspots, accessible Wi-Fi, and other digital inclusion efforts, particularly in support of education, health, and workforce development needs.  The following types of data, among others, can inform efforts to reach underserved populations:
* Poverty/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
* Unemployment
* Broadband availability;
1. Second, to provide rapid emergency relief to libraries across the country, allowing them to safely respond to the pandemic and implement public health protocols;
2. Third, to support library services that meet the needs of communities throughout the U.S., including costs such as personnel, technology, training, materials, supplies, equipment, and associated indirect costs; and
3. With respect to (a), (b), or (c), reach tribal and museum partners best positioned to assist with pandemic response efforts, in addition to traditionally eligible library entities, where appropriate.

All project activities will have to be completed and all funds obligated by September 30, 2022. In addition, there is no match requirement for these funds.

We are in the process of gathering input regarding possible uses of our ARPA funds and will be scheduling a call with our State Advisory Council on Libraries, among others, but our preliminary ideas include the following:

* Providing hotspots, Chromebooks, and other devices
* Funding e-resources to support schools, job seekers, summer learning, etc.
* Virtual programming support (partnering with museums, if possible)
* Online summer learning platform support
* IT/Technology assistance for small libraries
* Statewide assessments of public libraries’ HVAC systems, broadband availability, and ADA accessibility
* A limited number of direct grants to support digital inclusion efforts and pandemic response

**CARES Act Spending:** The MBLC awarded $117,000 in funding for eBook collections (Overdrive content) to the Library for the Commonwealth. The funds will be used to add to the collection to reduce hold waitlist times and to expand collections serving teens, job seekers, and to support summer learning activities.

**LSTA Update:** LSTA consultants (Lyndsay Forbes, Shelley Quezada, Kate Butler, and Evan Knight) worked throughout March reviewing and commenting on draft applications. Input from consultants is used by applicants to better conceptualize and strengthen their LSTA Direct Grant applications. Final applications are due on April 6, 2021. Applications will be reviewed and scored by SACL members and a final recommendation will be made during the May SACL meeting. SACL’s LSTA Direct Grant recommendations will be presented during the July monthly board meeting.

**Trustee Deep Dives:** The MBLC Trustee Deep Dives continued in March with two sessions on trustee recruitment on March 16 and 25. Maura Deedy led the sessions that emphasized the importance of recruiting a board that reflects the make-up of the community that the library serves. The well-attended sessions provided best practices and provided an opportunity for trustees to share ideas and experiences. The Trustee Deep Dives continue with sessions exploring strategic planning on April 4 and April 22. For more details and to register visit the MBLC’s calendar: <https://mblc.libcal.com/calendar/main?cid=3880&t=d&d=0000-00-00&cal=3880&inc=0>

Maura held a **Friends Sharing with Friends** Coffee Hour on 3/9 that had 36 attendees. She is also planning for the Spring Friends Sharing with Friends Meeting. This virtual meeting will take place on April 10 and will focus on online auctions and fundraising activities. Registration link: <https://mblc.libcal.com/event/7553688>

Maura continues to do outreach to new directors, expanding support for new directors in FY22. She had 7 support calls with new directors last month. Some directors bring questions about board issues or other challenges. Some are new and just hearing about MBLC for the first time- other than our job board. And others are more experienced directors who moved to bigger libraries looking for new opportunities.

Maura is putting final touches on her session for MLA Annual: “Does the Mayor Have a Library Card: Understanding Local Government and Making Libraries Important to it” in which attendees will learn about different types of municipal government in MA, and how to build relationships with elected and appointed leaders. We’d like the panelist to share their perspective as town manager (or mayor) and perspective of working with the library from the municipal side. The panelists will be: Nicole LaChapelle, Mayor of Easthampton; Mehreen Butt, City Councilor in Wakefield, and John S. Mangiaratti, Town Manager in Acton.

Shelley Quezada has been working with April Mazza from MLS on preparing for the **School Readiness Toolkit** workshops that will be offered next month. The School Readiness Toolkit training is another excellent example of MBLC and MLS collaboration. On March 25 Shelley also presented at the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health agency’s (SAMSHA) “monthly social check in.”

Evan Knight along with fellow Digital Commonwealth board and committee members attended 3 short ‘peacebuilding’ sessions on conflict resolution (Pollack Peacebuilding Systems). The sessions included some training, exercises, and discussions to promote safe virtual and in-person events.

Evan also reviewed and scored grant applications for NEH’s Sustaining Cultural Heritage Collections program (<https://www.neh.gov/grants/preservation/sustaining-cultural-heritage-collections>). In addition, after connecting to their group because of the ice storm, a group located in Texas, TX-CERA (Texas Collections Emergency Resource Alliance), reached out to Evan to discuss broad issues in each of our group’s approach to emergency management issues in cultural heritage.

Rob Favini assisted Michelle Eberle with the March 2 and 18 MLS Strategic Planning Workshops. Rob provided MBLC’s best practices for a successful planning process and LSTA Direct Grant strategic planning requirements. Rob also attended the Central Mass Library Advocates meeting on March 17.

The **Communications team** will be launching the 2nd annual First Lady of the Commonwealth and Blades Summer Challenge. This summer, the team is coordinating with Beanstack (the summer tracking software) to integrate the challenge into the software with a template and badges that kids earn as they hit reading benchmarks.

The team is also working with Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative to coordinate statewide trainings for public librarians and with the Collaborative and public libraries to create technology how-to videos for senior citizens. Finally, the team is developing materials for legislative meetings with our Congressional delegation and that are also part of the portal redesign process.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

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

The American Library Association (ALA) is asking the library community to reach out to the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation regarding the Build America’s Libraries bill. The bill originated in the Senate and was sponsored by Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island. The bill could be voted separately or as part of a larger infrastructure bill, which already has support in the House and Senate among members of the Massachusetts congressional delegation.

The Virtual Library Legislative Days are only a few days away. This is the second year that the annual State House event has gone virtual. The MLA Legislative Committee met on March 31, to finalize the event program for the four sessions.

**Massachusetts Library Association**and **Massachusetts School Library Association**invite you to [register](https://mla.wildapricot.org/event-4169013) for any (or all) of the four virtual sessions this April to connect library advocates and State Senators and Representatives.  The MLA/MSLA Library Legislative Day, online sessions announcement and details, follow:

  **April 6, 10:00 a.m.**– featuring Western Massachusetts Library Advocates

**April 7, 10:00 a.m.**– featuring Central Massachusetts Library Advocates

**April 8, 10:00 a.m.**– featuring libraries from Boston, Metrowest, and North of Boston

**April 8, 11:30 a.m.**– featuring libraries from South of Boston, the Cape and Islands

You are encouraged to join a session that corresponds with your geographic area as we are trying to match one or more Library Caucus members from each area to participate in that session. Can’t make your preferred session? Feel free to join another – you’ll get the same overall briefing and talking points on the MBLC Library Legislative Agenda.

**1-hour sessions will include:**

· Welcome and overview - Jennifer Harris, Co-Chair, MLA Legislative Committee

· Regional Welcome & Introduction, WMLA/CMLA (April 6/April 7)

· Legislative Agenda Briefing - James Lonergan, Director, MBLC

· MSLA Briefing - Greg Pronevitz, Director of Outreach, MSLA

· Remarks from Legislator, member of Library Caucus

· Call to Action - Mary Ann Cluggish, Chair, MBLC

· Formal session ends, optional overview of Engage software for those who wish to remain online

 **Then it’s your turn!**Following the online session email and/or call your legislators!

**Click this**[**link to register**](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/mla.wildapricot.org/event-4169013__;!!CUhgQOZqV7M!3cGOyAUSxwWrdGptiau3CgM0DJhlHoUlUH5sbKOB438pkJLkJcRTJrcdTp4o5ugtGbVtY1o$)**for a session**: [https://mla.wildapricot.org/event-4169013](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/mla.wildapricot.org/event-4169013__;!!CUhgQOZqV7M!3cGOyAUSxwWrdGptiau3CgM0DJhlHoUlUH5sbKOB438pkJLkJcRTJrcdTp4o5ugtGbVtY1o$)

The legislative priority for the FY2022 budget is to increase State Aid to Public Libraries (Budget Line 7000-9501) AND keep up with inflation under the remaining budget lines. Come prepared! Read more about the [Legislative Agenda](http://mblclegislativeagenda.com/).

The MBLC Legislative Agenda page and site include links (see below) to all the documents and talking points Commissioners and other advocates need to be informed about the MBLC budget lines and the work that the library affiliates, the networks and the library community do for the communities we serve. The MBLC Budget page (also see below) includes the FY 2022 request and the Governor’s House 1 figures. Once the House Ways and Means proposal is announced, the page will be updated to include those figures as well, and so on until there is a final budget for the year, hopefully by the end of June.

| [**FY2022 Operating Budget Request**](https://mblc.state.ma.us/about-us/budgets-and-funding.php) |
| --- |
| **Item No.** | **Item Name** | **FY 2021 Budget** | **FY 2022 LegislativeAgenda Request** | **FY 2022 Governor's Proposed Budget (January)** |
| 7000-9101 | Board of Library Commissioners | $1,579,876 | $1,627,272 | $1,585,251 |
| 7000-9401 | State Aid to Regional Libraries | $12,516,000 | $12,891,480 | $12,516,000 |
| 7000-9402 | Talking Book Library (Worcester) | $482,264 | $496,732 | $482,264 |
| 7000-9406 | Talking Book & Machine Lending (Perkins) | $2,745,774 | $2,828,147 | $2,745,774 |
| 7000-9501 | State Aid to Public Libraries | $12,000,000 | $13,000,000 | $12,000,000 |
| 7000-9506 | Library Technology & Resource Sharing | $4,386,770 | $4,518,373 | $4,386,770 |
| 7000-9508 | Center for the Book | $225,000 | $300,000 | $225,000 |
| **TOTAL:** | **$33,935,684** | $35,662,004 | $33,941,059 |

[**Legislative Agenda**](http://mblclegislativeagenda.com/)

* [FY2022 Legislative Agenda](http://mblclegislativeagenda.com)
* [Benefits of State Aid](https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/state-aid-and-aris/benefits-state-aid.php)
* [Libraries During COVID-19](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/3f3e6d9d_libraries-during-covid-19_download.pdf)

Legislative Fact Sheets

* [Library for the Commonwealth at Boston Public Library](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/7176d908_library-for-the-commonwealth-affiliate-sheet-fy22_download.pdf)
* [Massachusetts Center for the Book](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/c8f11ab9_fy22-mass-center-for-the-book-affiliate-sheet_download.pdf)
* [Massachusetts Library System](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/c3bee754_fy22-mls-affiliate-sheet_download.pdf)
* [Perkins Braille and Talking Book Library](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/868fb842_fy22-perkins-affiliate-sheet_download.pdf)
* [Worcester Talking Book](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/d163e117_fy22-worcester-talking-book-affiliate-sheet_download.pdf)

     Networks

* [CLAMS-Cape Libraries Automated Materials Sharing](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/eb9d8698_fy22-clams-affiliate-sheet_download.pdf)
* [C/W MARS-Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/c96f49e8_fy22-cw-mars-affiliate-sheet_download.pdf)
* [MLN-Minuteman Library Network](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/0d14d281_fy22-minuteman-library-network-affiliate-sheet_download.pdf)
* [MVLC-Merrimack Valley Library Consortium](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/a10980b2_fy22-mvlc-affiliate-sheet_download.pdf)
* [NOBLE-North of Boston Library Exchange](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/597d426b_fy22-noble-affiliate-sheet_download.pdf)
* [OCLN-Old Colony Library Network](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/ae52ce26_fy22-ocln-affiliate-sheet_download.pdf)
* [SAILS Library Network](https://mblc-newsroom-static.s3.amazonaws.com/collateral/official-docs/legislative/06b66c85_fy22-sails-affiliate-sheet_download.pdf)

**[Mass Budget Browser-Libraries](https://archive.massbudget.org/browser/subcat.php?id=Libraries)**



Mid-month collections for the month-to-date period in March were $1.689 billion, up $107 million or 6.7% versus the same period in March 2020. The month-to-date increase is mostly due to increases in estate, withholding and corporate and business return payments. Income Taxes totaled $682 million, up $56 million or 9.0% versus the same period in March 2020. Sales & Use Taxes were $113 million, up $5 million versus the same period in March 2020. Corporate & Business Taxes were $795 million, up $13 million or 1.7% versus the same period in March 2020. Other Taxes totaled $100 million, up $32 million or 47.7% versus the same period in March 2020.

Since the deadline for tax filings has been extended by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) until May 17, the revenue calculations for April will again be skewed from historical projections. With the stimulus money for states and municipalities approved, a smaller withdrawal will be needed from the Commonwealth’s rainy-day fund.

As the Legislature navigates the remaining months of budget season, there are a number of committees that are important to follow, but the most important of these is the [Joint Committee on Ways and Means](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J39). The House and Senate Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Ranking Minority Members of both chambers make up the Conference Committee that will negotiate the House and Senate budget differences and develop the final budget that will be voted in each branch before being sent to the Governor for his signature. [Michael J. Rodrigues](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/MJR0), Chair, [Cindy F. Friedman](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/CFF0) Vice Chair, and [Patrick M. O'Connor](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/PMO) (Ranking Minority) in the Senate and [Aaron Michlewitz](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/AMM1), Chair, [Ann-Margaret Ferrante](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/AMF1), Vice Chair, and [Todd M. Smola](https://malegislature.gov/Legislators/Profile/TMS2) (Ranking Minority) in the House are the members of the Conference Committee for the FY 2022 budget.

The [Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J30) oversees the seven MBLC budget lines and the [Joint Committee on Education](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J14) has oversight of library legislation. The House Chair of Tourism is Representative Carole Fiola of Fall River and the Senate Chair is Senator Edward Kennedy of Lowell. The House Chair of Education is Representative Alice Peisch of Wellesley and the Senate Chair is Senator Jason Lewis of Winchester. The [Joint Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J32) is responsible for the various bonding bills that are introduced by the Legislature and the Governor, including the construction bond bills that support the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP). The [Joint Committee on Revenue](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J26) will be important should the Commissioners look for additional funding for construction, infrastructure, or other library initiatives at some point in the future.

* [Joint Committee on Advanced Information Technology, the Internet and Cybersecurity](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J33)
* [Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J12)
* [Joint Committee on Higher Education](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J29)
* [Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J43)
* [Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J10)
* [Joint Committee on Public Health](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J16)
* [Joint Committee on Public Service](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J23)
* [Joint Committee on Racial Equity, Civil Rights, and Inclusion](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J34)
* [Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J37)

**Consideration of appointment to the State Advisory Council on Libraries (SACL)**

Rob Favini, Head of Library Advisory and Development stated that the Statewide Advisory Council on Libraries has an opening for SACL representative; one representing library user. The LSTA staff is pleased to present the following candidate for your consideration:

* Eric Poulin, Assistant Professor, Simmons University

Each representative is appointed to a three-year term and can be re-appointed for an additional three years.

Chair Cluggish asked for a motion to approve the minutes under the consent agenda.

Commissioner Conrad moved and Commissioner Bianoclo seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners appoints Eric Poulin, Assistant Professor, Simmons University to complete the vacant library user representative position ending on September 30, 2023 under the consent agenda.

**Hearing no objection, Chair Cluggish declared the motion passed under the consent agenda.**

**Consideration of approval of the FY2022 Plan of Service and Program and Budget for the Massachusetts Center for the Book**

Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director, Massachusetts Center for the Book and Krista McLeod, Board Member, Massachusetts Center for the Book (MCB) presented the FY2022 Plan of Service and Budget for the Center for the Book at the February 4, 2021 Board Meeting.

Massachusetts Center for the Book is in its 22nd year of operations, chartered as the commonwealth affiliate of the Library of Congress and charged, per our line-item budget language, with developing, supporting, and promoting cultural programming to advance the cause of books and reading and to increase the outreach potential of Massachusetts public libraries.

Ours is the smallest line item under the purview of the Board of Library Commissioners, by a large factor. We believe our best face would be presented in a reporting structure that aligned with the requirements of the Perkins and Worcester Talking Book Programs or the nine networks, and we say that only underscore the difficulty of fitting a small line-item of $225K into a structure developed for multi-million dollar systems such as MLS and LFC. We trust that our document will be read with scale and scope in mind.

With this covering narrative, we submit our proposed budget for FY2022 based on $225,000, an amount that is still 10% below the level of funding that MBLC along with MCB said was necessary to establish funding for a standalone organization back in FY15. This document represents the best of our current thinking about the prospects for activity and interaction during the next 16 to 18 months for an initiative that continues to be drastically underfunded.

The budget begins to work toward executive transition and much-needed organizational change. In FY22, we shall hire a full-time staff person to become versed in the programs and activities of Massachusetts Center for the Book. To accomplish this feat, we are earmarking the modest $25,000 increase we received 6 months into the current fiscal year to cover half of the proposed $50,000 salary for this new position, taking the other $25,000 from the FY 22 appropriation.

This is also a budget that will invest the savings from FY21 (the anticipated balance at close of FY21 and the carryovers on projects that we and partners have found take much longer to complete during the extended quarantine) into a new model for programmatic activity that emphasizes collaboration so as to extend our reach.

Highlights of our anticipated activity:

* We shall continue to administer an annual (albeit streamlined) Massachusetts Book Awards.
* We shall offer Letters About Literature for one more year while we assess the impact of the school shutdown.
* We shall transition Mass Book Trails to a Google platform, reimaging the project as an armchair tourism initiative with greater emphasis on sites than on routes.
* We are increasing our collaboration with Boston Book Festival, continuing to work with them on Mass Book Bites and beginning to plan outreach to, potentially, Indie Authors.
* We are in the process, as well, of establishing programming partnerships with organizations focused on family literacy and on readers’ advisory/reading promotion, which we hope to announce before the close of the current fiscal year and launch in FY22.

Highlights of the affiliated centers for the book network activity:

* We shall continue to nominate organizations for the Library of Congress Literacy Awards. We have been gratified to have had all of our nominations succeed with the national awards committee.
* We shall continue, though in a reduced role nationally, our participation in the East Coast Affiliated Centers for the Book reading promotion activity, Route 1 Reads. This year, we will turn our attention to the cities and towns along Rt 1 in Massachusetts to develop programs that will support an affinity group.
* We shall be in Year 1 of a new biennial agreement with LOC that will focus on increased involvement with our nation’s library in bringing increased engagement opportunities to the local level. Our Executive Director will continue to serve on the Steering Committee for this initiative.
* We shall be involved in National Book Festival, which will be, once again, remote. Building on the knowledge gained from the 2020 festival, we are in talks to develop strategies that will exploit the virtual nature of the festival to localize offerings to a greater extent.

Organizational priorities for FY2021:

* Increase the number of directors sitting on our board
* Fill the first third of seats on an advisory board named the Mass Book Council
* Rationalize the relationship between MCB and MBLC
* Settle the Center for the Book in a supportive and congenial working environment
* Begin to plan for executive transition

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Kronholm seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the FY2022 Plan of Service and Program and Budget filed on February 25, 2021 for the Massachusetts Center for the Book, with a bottom line of $225,000 as presented in accompanying documents in agenda item 8.

Chair Cluggish asked for a roll call of the Commissioners for this motion.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Commissioner Abraham- Yes | Commissioner Cluggish- Yes | Commissioner DeBole- Yes |
| Commissioner Ball- Yes | Commissioner Comeau- Yes | Commissioner Kronholm- Yes |
| Commissioner Biancolo- Yes | Commissioner Conrad- Yes | Commissioner Resnick- Yes |

**The motion passes.**

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

Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director, presented the following report:

**Strategic Initiative 1**

MLS ensures its services are sustainable, prioritize member needs, and equitably serve all member types.

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| Goal | Actions | Measurement of Success | **Monthly work toward Goal** |
| MLS ensures service value to all member types. | MLS will develop a guide to its levels of services, clarifying what benefits are available to each member type; the guide will be shared broadly and in several formats | *Member library staff at a broad level will have a greater understanding of MLS services and resources.* |  |
| MLS will continue to strengthen its partnerships and collaborations to allow MLS to focus on what it does uniquely well. | MLS will establish a partnership process, including a rubric, liaisons, expectations, policy and evaluations of current and new partnerships for opportunities and overlap. | *MLS will report out annually on the value of their partnerships.* | MLS registered to be a sponsor of the MA School Library Association Conference.Developing new ways of “exhibiting” including recorded videos, and learning how to engage with members at events using various event platforms. |
| New Services will be designed to deliver the greatest statewide impact, able to expand and contract due to available funding and need. | MLS will create guidelines and criteria for new and established services for value and impact. | *As an element of service review or introduction, MLS will be able to detail the impact of the service.* | Building off of our work last month, we discussed and selected a new method to share end of the year stats and comments with the membership. |

# Strategic Initiative 2

MLS empowers leaders to emerge at every level of library service, connecting staff throughout the stages of their careers.

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| Goal | Actions | Measurement of Success | **Monthly work toward Goal** |
| MLS promotes excellence and continuity by providing professional development, conversation and community around leadership. | MLS develops a process for reaching out to members/training participants, asking them to report on how MLS programs have helped them. | *Member library staff recognize the transformative value of building and maintaining a professional network.* | Began Spring CE season.Continue identifying leadership training topics and external presenters. |
| Leadership, professional development, and networking opportunities will have flexible offerings in order to include participants from various library types, library sizes, and resources. | Linked to S.I.1, G.1: MLS will develop a guide to its levels of service, clarifying what benefits are available to each member type; the guide will be shared broadly and in several formats. | *MLS will report to member libraries on an annual basis the number of professional development opportunities via type of opportunity, intended audience, training modality and type of library.* | Continue identifying leadership trainings in a variety of online formats for member staff in informal and formal leadership positions. |

# Strategic Initiative 3

MLS will take the lead in facilitating important conversations, and support member-facing initiatives focused on DEI: diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and social justice work.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goal | Actions | Measurement of Success | **Monthly work toward Goal** |
| MLS will integrate the core values of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and social justice into its policies, practices, procedures, and programs. | In collaboration with partner organizations, MLS will explore hiring a coordinator/consultant to support the membership in this work.MLS will work to align internal policies and procedures to the tenets of DEI. | *MLS will demonstrate both increased resource allocation as well as substantive, visible progress in representation throughout MLS services.* | MLS is now a institutional member of several local and national associations (listed below)Membership in these groups has a two-fold benefit: 1. We are able to support the work these orgs are doing and 2. Provide resources and opportunities to MLS and our members. |
| Following the lead of trusted experts, MLS will build awareness in using the DEI tenets with member library staff to identify and eliminate barriers to inclusive library services. | In partnership with member libraries, research and tailor a DEI evaluation framework for member libraries. | *Member library staff are confident in using the core values of DEI with their communities.* | Continue identifying DEI training topics and external presenters. |

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

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

**Flipster**

We have subscribed with a new digital magazine provider, Ebsco’s product, Flipster. We’ve purchased 115 magazine titles and back issues are available. Our prior magazine subscription was acquired by OverDrive and those titles will expire at the end of the fiscal year. Flipster magazines are offered in addition to those found in another product BPL subscribes to, PressReader, which offers hundreds of magazines and newspapers from countries around the world and in dozens of languages.

Apps for Flipster are available for several mobile device platforms, including iOS, Android, and Fire. Notable titles include: Consumer Reports, Sports Illustrated, People, People en Espanol, TIME, the Atlantic, and library professional resources, Publishers Weekly, Library Journal, SLJ, and Hornbook.

**CARES Act funding**

Rob Favini reached out to BPL regarding available CARES Act fund and we are very happy to be receiving $117,000. We will be using these funds for the purchasing of OverDrive e-content. Our established reach as LFC enables us to be sure these funds will serve residents across the Commonwealth. We’ll focus on titles that support youth summer reading, workforce development, health and mental health titles. BPL will be spending these funds in July and August and this support will help us reduce wait times over the summer.

**$2.1 Million Philanthropic Investment in Founding Research Collection**

On Wednesday, March 24, it was announced that the BPL has received $2.1 million in private funding to revitalize the library's Founding Research Collection. Two gifts are making this work possible: a contribution to the Boston Public Library Fund through an anonymous donor, and another from the Associates of the Boston Public Library. These funds will enable the library to clean, catalog, and preserve the collection, making them fully accessible to the public for the first time in the digital era.

Today, this collection spans five centuries and contains more than 500,000 volumes, thousands of which date from before 1820. The collection contains books, pamphlets, journals, maps, atlases, illustrated portfolios, and more. Many items in the collection are first editions or are one of few remaining copies of certain texts, making objects in this collection invaluable to researchers and scholars worldwide.

To preserve the Founding Research Collection and make it available for public scholarship, the BPL will implement a comprehensive cleaning program to remove decades of accumulated dirt and debris amassed over the collection’s long history. This process will enable these collections to be handled, cataloged, and stored safely with long-term preservation needs in mind. For the cataloging portion of this preservation project, the BPL will create electronic records within the library’s online catalog that facilitate public discovery and retrieval of hundreds of thousands of volumes from the research collection and enable future digitization projects.

We look forward to returning this 16th – 20th century collection to our 21st century patrons, who will once again be able to easily explore and learn from these historic treasures.

**Libraries and COVID-19 Discussion**

Rob Favini stated that there are 3 overall themes in libraries at this time.

**Community expectations:**

As more people get vaccinated, and as retailers, bars, gyms, and the like have expanded operations patrons are becoming more vocal in pressing the library to return to full operations and programming. In addition to patrons, town officials are asking the same questions.

**Staff wellness:**

Staff wellness is still a concern. Staffs have gone above and beyond. No one wants to push staff too much. On most building opening issues staffs have been working closely with local Boards of Health. The fear is that at some point Boards of Health will green light services that will push staffs too far.

**Communication with area libraries:**

I felt that this could be the most frustrating aspect of providing service to outside users. Staff feel that they are not getting support from visitors’ home libraries. Front line staff at open libraries are left to sort out all manner of lending issues ranging from blocked accounts to library card renewals. In some instances, the home libraries of visitors are unavailable to be contacted, or referred to, in order to clear problems. This leads to frustration, anger, and potential problems. These are not new problems as they often occurred in pre-COVID days. The point is that they are more impactful to front line staff in the current conditions.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**List of documents for the April 1, 2021 Regular Monthly Board Meeting:**

1. Agenda for the April 1, 2021, Regular Monthly Board Meeting
2. Draft Minutes from the March 4, 2021 Regular Monthly Board Meeting
3. Agenda 7, SACL Appointment
4. Agenda 8, Consideration of Approval of the FY2022 Plan of Service and Program and Budget from the Massachusetts Center for the Book
5. Agenda Item 9, Report from MLS
6. Agenda Item 10, Report from LFC

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Cluggish asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting under the consent agenda.

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Conrad seconded to adjourn the April 1, 2021 MBLC Monthly Board Meeting.

**Hearing no objection, Chair Cluggish declared the motion passed under the consent agenda.**



N. Janeen Resnick

Secretary