MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS MONTHLY REGULAR MEETING

**Date:** Thursday, August 6, 2020

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

**Place:** Zoom Teleconference

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

**Staff Participants:**

James Lonergan, Director; Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist; Celeste Bruno, Communications Director; Kate Butler, Electronic Services Specialist; Tracey Dimant, Head of Operations & Budget; Rob Favini, Head of Library Advisory and Development; Lyndsay Forbes, Project Manager & Grants Specialist; 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 Participants:**

Sharon Bernard, Library Director, Fitchburg Public Library; Margaret Cardello, Library Director, Marlborough Public Library; Kim Charlson, Executive Director, Perkins Library; Catherine Halpin, Collaborative Library Services Coordinator, Boston Public Library (BPL); Marie Letarte, Library Director, Bigelow Free Public Library, Clinton; Mark Linde, Resident, Bridgewater; Kathy Lussier, Executive Director, SAILS, Inc.; Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director, Massachusetts Center for the Book; Sharon Sharry, Library Director, Jones Library, Inc., Amherst; Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director, Massachusetts Library System (MLS); Cynthia St. Amour, Library Director, Brewster Ladies Library, Brewster

**Meeting Called to Order by Chair Cluggish**

Chair Cluggish called the meeting to order at 10:01 A.M.

**Approval of Minutes from regular monthly meeting: July 9, 2020**

* Page 2, line 12- Change to “only include questions”
* Page 14, line 16- Clarify if $500,000 is only for this grant round.
* Page 23, line 6- Change to “are retiring from their current librarianship.”

Commissioner Ochsenbein moved and Commissioner Ball seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the minutes for the monthly business meeting from the July 9, 2020 with corrections stated.

Board Clerk, Rachel Masse asked for a Roll Call vote of the Commissioners.

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| Commissioner Abraham- YES | Commissioner DeBole- YES | Commissioner Ochsenbein- YES |
| Commissioner Ball- YES | Commissioner Kronholm- YES | Commissioner Perille- YES |
| Commissioner Cluggish- YES | Commissioner Madell- YES | Commissioner Resnick- YES |

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Chair’s Report**

Chair Cluggish presented the following report:

At the end of our last meeting, when we elected officers, I had planned to say something about Roland as Chair.  But we had already met for three hours so it was best that I waited until today.

Roland presided as Chair for the last two years. He was definitely a star and extremely hard working. He ordinarily took on speaking at 4-5 legislative breakfasts, jumped at the chance to speak at groundbreakings or library grand openings and was eloquent in his testimonies at Ways and Means. But it was in these last few months, when we had serious back-to-back crises that Roland showed his mettle. For the past few months, he had been doing MBLC work for as much as 40 hours a week. The only other library volunteer time that I can easily think of when you work that many hours a week is when you're Trustee Chair and building a new library.  I know the former was exhausting whereas the latter is exhilarating.

So before we move on, in thanks for his work as Chair these last two years, I'd like everyone to join in and give Roland a virtual standing ovation in recognition of two excellent years as Chair of this Board.

We now have a new Executive Board, with Jan as Secretary and Les as Vice Chair. The MBLC norm for the Executive Board has been that a Commissioner starts serving as Secretary, moves up to Vice Chair after two years, and moves up to Chair after serving as Vice Chair for two years, therefore having being on the Executive Board for 4 years before serving as Chair. Those of us who have been serving on the Board for several years agree that it takes at least two years before you have a solid idea of how everything operates. We don't have that luxury of time at the moment; Roland and I had several head scratching discussions about succession trying to figure out the best approach.

We may reconsider the makeup of the Executive Board sooner than past norms. In the meantime, the goal is to familiarize the newer appointees with as many aspects of the operations of the agency as quickly as possible.

The most important thing to remember is to take off your local library hat and put on your State Agency hat for MBLC considerations and decision making. We are not a library; we are a state agency. While your past local experience will inform your Commissioner work, a state-wide perspective is critical in discussions and decisions. I cannot stress that enough.
Two years ago, I recall saying that what we had in front of us were many unknowns; what I was referring to at the time was the fact that we had 5 imminent Board retirements in front of us and we had no idea when the appointments authority would fill them.

I was reminded of that when I began to prepare these remarks, as again we are faced with many unknowns. That is, until late yesterday afternoon, when one of the unknowns was partially explained when we got the good news that the MBLC budget is level funded at least for three months. Governor Baker signed the 3 month budget previously passed by the legislature. I had braced myself for 20-30% cuts.

However, Staff is currently working on next the next fiscal year's budget while state revenues still remain uncertain, and the Governor is talking about a possible pullback in reopening for the state which would have a direct impact on the economy.

An unknown that is in hand is that the agency is moving offices in late September; given the MBLC staff's superior ability at coordination, it should go well, although I suspect that the financing might have caused James and Tracey some loss of sleep.

At the Federal level, we're hoping that there will be a follow up to the CARES act from which the MBLC could access funds.  There's also legislation calling for $2 billion in economic recovery funding for America's libraries through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). I'm proud that our two Senators are sponsors. The Library Stabilization Fund Act would allow libraries across the country to retain staff, maintain services, and safely keep communities connected and informed. I hope you all received the notice from ALA and took action to advocate with both our Senators and Representatives. Even though our Senators are sponsors, they can point to a large number of supporter calls and emails in their own advocacy. If you don't receive notices on advocacy from ALA please let James know.

More unknowns for the MBLC include what will the waiver requests look like? Will cities and towns be able to fund their libraries? For the Construction Program, will communities go forward with their construction plans?

It all feels to me like waiting for the other shoe to drop. However, after watching our staff perform over the last 8 years, I am confident that they will handle all of this with their usual professionalism and skill.

In the last month, I've participated in the Executive Board Conference Call, the Dr. Ibram Kendi event, “How to be an AntiRacist”, and the Kennedy Institute conversation on Voting Rights.  I'd like to thank Maura Deedy and James for sending on the Board Source article, “A Message to My Fellow White Board Chairs”. Given that we voted unanimously on our pledge in our Statement on Black Lives Matter, it's incumbent on us to participate in these various opportunities regarding racism and its effects on minorities when it is possible for us to do so. I took a few of the Implicit Bias Tests at the link in the article and they are eye-openers.

Because of a busy few days, I was unable to watch the United for Libraries webinar, so I will be watching the recorded version. I'm eager to hear about it though.

I've also contacted several of you about your committee and liaison appointments. There are a few changes. Roland has dropped off as the MLS liaison and been replaced by Les Ball, Roland has also left the Resource Sharing Committee and been replaced by Stacy, but he will remain on Construction Subcommittee. Rachel has distributed a list of the changes to date.

Finally, to come full circle, I started these remarks by talking about Roland. When I served as Chair before, I know I set a highly engaged active pace. I spoke at a lot of legislative breakfasts, groundbreakings, grand openings, and other events. I knew I was doing more than my previous two predecessors, but I loved what I was doing, and I was having fun. Then Roland became chair and he not only kept up that pace, but watching him, I think he exceeded it. So, we set a high bar, and I think that we may have scared people off serving as Chair. I want you to know that I do not intend to keep up that pace this time; it is not necessary. So, the message is that as in past boards we will spread the work among all of us.

**Commissioner Reports**

**Commissioner Abraham**

* Participated in the MLA Annual Meeting
* Participated in the United for Libraries Trustees, Friends, and Foundations

**Commissioner Ball**

* Participated in Executive Committee Call

**Commissioner DeBole**

* Participated in a racial justice webinar
* Participated in the United for Libraries Welcome Session
* Participated in the meet and greet for Climate Week about getting libraries involved.

**Commissioner Ochsenbein**

* Spoke at the Littleton Groundbreaking
* Participated in the MLS Executive Board Meeting

**Commissioner Perille**

* July 28 - United for Libraries welcome webinar for (Massachusetts) state membership
* August 04 - United for Libraries conference session: Integrating Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity into Your Board Culture
* August 05 - United for Libraries conference session: Great Boards Don't Happen By Accident

**Commissioner Resnick**

* Participated in Executive Committee Call
* Sent construction thank you notes to legislators in Western Mass
* Reviewed articles on Implicit Bias and took some of the tests for bias

**Director’s Report**

Director Lonergan presented the following report:

Meetings/activities since the last monthly Board meeting:

* July 9—MLA Executive Board Transition Meeting, virtual
* July 9—Call with Noah McClanan, Deputy Director, Office of Boards and Commissions
* July/early August—Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) & Council of State Agencies in the Northeast (COSLINE) weekly virtual check-ins during COVID-19 crisis
* July 10—COSLA Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, virtual
* July 13— MLS Executive Board meeting, virtual
* July 14—Call with Matt Blumenfeld, Executive Director, Springfield Library Foundation
* July 15—Webinar: Build Your Online Presence with Google and Your Local Library
* July 22—MBLC Anti-racism Working Group meeting, virtual
* July 23—Special Collections Symposium for Smaller Libraries, virtual
* July 28—United for Libraries Statewide Membership webinar
* July 30—State budget & Grow with Google discussion with David Leonard and Michael Colford, BPL
* July 31—MLA Legislative Committee meeting, virtual
* August 3—Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Workshop: Libraries, Broadband Adoption and Digital Literacy
* August 4—Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP) Architects Roundtable: Library Design & COVID-19

The Governor has signed a $16.5 billion, three-month budget to fund state government through the end of October.  According to a recent State House News Service article, Senate Ways and Means Chair Rodrigues and House Ways and Means Chair Michlewitz think there should be sufficient information available by the end of October about federal relief funds, the trajectory of COVID-19, and the state of the economic recovery to assemble a budget to cover appropriations over the final eight months of fiscal 2021.

The IT bond bill was reported out of conference committee and passed by the legislature on July 31 and has been sent to the Governor. The bill includes $115 million for the MPLCP. The Governor may veto or reduce line items in bond bills, which the legislature can override with two-thirds majorities in both houses.

**Special Collections Symposium for Smaller Libraries:** MBLC’s Special Collections Symposium for Smaller Libraries was held on July 23 and hosted and moderated by Evan Knight. Keynote speaker Ken Gloss, from the Brattle Book Shop, spoke about the real and perceived value of special and rare collections. This was followed by a panel discussing academic perspectives around special collections featuring Lisa Conathan from Williams College and Mike Kelley from Amherst College. The final session of the day featured the public and special library perspectives with Sara Trotta from the Congregational Library and Archive in Boston and Cynthia Harbeson from the Jones Library in Amherst.

The event drew 289 registrations with 186 attendees. 133 Massachusetts institutions attended representing libraries of all types: public, school, public academic, private academic, and others. Attendees were also from other New England states (NH, Maine, VT, CT) and other national—and even international (Canada, Ireland, India)—locations.

A recording of the conference can be found here: https://vimeo.com/441103615 Huge thanks go out to Michelle Eberly and Anna Popp at the MLS who helped facilitate the day and made the use of MLS’s online event platform possible.

On July 28 Maura Deedy hosted a **“Welcome and Introduction to United for Libraries”** session. Beth Nawalinski, Executive Director, United for Libraries, American Library Association led the session which introduced MBLC’s Massachusetts statewide membership that is available to all Massachusetts Library Trustees, Friend Groups, Foundations and library staff. 45 people attended and learned about upcoming events, resources, training courses, and topical webinars.

To register for the Statewide Group Membership, visit http://www.ala.org/united/login/mass

You’ll be asked for your library name and city, name and email address.

As a statewide group member, you’ll get access to:

* Free registration to the United for Libraries Virtual Conference on August 4-6, 2020
* Live and recorded webinars on a variety of topics, including COVID-19, Friends and Trustees Under 40, Advocacy, Fundraising and more
* Resources on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Merging a Library’s Friends Group and Foundation, and Troubled Library Boards: Prevention & Survival to name a few
* Discussion forums for Trustees, Friends Groups, and Library Foundations
* Monthly Member Forums

So far, over 880 people have signed up for the Statewide Group Membership. The statewide group membership is made possible with federal funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

**LSTA Grant Management During the Pandemic:** As the Federal fiscal year approaches, LSTA consultants have been closely monitoring all currently funded grants to ensure that program objectives are met and that all federal funds are spent on time. In general library grant recipient project managers have been making necessary adjustments and are on track to successfully complete their projects. MBLC LSTA consultants have been reaching out to grantees and fielding questions. Apart from several staff changes at recipient libraries, to date there have not been any major issues. However, we will continue to closely monitor all active grants.

The MBLC will be hosting 5 coffee hours for Friends. Each session will last an hour and will feature a Friends group who will share a success they’ve had with online membership or fundraising or advocacy, as a few examples. Coffee Hour dates and registration links are below:

Monday, August 17, 2020 at 11:00 AM
https://mblc.libcal.com/event/6917129

Thursday, September 17, 2020 at 2:00 PM
https://mblc.libcal.com/event/6917140

Tuesday, October 20, 2020 at 6:00 PM
https://mblc.libcal.com/event/6917167

Tuesday, November 10, 2020 at 10:00 AM
https://mblc.libcal.com/event/6917177

Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 6:00 PM
https://mblc.libcal.com/event/6917185

**Reopening Libraries Project with MLS:** The Commonwealth entered Phase 3 on July 6, and our guidelines were updated according to the latest mandatory safety guidelines. We submitted a letter to the reopening advisory board detailing our concerns with the inclusion of contact tracing logs in the sector specific guidance.

**Construction:** We convened a roundtable of architects to discuss potential shifts in library design, both short- and long-term, as a result of the pandemic. Topics included patron circulation patterns; furniture design/arrangement; small rooms vs. large open spaces; exterior spaces; flexibility; safety and security; and HVAC. The event took place via zoom on Tuesday, August 4. We had 18 architects signed up to attend, all of whom work for firms that have done multiple MPLCP projects. Andrea will edit the recording to create a podcast episode, and Lauren will write a blog post about the discussion.

The **Communications team** is working on several initiatives with MBLC staff and Buyer including advertising ComCat (the Commonwealth Catalog), State Aid, Construction, and the Small Libraries Forum.

For **ComCat**, the team worked with Buyer to develop social media graphics and text to help announce updates to the ComCat service, which has been paused during the pandemic. The updates help explain that it is estimated service will resume in September but with over 350 participating libraries it may take some time to get up to full speed. The ComCat working group is headed up by Paul Kissman.

To help local officials better understand the COVID-19 related changes to the **State Aid to Public Libraries Program**, the team worked with Liz Babbitt and Mary Rose Quinn to create a new state aid FAQ that answers questions about the changes and addresses why it is important to stay certified, especially during difficult economic times. Print and digital versions have been created and will be posted in the State Aid section of the agency site as well as under the “public officials” tab on the top of the agency landing page.

The team also worked with Andrea Bunker and Lauren Stara on a **construction FAQ** that answers questions related to the pause in awarding grants for FY21. This is posted under the construction section of the agency website and can easily be emailed to people who have questions.

For the **Small Libraries Forum**, the team worked with Lyndsay Forbes to create social and print materials to support the now virtual conference coming up in November.

The team is also developing materials that help **announce the agency move** including a postcard for a physical mailing, social media, letterhead, and an email signature.

The **First Lady of the Commonwealth and Blades Summer Challenge** is ongoing until August 14.

The MBLC’s application to the **Boston Book Festival Online** has been accepted. The festival will run for almost an entire month--from October 5–25, 2020.  The MBLC will be highlighting library services as part of the virtual marketplace.

The team also continues to put together and send out the weekly **MBLC Service Updates** and the monthly **Libraries in the News**.

**MBLC Logo:** The MBLC logo includes the state seal. In late July, the Senate created a special commission to design a new seal and state motto and to study ways that the current version, which depicts a Native man standing beneath a disembodied arm and sword, "may be unwittingly harmful to or misunderstood by the citizens of the commonwealth." We are switching to the version of our logo that does not include the state seal and will be discussing a permanent logo solution.

**Woburn:** We recently forwarded a letter by email to the Commissioners that “a concerned citizen of Woburn and lifetime library user” mailed to the Commissioners, along with a copy of a letter from the Board of Directors of the Minuteman Network, regarding potential layoffs and furloughs at the **Woburn Public Library** and the decision of the Friends of the Woburn Public Library to disband. This situation has also been covered by local media, including NBC Boston 10, The Woburn Patch, and the Woburn Daily Times Chronicle. While this is an unfortunate and difficult situation, it continues to be a local matter, given State Aid to Public Libraries minimum requirements, which include the Municipal Appropriation Requirement and a minimum for hours, do not include minimum staffing levels.

We have convened an **anti-racism staff group** and met for the first time on July 22. Maura Deedy helped organize the group and facilitated our first meeting. We are hoping that this group will help inform the the MBLC’s ongoing discussion about diversity and inclusion, and particularly our strategic planning efforts. We have created a LibGuide for internal use that includes the Board’s June 10 statement regarding racism and racial justice as well as a list of anti-racism resources.

**Office move update:** Our moving company delivered crates this Monday to allow staff to begin packing their work areas. Our cubicles will be moved on Friday, 9/11, and our furniture and crates, boxes, etc. will be moved on Friday, 9/25 and Saturday, 9/26. While all staff are helping with the move, I want to particularly thank Tracey and Maryellen for all their hard and detailed work coordinating our move.

**Report from Perkins Library**

As Board Liaison to Perkins Library, Commissioner Abraham gave a background on Perkins before introducing Kim Charlson, Executive Director of the Perkins Library.

The Perkins Library has provided accessible reading material to people with visual impairment and other disabilities since 1837. Since then, they’ve significantly expanded their offerings to serve more people with more nuanced needs. Today, Perkins Library distributes more than half a million accessible books, magazines, newspapers, DVDs and more, at no cost to the estimated 28,000 patrons they serve annually. They’ve also led the charge in distributing assistive technologies like refreshable braille displays while providing a website that enables people to download accessible reading material.

Perkins Library circulates more than a half million accessible books, newspapers and publications in braille, large print and digital audio formats annually to thousands of registered patrons in New England and beyond. Members can borrow books and magazines in a variety of formats and foreign languages while accessing free services like Newsline, where newspapers and magazines are read aloud over the phone.

Kim Charlson, Executive Director provided the Board with the following report.

All of the staff of the Braille & Talking Book Library work very hard to provide first class services to over 25,000 borrowers all across Massachusetts and throughout New England every day. But it was when our world took a major change in March with the coronavirus that their true talents came to the forefront.

On March 20, staff learned that Governor Baker was issuing an executive order closing down all nonessential businesses on March 24 in response to the growing pandemic. Knowing that patrons would not be able to receive any reading materials, books, magazines, or audio described DVDs for some time, the staff were determined to select and ship out as many books as they could for borrowers. In two days, they sent out over 15,000 audio and braille books and magazines. Little did we know that would be our last outgoing shipment for nearly ten weeks. Normally, it would take the team ten business days to send out 15,000 items. This accomplishment was unprecedented in the history of our library.

Next, staff had to adapt to working remotely and handling countless emails from borrowers asking for services. Librarians continued to place book orders for patrons in hopes that the Shipping department would return soon to mail them out. After thousands of emails and voicemail messages, we were successful, working with IT, to get our phone system to allow staff to answer the phones remotely and process requests for our eventual opening. From the closing until the reopening, staff handled nearly 20,000 phone calls from anxious, desperate, and very appreciative borrowers.

The one way that patrons could still get books to listen to was to use our download service, BARD (Braille & Audio Reading Download). Since March, staff have enrolled over 130 new BARD users to the service. This has allowed many people who are now homebound to have access to our materials once again. The Library Zoom Team has hosted multiple training sessions to allow patrons to learn to effectively use this system, whether it be downloading to a cartridge or our special mobile app. Via zoom and the telephone, patrons learned to download their own braille and/or audio materials.

From BARD training, we learned how powerful the Zoom platform could be for staying connected to borrowers. We then added Trivia groups, book clubs, Teaching Tuesdays, Audio Described Movie Afternoons, Remember When groups for Library Without Walls, and Audio Dramas. Hundreds of borrowers are now regularly participating in these events, feeling more connected to the Library, Perkins, and one another. During a time of isolation, we have succeeded in delivering information, entertainment, companionship, friendship, support, and engagement.

Shortly after all students were sent home in March, the Library braille team realized there was a major problem for the teachers to get braille materials produced for their students for remote instruction and lessons because none of them had braille embossing equipment in their homes. The BTBL set up a Braille & Mail Program to help Perkins teachers work with their students who needed braille materials. Teachers would email worksheets, quizzes, short stories, spelling words, or other class materials to the BTBL Braille & Mail Program with any special instructions for putting it into braille for a student. They would also send along the mailing address of the student, and the team would format and braille the documents, and mail them directly to the students for the following week’s remote class assignments. Emails were sent back to the teachers to alert them that the material had gone into the mail. We believe this has been an extremely important service and has helped teachers to connect and provide vital braille services to students.

One of the most monumental feats was the Shipping Department’s return in late May, to face a returned mail backlog of audio and braille books and magazines of nearly 75,000 items stuffed into the library warehouse. Normally, about 25,000 return items are processed in each month, but in one month, the Shipping team checked in nearly 75,000 returned items that had been delivered by the Post Office and filled up every bit of working space available. At the same time, staff sent out nearly 40,000 outgoing items for patrons who were so desperate to get accessible reading materials once again. Everyone stepped up and made it all happen because our borrowers needed their books and magazines, and that was so important to them to get them out the door.

There is no question that Covid-19 has changed the way we all work with our constituents, but thanks to Perkins’ administration’s willingness to embrace the latest technology, and to think about service delivery outside the box, thousands of our patrons could still access services, teachers could get braille materials for students, seniors could have some connection with others through book clubs and other activities, children and young adults could still participate in summer reading activities and win prizes for reading, during what was a difficult time for all of us. All of the team in the library has tackled the challenges placed before them, figured out new ways to do business, stretched to meet the needs of patrons, supported professionals working with consumers and students in the community, and all with a positive attitude and can-do spirit. It is my privilege to lead this group, whenever I ask them to stretch to do something, they are there to make it happen. They all believe that it is their responsibility to make it possible for “Reading & Learning to be for Everyone!”.

**Legislative Report**

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

The Governor signed the appropriations portion of an interim spending budget bill that extends the temporary FY 2021 funding through the end of October. The $16.5 billion budget measure is based on three months of FY 2020 funding levels. Governor Baker did return to the Legislature for its reconsideration, language attached to the bill that mandated certain spending levels and “limited the flexibility [his] administration’s needs to manage three months of funding without a General Appropriations Act.”

The Legislature also passed the IT Bond Bill that includes funding for library construction. The $115 million approved in the bill will fund all seventeen projects on the construction waitlist. The bill has been sent to the Governor’s desk for his signature. Earlier this spring, Administration and Finance (ANF) set the annual spending cap for library projects at $20 million.

The House and Senate voted to extend the close of their formal legislative session from July 31 to the end of the calendar year. This will give both Chambers the opportunity to continue assessing the Commonwealth’s revenue outlook, to determine what financial assistance the state can expect from the federal government, and what further impact COVID 19 will have on state and local governments and economies this fall before finalizing the annual budget. In addition to the budget, there are several important bills in committees that have been delayed due to COVID 19 that are still pending and can now be voted on during this legislative session.

The legislature has voiced its commitment to maintaining school funding and unrestricted local aid at FY 2020 levels this fiscal year. This does not traditionally include restricted local aid such as the funding for the State Aid to Public Libraries Program. The MLA Legislative Committee has offered to assist with outreach and messaging in support of State Aid funding and why staying certified matters.

The Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) reports that June revenue collections total $2.493 billion as of July 24, 2020, which is $761 million or 23.4% less than benchmark, and $691 million or 21.7% less than the actual collections in June 2019. These figures are preliminary and FY2020 revenue is still being collected due to the April 15 personal income tax filing and payment deadline extension to July 15. The DOR moved the April and June quarterly estimated income tax payment deadlines to July 15 as well. Fiscal Year 2020 revenue figures and the June monthly figures will be revised once all the data has been collected and reviewed. Economists anticipate a $3 billion gap in FY 2020 revenues.

For the fiscal year-to-date through the interim report, partial revenue collections totaled $27.276 billion, $2.417 billion or 8.1% less than the same fiscal year-to-date period in 2019, and $3.014 billion or 9.9% less than the year-to-date benchmark. This figure is expected to be updated. The DOR reports total tax collections for the July mid-month report at $2.133 billion, up $1.338 billion or 168.5% versus the same period in July 2019. Income tax revenues totaled $1.858 billion, up $1.295 million or 230.2% versus the same period in July 2019. Sales tax collections were $80 million, down $7 million or 7.8% versus the same period in July 2019. Corporate and Business taxeswere $149 million, up $56 million or 60.1% versus the same period in July 2019. All other taxes totaled $46 million, down $6 million or 11.4% versus the same period in July 2019. The income and business taxes reflect the extension of the April filing deadlines to July.

**MLS FY2020 Budget Revision 3 Approval Request**

Sarah Sogigian, MLS Executive Director presented the FY2020 Budget Revision 3 to the Board.

The most significant changes from the revision 2 budget was the overbudgeting for the database line. This put the budget below by 14%. This resulted in $100,000 being reallocated to our contract line to prepay delivery. Many of the other expenses were down as well due to COVID-19, the office being closed and no in-state or out of state travel.

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

This budget revision has no major effect on our Plan of Service, but the revision is necessary to stay in compliance with the guidelines.

The MLS Executive Board unanimously approved the budget revision at its July 13, 2020 meeting.

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Ball seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the FY2020 Budget Revision 3 filed on August 6, 2020 for the Massachusetts Library System with a bottom line of $8,637,000, as detailed in the agenda item 7.

Board Clerk, Rachel Masse asked for a Roll Call vote of the Commissioners.

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| Commissioner Abraham- YES | Commissioner DeBole- YES | Commissioner Ochsenbein- YES |
| Commissioner Ball- YES | Commissioner Kronholm- YES | Commissioner Perille- YES |
| Commissioner Cluggish- YES | Commissioner Madell- YES | Commissioner Resnick- YES |

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF TWO BOARD POLICIES: 1) BOARD LIAISONS AND 2) SPONSORSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

Director Lonergan and Commissioner Perille presented the two Board policies that have expired and need to be renewed. They were both presented at the July 9, 2020 Board Meeting and were tabled until this meeting so that some corrections could be made. The policies are: 1) Board Liaisons (expired July 9, 2020) and 2) Sponsorships and Partnerships (expired July 9, 2020).

The only change to the Board Liaisons Policy is to add “our affiliates” in the first paragraph.

Commissioner Perille moved and Commissioner Abraham seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners extends its policy on Board Liaisons for five years to July 10, 2025.

Board Clerk, Rachel Masse asked for a Roll Call vote of the Commissioners.

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| Commissioner Abraham- YES | Commissioner DeBole- YES | Commissioner Ochsenbein- YES |
| Commissioner Ball- YES | Commissioner Kronholm- YES | Commissioner Perille- YES |
| Commissioner Cluggish- YES | Commissioner Madell- YES | Commissioner Resnick- YES |

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Policy**

**Board Liaisons**

Board Liaisons fill a critical role in the operation of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. As needed, the Chair may appoint liaisons to our affiliates and standing advisory committees (such as the State Advisory Council on Libraries or the Consumer Advisory Board to the Braille and Talking Book Library Program), Task Forces, and external groups. Liaison appointments are normally made by the Chair, on an annual basis or, in the case of a Task Force, until the charge has been completed.

Liaisons provide:

* a mechanism for improved communication and coordination between the Board and groups charged with advising the Board on the development and implementation of agency programs,
* an opportunity for Board members to gain a deeper understanding of agency programs and services,
* an opportunity for Board members to contribute specialized expertise and perspective to the work of committees and task forces.

Specific activities of Board Liaisons will vary depending on the nature of the committee or task force. Components may include one or more of the following:

* an initial orientation session,
* attendance at and participation in committee or task force meetings,
* regular formal briefings by and/or regular telephone communication with project staff,
* presentation of reports and serving as a resource person at Board meetings.

Initial Policy Approval Date: October 9, 1997

Re-approval Date: August 6, 2020

Policy Expiration Date: July 10, 2025

In consultation with the Executive Committee, Commissioner Perille stated that she is recommending that the Policy on Sponsorships and Partnerships be extended as is for 5 years with the following recommendations:

* the policy needs to be in the third person
* remove MLS from the policy
* the broad parameters of the "Approvals" section should be tightened
* the MBLC has published brand guidelines that should be followed and that the MBLC should have the opportunity to review the use of its name and brand in any partnership

Commissioner Perille moved and Commissioner Resnick seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners extend its Policy on Sponsorships and Partnerships, as amended, for five years to July 10, 2025.

Board Clerk, Rachel Masse asked for a Roll Call vote of the Commissioners.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Commissioner Abraham- YES | Commissioner DeBole- YES | Commissioner Ochsenbein- YES |
| Commissioner Ball- YES | Commissioner Kronholm- YES | Commissioner Perille- YES |
| Commissioner Cluggish- YES | Commissioner Madell- YES | Commissioner Resnick- YES |

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

Commissioner Perille stated that she would like to further amend the Policy on Sponsorships and Partnerships. In bullet number 4, add the Commonwealth’s libraries instead of member libraries.

Commissioner Perille moved and Commissioner Kronholm seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the amended and revised Sponsorship and Partnership Policy.

Board Clerk, Rachel Masse asked for a Roll Call vote of the Commissioners.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Commissioner Abraham- YES | Commissioner DeBole- YES | Commissioner Ochsenbein- YES |
| Commissioner Ball- YES | Commissioner Kronholm- YES | Commissioner Perille- YES |
| Commissioner Cluggish- YES | Commissioner Madell- YES | Commissioner Resnick- YES |

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**Policy**

**Sponsorships and Partnerships**

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners encourages sponsorship and partnership agreements that increase the level of service available to Massachusetts residents, offer new resources that may not be offered otherwise, and support awareness of libraries and library services.

**Guidelines**

**Definition**

Sponsorships and partnerships are defined as mutually beneficial exchanges whereby the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) receives funds, products or in-kind services from a sponsor or partner. The sponsor in turn benefits from community recognition and affiliation with libraries throughout the state. In general, sponsorship and partnership are ongoing rather than one-time. Grants for which the MBLC may apply to receive funding for a specific project(s) or gifts for which the giver requests a simple acknowledgement are not covered by these guidelines.

**Approvals**

All agreements must be in writing and approved by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. The Board may revoke its approval at any time.

**Sponsorship Recognition**

Sponsors will be provided with a level of recognition commensurate with their contribution. These levels will be clearly defined in writing within the sponsorship agreement. In all cases, the recognition required by the sponsor will be weighed against the benefit to the MBLC and the Commonwealth’s libraries.

Recognition may include (but is not limited to) the following:

* Recognition of the sponsor in an article in MBLC online newsletters.
* Recognition of the sponsor in media releases.
* Recognition of the sponsor on promotional materials or printed materials related to programs.
* Opportunities to promote services to the Commonwealth’s libraries. These opportunities must be agreed to ahead of time and included in the sponsorship agreement.
* Recognition at MBLC events.

The MBLC retains sole control of the content of its web sites and other promotional materials. If the MBLC agrees to display a sponsor’s name/logo in promotional materials, the MBLC will decide the placement of the name/logo and it will not take precedence or have prominence over the MBLC names/logos.

Recognition will promote the sponsor’s corporate name and will not include reference to any specific product. The MBLC will not endorse any product or service of its corporate sponsors.

**General Guidelines**

Sponsors will agree to display the MBLC logo according to the published brand guidelines (<https://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/mblc-brand-guide/logo> ). All uses of the MBLC name and logo will be subject to review by the MBLC Communications Director prior to publication. The MBLC name and logo may not be used as part of any official endorsement of a sponsor’s product or company.

MBLC will maintain complete control over the library database and mailing list. Library addresses may be found on the MBLC website.

Purchasing decisions on collections, materials or other items will be made by MBLC unless otherwise specified by the sponsorship agreement.

Sponsorship agreements will not limit the MBLC’s ability to enter into other agreements with similar organizations.

Initial Policy Approval Date: October 2, 2008

Revision and Re-approval Date: August 6, 2020

Policy Expiration Date: July 10, 2025

**Report from Massachusetts Library System**

Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director presented the following report:

**COVID-19 info**

MLS staff continues to work remotely. Member check ins have continued and will be a service we plan to offer for the foreseeable future. The MLS Marlborough office is back up and running, with staff beginning to return a couple of days a week. Priority was given to our Resource Sharing team, so they could manage the 3-month backlog of requests that arrived during our closure. We’ve created a reopening plan and shared with all staff so we can continue to keep safety of staff a priority.

MLS and MBLC have continued our work on the reopening guidelines, ensuring they are updated and aligned with the Governor’s reopening phases. Documents can be found on our Resource Guide, along with a summary of information.

I have continued work on our EDI focus, sharing resources to assist our members in their anti-racism work, attending virtual learning opportunities, and ongoing discussions with our Director Team.

We also closed out FY20 successfully, including staff evaluations and closing the financial books.

**MLS Strategic Planning Update**

Consultant Stephanie Chase led five Virtual Town Halls for our members, partners, and stakeholders. Please see her summary included in the board packet.

We’ve made changes (again) to our timeline and processes, but we are still on track to meet our deadline for our Annual Meeting in November, which will be held online.

Clare Dombrowski and I will co-lead a small committee to assist with putting the plan together.

**Board Member Highlight**

MLS Vice President Stephanie Friree-Ford recently co-authored an article published in the Journal of the Medical Library Association, titled “Elevation through reflection: closing the circle to improve librarianship”. I found this article to be helpful in my work on continuing to incorporate intentional reflection into my work and encouraging others to do so.

Article summary:

“Reflective practice is a strategy promoted as a way to improve professional performance and to develop expertise. Intentional reflection on work situations can lead to improved understanding of a specific situation, identify strategies for similar situations in the future, and uncover assumptions that hinder service to patrons. Research has identified lack of knowledge to be a barrier to health sciences librarians engaging in reflective practice. This article introduces the use of intentional reflection at work: what it is, how it helps, and how it can be applied in librarianship. It also provides practical advice on how to choose a format, how to use a model to guide reflection, and how to incorporate it into work.”

**New and Returning Members**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Librarian Name | Library | Town/City | Email |
| Paula Welch | Elias Brookings School  | Springfield | welchp@springfieldpublicdchools.com |
| Sarah Paisner | Green Meadow Elementary School | Maynard | spaisner@maynard.k12.ma.us |
| Ashanta Smith | Mary O. Pottenger Elementary School | Springfield | smithas@springfieldpublicschools.com |
| Wes Harrington, Co. Dir. | Hyannis Public Library | Hyannis | wharrington@clamsnet.org |
| Judith Harrington, Co. Dir. | Hyannis Public Library | Hyannis | jharrington@clamsnet.org |
| Cynthia Sheehan | Springfield Conservatory of the Arts School | Springfield | sheehan@springfieldpublicschools.com |
| Natane Halasz | Erving Public Library | Erving | Natane.halasz@erving-ma.gov |
| Anna Lawrence | Wendell Free Library | Wendell | alawrence@cwmars.org |
|  |
| This color print= new members |
| This color print= new librarians |
| This color print= returning schools |

**Consulting and Training Services report**

The MLS Consulting & Training Team’s Continuing Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

This is the final report of the Consulting & Training Services Team for FY20 and provides our continuing response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Live Learning Opportunities**

The Consultants have continued their innovative methods to bring live opportunities to library staff in an online environment.

**Online Check-Ins:** Our online check-ins continue to be phenomenally popular. They allow library staff to get together virtually, build community, and share ideas on how to serve their communities. Here are the check-ins from the month of June:

* Massachusetts Health Sciences Librarian Check-In
* 6/2 (11 attendees)
* Children’s & Youth Services Virtual Check-Ins
* 6/4 (46 attendees)
* 6/18 (35 attendees)
* YA/Teen Librarian Check-In
* 6/2 (39 attendees)
* 6/16 (38 attendees)
* Virtual Check-In: Quarantining Materials
* 6/9 (128 attendees)
* Virtual Check-In: Small Libraries
* 6/17 (43 attendees)
* Previously, between March 20-May 31, the Consultants held 34 check-ins with 1,302 attendees.

**Converting In-Person CE to Online:** The consultants have converted some of their in-person classes to online workshops. In June, we offered one such workshop: Make Shift Happen: Weeding the Physical Collection. That class, offered by Consultant Anna Popp, was offered five times in May, filling up each time quickly after it was advertised. In June it was offered two more times:

* 6/3 – 17 attendees
* 6/11 – 21 attendees

**Other Online CE Opportunities:** MLS is continuing to offer general online trainings, to ensure that our members have the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the needs of their patrons. We offered three such online trainings in June:

* Yoga Storytime, 6/5 – 57 attendees
* COSTEP MA: Hurricane Season 2020 Readiness Webinar, 6/16 – 88 attendees (offered in partnership with MBLC)
* Project READY Informational Webinar, 6/23 – 47 attendees

**Recorded Learning Opportunities**

In addition to live events, we have made a number of recorded learning opportunities available to library staff, so they can continue their professional development anytime, anywhere:

Recorded Webinars: Over the past several years, MLS has been recording the webinars that it offers to members and has put the recordings on our MLS Vimeo channel. These 210+ recorded webinars are remarkably popular. We looked at the statistics of our recorded webinars from 3/17/2020 to 5/31/2020 and compared them to the 365-day period prior to the suspension of in-person CE. For comparison:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **3/17/2020-6/30/2020 (15 weeks)** | **3/17/2019-3/16/2020 (52 weeks)** |
| Plays | 17,205 | 3,699 |
| Finishes | 4,125 | 520 |

**Teleworking Tips Videos:** The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way that many people are working, at least temporarily. MLS staff shared their top tips for alternative work arrangements and shared them in a series of five entertaining videos. From April 1st through June 30th, these videos received 2,100 views.

**LibGuides**

Finally, the Consultants have made a lot of information available on LibGuides to provide library workers with information about the COVID-19 pandemic and external professional development opportunities:

**COVID-19 LibGuide:** In collaboration with MBLC, MLS created and launched the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and Massachusetts Libraries guide on March 12th. The guide includes 15 pages of information, on topics as diverse as “Academic Libraries,” “Pandemic Planning,” and “Financial Recovery.” Through June 30th, the guide received a staggering 72,717 views. In June, the most viewed pages were “Reopening Your Library” (11,828 views), followed by “News” (the guide’s home page: 5,526 views), “What Your Library Can Do Remotely” (1,013 views), “Hygiene, Cleaning, Supplies” (930 views), and “COVID-19 Webinars & Forums” (809 views). The guide is continuing to be updated by the Consultants as events unfold and member library needs change.

**Online Training Resources Page:** We received several requests for additional resources for online learning opportunities. In response, MLS created and launched the Online Training Resources page on March 25. That page provides links to both MLS resources and other external resources that provide online training opportunities to library staff. Through June 30th, the page received 5,062 views.

**Staff News**

Consultant Anna Popp participated in judging for the LLAMA PRXchange Awards. Almost 300 submissions of newsletters, annual reports, capital campaigns, marketing campaigns, and reading programs were considered this year. Usually held during ALA Annual, the awards ceremony will be conducted virtually sometime in August.

Terry McQuown, Consulting & Training Services Director, again served as the Chair of the Pat Carterette Professional Development Grant committee (Learning Round Table, a division of ALA). This competitive grant provides $1,000 for a library staff member to attend a professional development opportunity. This year’s recipient is Jerilynne Stewart (corrections librarian at SCI Mahanoy, PA Dept. of Corrections).

**Resource Sharing Report**

**Work-from-home: the new normal.**

Overall member interactions and support requests have slowed for most of the Resources Sharing departments. An increase in ILL support as libraries in MA and nationally slowly began to re-open. The seven staff who work in Interlibrary Loan, Commonwealth eBooks, Database support, MassCat, and IT continue to rise to the occasion with quick turn-around answering questions and support requests. Resources Sharing staff continue to help out with other MLS staff projects as needed. This was the month for annual staff performance reviews, and added additional meetings for everyone this month. My first time as a supervisor for 5 of my 7 staff. It was a pleasure for me to meet individually with all my staff, touch base, and begin to look ahead. The following statistics and commentary below illustrate the hard work of the Library Resources staff.

**Member Interactions / Support requests (email, phone):**

2020 vs 2019: 1 March – 30 June

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Support Area: | 2020 | 2019 |
| Interlibrary Loan | 1,693 | 2,510 |
| Commonwealth eBooks | 464 | 232 |
| State-wide Databases | 148 | 69 |
| MassCat | 201 | 61 |

* **Interlibrary Loan (ILL)** is still effectively shut down for libraries in the United States and internationally. The few libraries open nationally for ILL are limiting sharing to e-resources and document delivery. MLS member libraries are just beginning to put in ILL requests, but staff already finding that even with fewer requests, they are busier than ever attempting to find lenders. This will be norm for the foreseeable future. Staff continue to deal remotely with loans in transit, overdue and due date extensions. We plan to begin physically processing items when the Marlborough office opens in July.
* **Commonwealth eBooks (CEC)** support interactions have slowed this past month due to K-12 school’s year ending and end of fiscal year, a welcome, if slight relief. As always, the gratitude from K-12 school library members has been welcome to a very busy Tressa Santillo. We were also delighted to have a highly successful and massively attended (80+) OverDrive Sora workshop for K-12 members in late June.
* **Database** support has tapered off as school distance education efforts have ended to with the close of the school year. But, still seeing double the number of support tickets helping libraries compared with same time period in 2019.
* **MassCat** system had a major software upgrade this month, an annual summer occurrence, for its Koha ILS. Thus far, that upgrade and the system are working well. Slight up-tick in support with schools needing year-end reports, and the publics starting up curb-side service. At least three MassCat public libraries have had their staff furloughed. There are indications that some K-12 libraries may lose their directors due to FY21 budget cuts. This is not unusual, but will likely be exacerbated due to COVID-19 crisis and related budget woes.

**Webinars in Response to COVID-19 Closings**

In response to the COVID-19 related school and library closings, Tressa Santillo, worked with vendors Gale Cengage and OverDrive to provide timely workshops for our member libraries.

Further webinars continue to be scheduled: https://calendar.masslibsystem.org/

*June & July 2020 - Gale and OverDrive webinars*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Tuesday, June 2, 2020*Gale In Context: Elementary (formerly Kids InfoBits)*Wednesday, June 24, 2020*Maximizing Your School's Digital Reading Resources … OverDrive's Sora … Summer Reading …*Wednesday, June 24, 2020*Gale Advanced Search Techniques*Tuesday, June 30, 2020*Marketing Your Gale Public Library Resources* | Friday, July 10, 2020*Enhance Project-Based Learning with Gale In Context*Thursday, July 16, 2020*Market Your Gale K-12 Library Resources*Tuesday, July 21, 2020*Create Online Student Connections with Gale*Friday, July 31, 2020*Market Your Gale Academic Library Resources* |

**MLS Internal IT Updates**

The MLS IT team, myself, and Desktop Support Specialist, Amos Thomas, continue to be busy with support issues. We continue to troubleshoot and support MLS staff on their telecommuting issues and tech needs, as well as working with our network, server, and telecom vendors.

We had our first occurrence of touchless curb-side service in June, provided by Amos for a staff member in need.

**Business/HR Report**

* Preparations for the audit are in process.
* Virtual trainings are being set up for COVID-19 training and Sexual harassment training.
* FY21 Budget is being reviewed and FY 22 is being prepared.
* Marlborough has started letting ILL staff return to the office on a part time basis. Office has been cleaned and all precautions are in place.

**Report from Library for the Commonwealth**

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

**Reopening physical library spaces**

* BPL has opened the Central Library and 21 branch locations for curbside pickup of holds. We have also recently launched Printing to Go so that patrons can submit print jobs and later pickup their documents during curbside pickup hours. BPL continues to refine its new model of service.

**Digital Offerings**

* Online patron usage remains high and we are committed to the ongoing development and delivery of online programs and resources.
* During June and July 2020, there were 9,017 live participants in online programs and 129,804 views of recorded events. (138,821 view in total for June & July 2020)
* eCards: 35,991 eCards created since March 16, 2020 (through August 5). June and July eCard registrations were averaging 172 new eCards per day.
* 2,489,107 OverDrive checkouts in FY20.
* 254,830 Hoopla checkouts in FY20

**Best of Boston Recognition**

* BPL was recognized by Boston Magazine in its annual “Best of Boston” edition. We were awarded recognition for 2020 Best Daily Dose Of Online Culture. They cite our ability to remain a hub of community during COVID-19, highlighting virtual programs for all ages, and that, “the organization has harnessed the diverse resources of all of its branches to offer such a busy, varied selection of virtual fun each day that you’ll hardly find enough time to experience it all.”

**Libraries and COVID-19 Discussion**

Commissioner Ball recommended that the Board make a statement about municipalities laying off librarians.

His recommended language was:

The MBLC neither condones nor supports actions of cities or towns that significantly decrease staff and/or financial support to libraries that would reduce or eliminate valuable services that libraries provide to their communities

Commissioner Cluggish stated that the word condones is a word she wasn’t comfortable expressing. She recommended that the MBLC Executive Committee work with the Communications Team to develop a statement on behalf of the Board.

Commissioner Ochsenbein moved and Commissioner Cluggish seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners directs the Executive Committee and Communications Team to refine the statement expressed by Commissioner Ball that is in support of libraries maintaining pre-COVID-19 funding and staffing levels.

Board Clerk, Rachel Masse asked for a Roll Call vote of the Commissioners.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Commissioner Abraham- YES | Commissioner DeBole- YES | Commissioner Ochsenbein- YES |
| Commissioner Ball- YES | Commissioner Kronholm- YES | Commissioner Perille- YES |
| Commissioner Cluggish- YES | Commissioner Madell- YES | Commissioner Resnick- YES |

**Board voted unanimous approval.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**List of documents for the August 6, 2020 Regular Monthly Board Meeting:**

1. Agenda for the August 6, 2020 Regular Monthly Board Meeting
2. Draft Minutes from the July 9, 2020 Regular Monthly Board Meeting
3. Agenda Number 7- MLS letter and budget sheets
4. Agenda Item 8- Memo, motion, and policies for Board Liaisons and Sponsorships and Partnerships
5. Report from Massachusetts Library System
6. Report from Library for the Commonwealth

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Abraham moved and Commissioner Ball seconded to adjourn the August 6, 2020 monthly business meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners at 12:44 P.M.

Board Clerk, Rachel Masse asked for a Roll Call vote of the Commissioners.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Commissioner Abraham- YES | Commissioner DeBole- YES | Commissioner Ochsenbein- YES |
| Commissioner Ball- YES | Commissioner Kronholm- YES | Commissioner Perille- YES |
| Commissioner Cluggish- YES | Commissioner Madell- YES | Commissioner Resnick- YES |

**Board voted unanimous approval.**



N. Janeen Resnick

Secretary