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

**Date:** Thursday, June 3, 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

 George Comeau, Esq. left meeting at 10:56 A.M.

 Stacy DeBole left meeting at 11:05 A.M.

 Mary Kronholm left meeting at 10:50 A.M.

**Staff Present:**

James Lonergan, Director; Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist; 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; Shelley Quezada, Consultant to the Unserved; Lauren Stara, Library Building Specialist

**Observers Present:**

Maureen Amyot, Library Director, Westborough Public Library; Sharon Bernard, Library Director, Fitchburg Public Library; Eileen Chandler, Administrator, Cape Libraries Automated Materials Sharing Network (CLAMS); Ron Gagnon, Executive Director, North of Boston Library Exchange (NOBLE); Carol Gray, Resident, Amherst; Lynn Griesemer, President, Amherst Town Council, Amherst; Hilda Greenbaum, Resident, Amherst; Catherine Halpin, Collaborative Library Services Coordinator, Boston Public Library (BPL); Sarah McKee, former Trustee and President of the Board of Trustees, Jones Library Inc., Amherst; Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director, Massachusetts Library System (MLS); Sharon Sharry, Library Director, Jones Library, Inc., Amherst; David Slater, Network Administrator, Old Colony Library Network (OCLN); Jocelyn Tavares, Library Director, Dighton Public Library

**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 with the Open Meeting Law for remote meetings.

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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 |

Chair Cluggish explained that she would be making a motion to comply with 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 #8, Consideration of Grant Round for 7000-9506, agenda item # 9, Consideration of LEA eContent grants and item #17 to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Ball seconded.

Chair Cluggish asked for a roll call vote 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 passed.**

**Approval of Minutes from the regular monthly meeting: May 6, 2021**

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

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Conrad seconded to approve, with minor edits, the minutes from the May 6, 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 Conference events over three days
* Statewide PR Committee Meeting
* MLA Legislative Committee meeting
* Executive board meeting

Suddenly, due to the state meeting vaccination goals, reopening libraries is and will be a major topic for a while. The unique complexities of each library, staff members, library workflow, community decisions impacting reopening -- along with the uniqueness of each individual library building determine the process. Discussion and decisions are made in each community, guidance and support from MBLC and MLS are provided at the state level, and from ALA at the national level. While these are organizational decisions, the decision of how to proceed for most individuals is quite personal. All of it has to be taken into consideration.

Fortunately, the MBLC/MLS Team led by Sarah Sogigian from MLS and Rob Favini from MBLC have been hard at work for over the past year and in recent months became the MBLC/MLS Reopening Team. We also continue to see a sharing of ideas among libraries via email list servs. James and Rob can talk more about reopening during the COVID-19 discussion later in the meeting.

This *may be* Mary Kronholm's last Board meeting. Her term is up in June, but given the vagaries of when appointments come through, she may or may not stay on the Board for a while. Mary has been a long time Trustee of the Porter Memorial Library in Blandford. She also served as President of the Massachusetts Library Trustee Association. She was first appointed to the MBLC by Governor Patrick in 2011 and then reappointed by Governor Baker. During her time on the MBLC she has served as a liaison to SACL, as a member of the State Aid to Public Libraries Committee, and on the Statewide Public Relations Committee. She also served on the Executive Board as Secretary.

What Mary is best known for is her relentless Advocacy. She is known by many as the woman who holds up the signs at legislative breakfasts...the signs for 7000-9501, 7000-9506, and other lines in our legislative agenda. She was a founding member of what is now known as the Western Massachusetts Library Advocates and was an Executive Board Member of the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System. Every legislator in Western Massachusetts knows Mary by sight and by name and I suspect she has each of their numbers on speed dial. She advocates for advocacy.

Back in pre-COVID days when the MBLC had a booth at the annual Mass Municipal Association Conference, Mary would drive in to the Hynes Auditorium from Blandford, stay overnight, and spend a whole day roaming the expo, buttonholing legislators and town executives while advocating for libraries and handing out the printed Legislative Agenda to anyone who would listen. At the beginning of this I said that she is known for her relentless advocacy; now you know why.

So Mary, we know you'll keep up the good work in Western Massachusetts. Somehow, I have the confidence that you'll still be advocating for the MBLC Legislative Agenda whether you're on the Board or not. Mary, know that you will be missed. Let's give Mary some virtual applause.

**Commissioner Reports**

**Commissioner Resnick**

Before I report on my activities, I would like to add to Chair Cluggish’s remarks about Commissioner Kronholm’s service to libraries and the Board.  I have learned so much about relentless advocacy from Mary.  She is so sincere, that she gets away with techniques that wouldn’t occur to the rest of us.  One of our former legislators, Rep. John Scibak make his remarks at a legislative breakfast at least 10 years ago in verse form.  Mary responded after the event in verse in an email to John.  Thereafter, they had a running advocacy poetry slam.  Many times I found John in his car before the meeting, madly composing or revising his odes, to make sure Mary didn’t best him.

For myself, I learned a lot about signage from Mary.  If you can use a sign (or two or three) during your remarks to legislators, they will remember the points, and especially the budget line numbers we want to prioritize.  One particularly effective sign was of Michelangelo’s David with an open book protecting his privacy.

Mary, I truly value your example and will always remember the techniques you have shared.  You may leave the Board, but not our hearts or your role as a library advocate.

* MBLC Executive Committee Meeting
* Reframing Aging Zoom with Matt Perry
* 3 Days of MLA

**Commissioner Kronholm**

* Thanked Mary Ann Cluggish and Jan Resnick for their kind words.
* Got a great tour of the Monterey Library from Library Director, Mark Makuc

**Commissioner DeBole**

* Attended MLA

**Commissioner Conrad**

* May 3 - SACL Small Group Grant Review
* May 5 - SACL Grant Review
* May 10 - MLS Executive Board Meeting
* May 17 – 19 MLA multiple sessions
* May 25 - United for Libraries - Friends of the Library and the Future of Booksales

**Commissioner Biancolo**

* May 3 - SACL Small Group Grant Review
* May 5 - SACL Grant Review
* PR Committee Meeting
* Attended MLA

**Commissioner Ball**

* Attended MLS Executive Meeting
* 2 Days of MLA
* Will be speaking at dedication of Norwell Public Library

**Commissioner Abraham**

* Reframing Aging Zoom with Matt Perry
* PR Committee Meeting
* Attended MLA

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Lonergan presented the following report:

Meetings/activities since the last monthly Board meeting:

* May 6, 13, 20, 27—COSLA Exchanges (topics included: National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled; ARPA communications; digital inclusion; and library construction)
* May 10—MLS Executive Board Meeting, virtual
* May 12— Council of State Library Agencies in the Northeast (COSLINE) meeting, virtual
* May 12—MBLC staff webinars: Unconscious Bias & Understand and Embrace Diversity
* May 14—Meeting with Marybeth Groff, MA Emergency Management Agency and MBLC staff to discuss climate resilience
* May 17-19—MLA Virtual Conference: attended multiple sessions and presented “State of the State” address during business meeting
* May 19—Zoom meeting with Paul Bockelman, Town Manager, Amherst, Lauren Goldberg, Town Attorney, Amherst, and Andrea Bunker to discuss MPLCP contract
* May 21—Network administrators meeting, virtual
* May 27—Emergency Connectivity Fund: Introduction webinar
* June 2—Call with Noah McClanan, Deputy Director, Office of Boards and Commissions

Mary Rose will review the **Senate FY2022 budget** as well as the process and timing for the rest of the FY2022 budget process.

**ARPA Funding**: In keeping with IMLS guidance regarding the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and the focus on digital inclusion, we are moving forward with creating a statewide WiFi hotspot lending program. We’ve held preliminary meetings with three hotspot vendors that are on statewide contracts: T-Mobile/Sprint, AT&T, and Verizon.

We surveyed public libraries to gauge their interest in the program and received responses from 307 libraries requesting approximately 2300 hotspots. Approximately half of the libraries already lend hotspots. We are leaning towards primarily working with T-Mobile, possibly using Verizon as an alternative for libraries in communities with connectivity issues. We hope to have the hotspots sent to public libraries and possibly the Perkins and Worcester Talking Book libraries by mid-July for usage through September 2022.

We also plan to use ARPA funds to continue our support of e-content through both the Library for the Commonwealth and MLS and are considering a limited number of subgrants to communities that have been hard hit by COVID-19.

The **State Advisory Council on Libraries** (SACL) held their LSTA Direct Grant review meeting on May 5. This meeting consisted of reports of grant recommendations from SACL subgroups. 36 grant applications were recommended for approval by the Board of Library Commissioners. The complete list of grant recipients will be brought to the Commissioners at the July 2021 board meeting for final approval. Special thanks to Lyndsay Forbes, Shelley Quezada, Evan Knight, Kate Butler, and Amy Clayton for their hard work coordinating and managing the application and review process.

Of special note this application round was the inclusion of an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) component to the grant application and scoring. In general, SACL members and staff were pleased with how grant applicants incorporated EDI as a factor in creating their grant programs and as a component of grant impact within their communities.

The MBLC and members of SACL were saddened to learn that Dominic Paulo, a Weymouth Library trustee and SACL member, died on Monday, May 25. Dominic just recently joined SACL representing library users. Although we had the pleasure of his company for only a few meetings, his intelligence, perspective, and good nature will be sorely missed. Dominic’s obituary can be found here:  <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/southofboston-ledger/obituary.aspx?n=dominic-m-paulo&pid=198812664&fhid=5914>

**MBLC at Massachusetts Library Association Annual Conference**

Congratulations to Lyndsay Forbes, Shelley Quezada and Maura Deedy for their informative and well-received presentations at this month’s MLA Annual Conference. The programs that they delivered drew on average 70 attendees. The programs also showcased the work being done at the MBLC as well as their knowledge and expertise to the library community.

Lyndsay Forbes and Christi Farrar from MLS presented ***It’s an Equity Issue: Why Public Libraries Should Have a Dedicated Teen Services Librarian* on May 19.**

Shelley Quezada facilitated a program titled: *Inclusive Library Services: New Tools and Techniques to Reach People with* Disabilities on Monday, May 17 with panelists: Carla Burke, Assistive Technology Coordinator, Brooks Free Library, Harwich; Erin Fragola, Library Outreach Coordinator, Perkins Library; Jonathan O’Dell, Assistive Technology and Training Specialist, Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Maura Deedy facilitated a program titled: *Does the Mayor Have a Library Card: Understanding Local Government and Making Libraries Important to it* on May 19 with the following panelists: Mehreen N. Butt, Wakefield Town Councilor; Nicole LaChapelle, Mayor, City of Easthampton; John Mangiaratti, Acton Town Manager. Panelists answered questions about funding, municipal priorities, and the importance of the First Amendment and protected free speech.

I presented the **State of the State** address at the MLA Annual Business meeting on Wednesday, May 19 and forwarded a copy of my remarks to the Commissioners afterwards.

**Portal redesign:** Paul Kissman, Kate Butler, Celeste Bruno, and Matt Perry have been dedicating a significant amount of time working with Kyyba Tech, a leading technology design and consulting firm to create the specifications for the MBLC’s consumer portal redesign. During the pandemic the need for providing online services became abundantly clear. The redesign of the MBLC consumer portal will enable citizens from across the Commonwealth to better access statewide library services. The initial design phase is a critical stage in the redesign roll out.

**Trustee Orientations:** We launched the next season of Trustee Orientations with an increased focus on board dynamics and telling advocacy stories. We look forward to considering these for in-person sessions for the fall, with some combination of virtual programming for the Trustee Deep Dives.

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| **Program** | **Date/Time** | **Attendance** |
| Trustee Orientation  | Thursday, April 29, 2021 10:00am - 12:00pm | 25 |
| Trustee Orientation | Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 6:00 pm | 11 |
| Trustee Orientation | Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 2:00 pm  | 15 |
| Trustee Orientation  | Tuesday June 1, 2021 at 6:00 PM  | 14  |
| **Total:** | **65** |

In addition to trustee deep dives and orientations, Maura’s work on updating the **MBLC Trustee Hiring a Director search packet** continued in May. Maura facilitated a series of focus groups with library trustees and directors who have recently gone through the search and hiring process. Insights gained from these sessions, and the work of her ad-hoc advisory group, will inform updates to the director search packet including with whom they will be interviewing.

Some of the comments have included “the New Director Search packet was so helpful in guiding our search”; feedback on salary requirements to boards; clear communication about the process, including whom they will be interviewing with;  and managing the process and news with staff. We will be launching a survey in June to directors and trustees. One surprising and helpful piece of information was about the role of the municipality which is lacking in the current publication. Maura plans to reach out to a few municipal officials to interview them for the packet.

Paul Kissman, the state E-Rate coordinator for Massachusetts libraries, provided an overview of the **Emergency Connectivity Fund**, a part of the American Rescue Plan Act, on May 27. The Emergency Connectivity Fund provides over $7.1 billion to the nation's schools and libraries to address the "homework gap" for students and the connectivity gap for library users. Libraries will be able to purchase laptops and tablets for lending to patrons, mobile hotspots, or set up internet connections beyond the library's walls for use by library patrons. 100% of the cost of eligible equipment and services will be covered. ECF complements the longstanding E-Rate universal service program, but there are important variations in rules, process, and coverage.

**MPLCP**: Five newly built or renovated and expanded libraries will be opening in the next few months. MBLC library building specialists made site visits to Norwell, Sherborn, Grafton, and Littleton last week. Norwell is scheduled to open to the public on June 10; Sherborn and Grafton in late summer; and Littleton in the fall. Medford will also be opening this fall as the first stand-alone net-zero-ready library.

Amherst Town Manager Paul Bockelman informed us last week that the Town was served with a new lawsuit concerning the certification of signatures for the Voter Veto provision of the Town Charter on the vote of the Town Council on the Jones Library. The Amherst Town Attorney is reviewing this complaint and will be responding to it. Mr. Bockelman is regularly communicating with us to provide updates.

In addition, Amherst resident Sara McKee forwarded a letter with attachments on May 31 regarding the new court case to the attention of the Commissioners.

Lauren and Andrea participated in a COSLA virtual discussion about construction on May 27. Several COSLA colleagues noted in the chat how much they appreciated receiving hard copies of the Library Space Planning tool. Celeste also participate in a separate COSLA discussion about communicating about ARPA on May 13.

**MBLC Office Reopening**: The Governor has established a hybrid model of work for most office-based state employees for the future which will enable us to achieve an appropriate balance of in-office and remote work. We are transitioning from most staff working fully remotely to a hybrid model over the summer, with an expectation that all employees will generally be working in the office three days and remotely two days a week after Labor Day. We anticipate holding our first in-person board meeting since last March in the MBLC office in September.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

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

The Senate approved unanimously their version of the Fiscal Year 2022 spending plan on May 27. The full Senate budget for the MBLC budget lines mirrored the proposal offered by Senate Ways and Means which did not include any funding for the Center for the Book.

The Senate funding for the MBLC budget lines met the Legislative Agenda requested amounts for five of the seven budget lines. The Aid to Regional Libraries line (7000-9401) received an increase of one million dollars over the FY 2021 budget, $624,520 higher than the Agenda requested amount for that line. The amendment for $300,000, offered by Senator Barrett for the Center for the Book failed in the first group of bundled amendments. The Senate figures and budget language are listed below. The official Senate budget has not been posted to the budget site. Commissioners will receive a link to the budget as soon as it is posted.

7000-9101 For the operation of the board of library commissioners .........................$1,627,272

7000-9401 For state aid to regional public libraries; provided, that the board of library commissioners may provide quarterly advances of funds as it deems appropriate under clauses (1) and (3) of section 19C of chapter 78 of the General Laws to regional public library systems throughout each fiscal year, in compliance with the office of the comptroller’s regulations on state grants, 815 C.M.R. 2.00; provided the commonwealth shall receive not less than ...$1 further, that the board shall provide funds for the continued operation of a single regional library system to serve the different geographic regions of the commonwealth; and provided further, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the library for the commonwealth shall receive not less than 25 per cent of the amount appropriated under this item ..............$13,516,000

7000-9402 For the talking book library at the Worcester public library......................$496,732

7000-9406 For the Perkins Braille and Talking Book Library in the city known as the town of Watertown, including the operation of the machine lending agency ...................$2,828,147

7000-9501 For State Aid to public libraries; provided, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, no city or town shall receive funds from this item in any year when the appropriation of the city or town for free public library service is below an amount equal to 102.5 per cent of the average of the appropriations for free public library services for the3 years immediately preceding; provided further, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the board of library commissioners may grant waivers in excess of the waiver limit set forth under the second paragraph of section 19A of chapter 78 of the General Laws for fiscal year2022for not more than 1 year; provided further, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, of the amount by which this item exceeds the amount appropriated under item 7000-9501 of section 2 of chapter 194 of the acts of 1998, funds shall be distributed under the guidelines of the municipal equalization grant program, the library incentive grant program and the nonresident circulation offset program; and provided further, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, any payment made under this item shall be deposited with the treasurer of the city or town and held in a separate account and shall be expended by the public library of that city or town without appropriation....$13,000,000

7000-9506 For the technology and automated resource sharing networks................$4,518,373

The House and Senate will establish the Budget Conference Committee this week to negotiate a compromise between their respective budgets and develop the final budget that each chamber will approve in separate votes before the document is sent to the Governor for his signature. The House and Senate Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Ranking Minority Members of both chambers make up the Conference Committee. [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 cycle.

MBLC lines that will be decided by the Conference Committee are the Agency line, 7000-9101 (House $75,000 in two earmarks), the Regional line, 7000-9401 (differences in language related to division/distribution of funding for MLS and LFC), and the Center for the Book, 7000-9508 (to fund the Center at the House level). State Aid to Public Libraries, Technology and Resource Sharing, and The Talking Book Libraries at Worcester and Perkins received the same funding in both the House and Senate and will not need to go to Conference.

Budget calendar:

1. [Governor's Budget](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/GovernorsBudget)
2. [House Ways & Means Budget](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/HouseWaysMeansBudget)
3. [House Debate](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/HouseDebate)
4. [House Budget](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/HouseBudget)
5. [Senate Ways & Means Budget](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/SenateWaysMeansBudget)
6. [Senate Debate](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/SenateDebate)
7. [Senate Budget](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/SenateBudget)
8. [Conference Committee](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/ConferenceCommittee)
9. [Final Budget](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/FinalBudget)

Historically, May is a mid-size month for tax collections, ranking seventh of twelve months in eight of the last ten years. However, because of measures enacted this year and last year designed to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, historical comparisons between May month-to-date 2021 results and prior periods are not comparable.

Total Tax collections for the month-to-date period mid-May were $1.190 billion, up $519 million or 77.5% versus the same period in May 2020. The month-to-date increase is mostly due to increases in withholding, income returns payments, regular sales tax, and sales tax on motor vehicles, partly offset by an increase in income tax refunds. Income Taxes totaled $970 million, up $446 million or 85.0% versus the same period in May 2020. Sales & Use Taxes were $108 million, up $53 million or 95.2% versus the same period in May 2020. Corporate & Business Taxes were $35 million, up $18 million or 105.9% versus the same period in May 2020. Other Taxes totaled $76 million, up $3 million or 3.8% versus the same period in May 2020. Commissioners will receive the full monthly report as soon as it is posted.

The MLA Annual Conference remained digital this year. The MLA Legislative Committee each year develops at least one program for the Conference. This year, the Committee hosted John Chrastka, Executive Director at EveryLibrary as their program speaker. His talk, *“Expand your Library’s Advocacy Potential to the Max”* was the featured presentation on May 18, the third and final day of the conference. His comments about the Massachusetts state budget picture, including advocacy, were extremely positive. Mr. Chrastka encouraged the audience to include local officials and local budgets as part of their advocacy efforts in addition to advocating for libraries at the state and federal levels.

**Consideration of approval of three Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP) Partial Provisional Grant Awards**

Lauren Stara, Library Building Specialist stated that a Construction Project may either be a project to construct a new facility, an addition/renovation to an existing building that may or may not add space, but does involve a significant reorganization of functional space, or a joint library project that will involve construction of a facility by two or more municipalities.

Ms. Stara is requesting a partial provisional grant award to the City of Boston for the Boston Public Library, Roxbury Branch in the amount of $1,859,713, the City of Cambridge for the Cambridge Public Library, Valente Branch in the amount of $1,859,713, and the Town of Grafton for the Grafton Public Library in the amount of $1,859,714 for its public library construction project.

These awards are subject to the completion and execution of a contract with the MBLC and the compliance of the libraries and communities with all of the assurances as listed in the grant application and found in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations, 605 CMR 6.00 governing the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program. The date by which the City of Boston, City of Cambridge, and Town of Grafton must accept their award is June 4, 2021.

Commissioner Ball moved and Commissioner Biancolo seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves partial grant awards totaling $ 5,579,140 to the following library construction projects; Boston Public Library, Roxbury Branch ($1,859,713),Cambridge Public Library, Valente Branch ($1,859,713), and Grafton Public Library ($1,859,714). The date by which the municipalities must accept their award is June 4, 2021.

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

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

**The motion passes.**

**Consideration of a FY2022 Grant Round for 7000-9506, Library Technology and Resource Sharing, including Telecommunications for Resource Sharing, Resource Sharing Program, Network Infrastructure, and Small Libraries in Networks**

Paul Kissman presented the four FY2022 Telecommunications, Resource Sharing, Network Infrastructure, and Small Libraries in Networks Grants.

**Telecommunications for Resource Sharing** provides offsets to the ongoing costs that networks bear for providing broadband connectivity, dedicated data lines and shared Internet service to their members. Telecommunications for Resource Sharing also provides ongoing support for the cost of Internet service for smaller libraries that are not part of a network.

The **Resource Sharing Program** grant recognizes that libraries in networks are contributing to the overall universe of materials available to all residents of Massachusetts by facilitating interlibrary lending using network technology. For FY22, a new formula will be used to calculate awards.

The **Network Infrastructure** grant provides funding to each network based on the network’s size in number of outlets. These funds allow the network to accomplish large equipment replacement projects and related system costs on its own timeline.

The **Small Libraries in Networks** (SLIN) allows networks to directly offset annual membership costs for small public libraries.

Chair Cluggish asked for a motion to approve the FY2022 Grant Round for 7000-9506 under the consent agenda.

Commissioner Resnick moved and Commissioner Ball seconded to approve the four FY 2022 grant opportunities, to be funded out of account 7000-9506 as described in the accompanying fact sheets in agenda item 8: Telecommunications for Resource Sharing, Resource Sharing Program, Network Infrastructure, Small Libraries in Networks.

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

**Consideration of a FY2022 Grant Round for 7000-9506, LEA eContent grants**

Kate Butler, Electronic Systems Specialist presented the LEA eContent Grants.

The **Library eBooks and Audiobooks (LEA) Content grant** provides networks participating in the LEA program with additional funds to purchase sharable eContent. These funds will directly support the continually growing demand for eBooks and Audiobooks across the Commonwealth.

**Background**

Three networks (SAILS, OCLN and Minuteman) piloted a new inter-network lending model with the vendor OverDrive beginning in the winter of 2017-18. The pilot allowed, for the first time, patrons of one network to check out eBooks and Audiobooks from the collection of another network. Over the course of the next year, the remaining automated networks having OverDrive collections joined the program. By May 2019, with the onboarding of the final two networks, the Library eBook and Audiobook (LEA) lending program was available statewide. In addition, the SAILS network serves as the access point through which MassCat members and unaffiliated libraries may participate. MLS manages these participants.

**Purpose of this Grant Offering**

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

The LEA Networks’ OverDrive platform fees will also be covered by grant funds as part of their participation in this program. Said fees will be paid out of account 7000-9702 (LSTA). For the Boston instance of OverDrive, BPL will be the LSTA grant recipient rather than MBLN.

Chair Cluggish asked for a motion to approve the FY2022 Grant Round for 7000-9506, LEA eContent Grants under the consent agenda.

Commissioner Biancolo moved and Commissioner Resnick seconded to approve the FY 2022 grant opportunity, funded out of account 7000-9506, as described in the accompanying fact sheets: Library eBooks and Audiobooks (LEA) Content. The Board authorizes any additional FY2022 7000-9506 disbursements that may be possible toward the end of the grant cycle.

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

**Update on FY2023 Database Procurement Activities and Survey Results**

Kate Butler, Electronic Systems Specialist updated the Board on the FY2023 Database Procurement Activities and Survey Results.

Database Procurement Update:

Though it hardly seems possible, we're about to begin the fifth and final year of our current database contracts, and so are in the process of preparing for a procurement process which will secure products for July 1, 2022 (the start of FY23).

The prior set of contracts, which started on July 1, 2017, was negotiated with a reduced budget - MLS had been forced to reduce their monetary contribution, and hard decisions had been made about which products we needed to prioritize for purchase. Continued advocacy from the library community over the next few years brought the restoration of funds to several budget lines, and we were fortunate to be able to add additional database products - including the much-missed Opposing Viewpoints in Context - in January 2020.

Staff from MLS, MBLC and all of our Massachusetts libraries contributed huge amounts of time and energy to promoting and marketing the databases over the past contract cycle. The IDEAL program in particular produced a number of successful promotional schemes which the MBLC Communications team translated to statewide campaigns. Usage of the databases was seeing a year over year increase.

Then COVID arrived. There were major impacts to libraries on all fronts, including to the usage of electronic resources. With libraries physically inaccessible to most people, eBook usage skyrocketed. But our heaviest and most reliable database users, K-12 schools, were forced to reconfigure their entire curriculum and lesson plans on the fly, for methods of instruction that kept changing. It's perhaps not surprising that their database usage went down and remains at a reduced level even now. Academic libraries were also challenged.

We now assume most K-12 students will be in person in the fall, but what sort of precautions may still be in place are unknown. Many universities and colleges are still finalizing their plans. Public libraries are still figuring out their new normal. And what things will look like a year from now is difficult to predict.

So it was from this place of uncertainty that we began looking at how to gather information from our library community about their experiences over the past few years with our statewide electronic resources.

Tressa Santillo from MLS and I decided that in addition to the usual survey of the community, we also needed to do a live check-in with as many librarians as possible, to hear from them how the databases had been working for them, if there were products they would like to see made available, and to have the sort of conversations that just can't be captured by a survey.

Over this past winter, we held 13 sessions with groups of librarians, including two sessions specifically for school librarians and three focused on academics. We were able to connect with well over 100 people who use and promote our databases regularly in their work.

Several themes emerged from these meetings:

* Schools and small academic libraries frequently have no access outside of what the state provides
* a good product for very young children would be nice to have
* Public library patrons are less enthusiastic about general reference databases - but they like specialty databases like Ancestry, or a local paper
* Article databases for products people want to read for entertainment/browse (newspapers, popular magazines) are a format disconnect
* Streaming video is a real need which is not currently covered
* People are open to changes in our offerings, but consistency is good, and being able to rely on access is helpful in times of budget uncertainty

We then conducted a survey of the entire library community and received 659 responses from a variety of library types.

66% of respondents rated the statewide databases as either essential or very important to their library

Public libraries have different database preferences from other library types:

School/Academic top types of databases:

* subject article database
* General article database
* large/national newspaper

Public top types of databases:

* Genealogy
* large/national newspaper
* local/regional newspaper

Because of responses from the live sessions, we asked librarians to (subjectively) rate the response of patrons when presented with types of databases. Librarians perceptions of how the patrons feel about the products agreed with their ranking of how important types of databases are to them - public librarians perceive their patrons as significantly more interested in specialty databases like Ancestry than a more general collection of journal articles.

This distinction between public library patron needs and student needs has been reflected in the usage levels for some time - public library usage is always less than would be expected based on the number of public libraries and their population of users. Finding ways to make sure our offerings better serve all types of libraries is a priority.

**Discussion of State Aid Hours Open Requirement**

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

**Minimum Standards of Free Public Library Service**

In addition to the MAR, libraries must comply with the following standards during the prior year. <https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/state-aid-and-aris/regs-standards.php#standards>

Open to all residents of the Commonwealth

Make no charge for normal library services

Minimum number of hours open per week

The Minimum Hours Open requirement is defined in statute and regulation ([MGL, c.78, s.19B](http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter78/Section19b) and [605 CMR 4.01[3]](https://mblc.state.ma.us/about-us/laws-and-regulations/605cmr4.php)).

In order to be eligible to apply for State Aid to Public Libraries, a library *must* be open the minimum required hours, days, and evening hours for its population group (see chart below).

Libraries may close for renovations, emergencies, inclement weather, or for other typical reasons for closure, and still meet the Minimum Hours Open Requirement. However, a library *may not* close for financial reasons (i.e., closing to save utility costs or to furlough employees). If the library closes for fiscal reasons, the library will lose its certification immediately upon closure.

**Minimum Hours Open Requirement**

(unless using the [Hours Open Accommodation Policy](https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/state-aid-and-aris/policies.php))

| **Population Size** | **Number of Hours** | **Number of Days** | **Portion of Day** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Under 2,000 | 10 | not specified | including some evening hours |
| 2,000 - 4,999 | 15 | not specified | including some evening hours |
| 5,000 - 9,999 | 25 | not specified | including some evening hours |
| 10,000 - 14,999 | 40 | 5 | including some evening hours |
| 15,000 - 24,999 | 50 | 5 | including some evening hours |
| 25,000 - 49,999 | 59 | 6 | including some morning, afternoon, & evening hours |
| 50,000 and over | 63 | 6 | including some morning, afternoon, & evening hours |

**Request for Flexibility**

Per regulation, "each library shall be open at least the minimum required hours for its population group (refer to the minimum standards contained in [605 CMR 4.01[3]](https://mblc.state.ma.us/about-us/laws-and-regulations/605cmr4.php#4.01)). A library that is open the required hours for a larger population group may, by request of the Library Director and Chair of the Board of Trustees, expend the required materials expenditure for that population group. The request shall be made by filing a [Notification of Request for Flexibility for the Materials Expenditure Requirement (Word)](https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/state-aid-and-aris/files/forms/flex-app.doc) with the Board of Library Commissioners as part of the State Aid to Public Libraries Application."

**Materials Expenditure and Hours Open Accommodation FY22**

The Board of Library Commissioners recognizes the necessity of continuing the policy of accommodation of the standards of the State Aid to Public Libraries program. This policy for the accommodation of the Materials Expenditure and the Hours Open standards seeks to certify as many municipalities as possible while still reinforcing the principles of library service.

A municipality will receive certification for FY 2022 State Aid to Public Libraries if it:

* meets the FY 2022 Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR), or receives a waiver of the FY 2022 MAR,
* meets the materials expenditure and hours open standard at either a full (100%), or mid-level (90%),
* meets all other statutory and regulatory requirements for State Aid to Public Libraries as contained in 605 CMR 4.01.

**NOTE: Prior to FY2020, accommodation of the Materials Expenditure of the Hours Open standards included a minimum level of compliance (80%). Municipalities who received an accommodation at the minimum level (80%) in FY2019 (hours open or materials collected in FY2018 reported in FY2019) can remain at that level until FY2022 (hours open or materials collected in FY2021 to be reported in FY2022.) A reduction of 12.5% for each level of accommodation shall still be in effect.**

State Aid to Public Libraries grants will be awarded to all certified municipalities.

A municipality may meet a reduced standard of as low as 90% of the materials expenditure and hours open requirement contained in regulation (605 CMR 4.01), while continuing to remain certified and receive State Aid to Public Libraries. Award amounts will be unchanged for municipalities meeting 100% of both standards.

Awards for municipalities meeting adjusted standards will be reduced according to compliance with reduced standard and will be no less than 75% of the full award for meeting the minimum (90%) of both standards. Each standard that is met at a lower level will result in a 12.5% reduction to the full award for each level of reduction. Awards may be made in amounts of; 100%, 87.5%, 75%. If funds remain at the end of the FY2022 grant round. no additional award of the State Aid to Public Libraries will be made to a municipality using this policy of accommodation.

### Examples: Library A

Library A has a population of 17,000 and is meeting its MAR. It is required to be open 50 hours each week and expend 15% of its municipal appropriation on materials. It was only open 46 hours and spent 14% on library materials, mid-level compliance for both standards. As a result, the FY 2022 State Aid award will be reduced to 75% of the Cherry Sheet total.

### Adjusted Awards

| **Amount** | **Level of Compliance with Materials Expenditure Requirement and Hours Open Standards** |
| --- | --- |
| **100%** | **Full** (100%) compliance with both standards |
| **87.5%** | **Full** (100%) compliance with one standard and **Mid-level** (90%) compliance with the other standard. |
| **75%** | **Mid-Level** (90%) compliance with both standards. |

### Materials Expenditure Requirement

| **Population Group** | **Full Compliance(100%)** | **Mid-Level Compliance(90%)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Under 2,000** | 20.00% | 18.00% |
| **2-4,999** | 19.50% | 17.55% |
| **5-9,999** | 19.00% | 17.00% |
| **10-14,999** | 16.00% | 14.40% |
| **15-24,999** | 15.00% | 13.50% |
| **25-49,999** | 13.00% | 11.70% |
| **over 50,000** | 12.00% | 10.80% |

### Hours Open Requirement

| **Population Group** | **Full Compliance(100%)** | **Mid-Level Compliance(90%)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Under 2,000** | 10 hours, including some evening | 9 hours, including some evening |
| **2-4,999** | 15 hours, including some evening | 13.50 hours, including some evening |
| **5-9,999** | 25 hours, including some evening | 22.50 hours, including some evening |
| **10-14,999** | 40 hours, 5 days, including some evening | 36 hours, 4 days, including some evening |
| **15-24,999** | 50 hours, 5 days, including some evening | 45 hours, 4 days, including some evening |
| **25-49,999** | 59 hours, 6 days, including some evening | 53 hours, 5 days, including some evening |
| **over 50,000** | 63 hours, 6 days, including some evening | 57 hours, 5 days, including some evening |

**Initial Approval of Policy: April 3, 2003
FY 2022 Approval Date: October 3, 2019**
**State Aid policies are reviewed annually.**

**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.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 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.* | Work on confirming member library statuses and contacts. |
| 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.* | Working with our Board Governance Committee, began surveying current members and partner orgs. |
| 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.* |  |

**Strategic Initiative 2**

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

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 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.* | Hosted MLS Live! With partner organization Library for the Commonwealth. |
| 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; l 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.* | Announced workshops on leadership and management topics (classes are being held May – September 2021) |

**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.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 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 Board Nominating Committee launched a new call for board nominees, in specific alignment with our strategic plan and inclusion statement. |
| 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.* | Announced and began offering workshops on DEI topics (classes are being held April - August 2021). |

# Additional monthly notes:

* Our fourth MLS Live, a conversation with Catherine Halpin, Collaborative Library Services Coordinator at Library for the Commonwealth had 10 people in attendance and over 40 registered. The recording will be posted to our Vimeo Page.
* MLS consultant Kelly Jo Woodside and MBLC consultant Evan Knight co-presented a webinar with COSTEP (Coordinated Statewide Emergency Preparedness) called “Pandemic Safety at Cultural Heritage Institutions”. Of special note is the announcement of the state’s retirement of the sector specific guidelines for libraries reopening. 177 registered to attend; 111 attended live.

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

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

**Reopening of library buildings**

The Boston Public Library is reopening under a plan encompassing 3 phases. A limited reopening of the Central Library went into effect on June 1, 2021 (Phase 1). Patrons may browse a selection of titles from the first floor and request to have items retrieved on their behalf with the assistance of staff. 22 public computers are available for use without appointment. Specialized in-person reference assistance is available by appointment. All remote options will continue to be offered as they have during the pandemic.

On Monday, June 14 all locations (with exception of those currently closed for construction or remodel) will reopen to the public for nearly full service (Phase 2). At the Central Library, all public computer stations will be back online and all remaining public floors, and many of the services, including specifically the Children’s Library and Teen Central, will also be open. However, public meeting rooms, Art and Architecture tours, and in-person programming for example will not reopen or restart until a later date (Phase 3). Masks will continue to be required inside library locations until further notice. All City of Boston employees are expected to physically report for work in person by July 6.

**SAGE Business Cases**

We have subscribed to a new business reference and professional development resource. SAGE Business Cases provides engaging real-life examples from the global business environment, illustrating the application of core concepts and practice at a variety of settings. SAGE curates interdisciplinary case studies on in-demand subjects such as entrepreneurship, accounting, healthcare management, leadership, social enterprise, and more. Additionally, SAGE looks to fill in gaps that have been traditionally overlooked or undertreated in business education with a series within this subscription, called “SAGE Originals.” This series covers many topics, including such important issues as Women & Leadership, Sustainability, Immigrant Entrepreneurship, Coaching & Mentoring, to name just a few.

**McKim Master Plan Meeting #3 – Thursday, June 3, 2021 @ 6:30 p.m.**

The Boston Public Library is undertaking a master plan to look at the spaces and programs of the McKim Building, the Library’s 1895 National Historic Landmark building in Copley Square. [Learn more about the McKim Master Plan](https://www.bpl.org/mckimmasterplan/).

The third of four Community Meetings will advance the concept design phase of the McKim Master Plan and will focus on the key planning themes that have been developed based on the conversations and feedback from the Library and the community. The meeting will begin with a brief presentation summarizing the project goals and priorities, followed by a walk-through of areas of opportunity and initial proposals for improvement. The meeting will conclude with an optional group break-out session to allow participants to discuss their thoughts on the meetings content and proposals. A follow-up survey (digital as well as hard copy) will be available for those not able to attend. (This is an online meeting that requires pre-registration: www.bpl.org)

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**List of documents for the June 3, 2021 Regular Monthly Board Meeting:**

1. Agenda for the June 3, 2021, Regular Monthly Board Meeting
2. Draft Minutes from the May 6, 2021 Regular Monthly Board Meeting
3. Agenda 7, Consideration of approval of three Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP) Partial Provisional Grant Awards
4. Agenda 8, Consideration of a FY2021 Grant Round for 7000-9506, Library Technology and Resource Sharing, including Telecommunications for Resource Sharing, Resource Sharing Program, Network Infrastructure, and Small Libraries in Networks
5. Agenda 9, Consideration of a FY2021 Grant Round for 7000-9506, LEA eContent grants
6. Agenda Item 12, Report from MLS
7. Agenda Item 13, Report from LFC

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Cluggish asked for motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Conrad moved and Commissioner Biancolo seconded to adjourn the June 3, 2021 MBLC Monthly Board Meeting under the consent agenda.

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



N. Janeen Resnick

Secretary