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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONERS monthly regular meeting**

**Date** : Thursday, April 7, 2022

**Time** : 1:00 P.M.

**Place** : Zoom Meeting

**Present** : Mary Ann Cluggish, Chair; Debby Conrad, Vice Chair; Deb Abraham, Secretary Vicky Biancolo; Stacy DeBole; Karen Traub ; Jessica Vilas Novas

**Absent** : Les Ball

Commissioner Comeau left the meeting at 2:25 P.M.

**Staff Present:**

James Lonergan, Director; Liz Babbitt, State Aid Specialist; Celeste Bruno, Communications Director; Andrea Bono-Bunker, Library Building Specialist; Tracey Dimant, Head of Operations & Budget; Rob Favini, Head of Library Advisory and Development; Rachel Masse, Assistant to the Director; Matthew Perry, Communications Specialist; Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs / Government Liaison; Aparna Ramachandran, Data Analyst/IT Support Specialist; Lauren Stara, Library Building Specialist; Lilli Sutton, Administrative Assistant

**Observers Present:**

Amanda Alix, Shutesbury Resident; Mary Ann Antonellis, Director, M.N. Spear Memorial Library, Shutesbury; Kathleen Bort, Director, Otis Library; Susan Brofman, Library Trustee, Otis Library; Margaret Cardello, Library Director, Marlborough Public Library; Kate Cell, Library Trustee, M.N. Spear Memorial Library, Shutesbury; Jaime Donta, Resident, Town of Shutesbury; Dianne Dyer, Chairperson Library Trustee, Otis Library; Susan Ebitz, Library Trustee, Otis Library; Rita Farrell, Chairperson Selectboard, Town of Shutesbury; Gail Fleischaker, Former Trustee, M.N. Spear Memorial Library, Shutesbury; Brad Foster, Library Trustee, M.N. Spear Memorial Library, Shutesbury; Matt Franz, Resident & Friends President, M.N. Spear Memorial Library, Shutesbury; Ron Gagnon, Executive Director, North of Boston Library Exchange (NOBLE); Larry Gould, Building Inspector, Town of Otis; Jim Hemingway, Resident, Town of Shutesbury; Catherine Hilton, Resident, Town of Shutesbury; Weezie Houle, Resident, Town of Shutesbury; Penny Jacques, Friends of the Library, M.N. Spear Memorial Library, Shutesbury; Ajaj Khashu, Finance Committee, Town of Shutesbury; Penelope Kim, Resident, Town of Shutesbury; Leslie Luchonok, Resident, Town of Shutesbury; Gloria Mamokhin, Library Trustee, Otis Library; Scott Merzbach, Staff Writer, Daily Hampshire Gazette; Susie Mosher, Friends of the Library, M.N. Spear Memorial Library, Shutesbury; Brandi Page, Town Administrator, Otis; Michele Regan-Ladd, Co-Chair Trustees, M.N. Spear Memorial Library, Shutesbury; Donna Rich, Library Trustee, Otis Library; Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director, Massachusetts Center for the Book; Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director, Massachusetts Library System (MLS); Eric Stocker, Resident, Town of Shutesbury; Rebecca Torres, Town Administrator, Shutesbury; Angela Veizaga, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Boston Public Library (BPL)

**Meeting called to order by Chair Cluggish**

Chair Cluggish called the meeting to order at 1:03 P.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- Present | Commissioner Cluggish- Present | Commissioner DeBole- Present |
| Commissioner Ball- Absent | Commissioner Comeau- Present | Commissioner Traub- Present |
| Commissioner Biancolo- Present | Commissioner Conrad- Present | Commissioner Vilas Novas- Present |

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 #2- Approval of Minutes, Agenda #9- Consideration of an appointment to the Public Relations Committee; #16-Adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Conrad 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- Absent | Commissioner Comeau- Yes | Commissioner Traub- Yes |
| Commissioner Biancolo- Yes | Commissioner Conrad- Yes | Commissioner Vilas Novas- Yes |

**The motion passed.**

**Approval of Minutes from the regular monthly meeting:**

**march 3, 2022**

Chair Cluggish asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 3, 2022 Monthly Meeting.

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Conrad seconded to approve the minutes from the March 3, 2022, Regular Monthly Meeting with minor edits.

**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 events:

* Virtual PR Committee meeting, March 9
* Virtual MLA Legislative Committee meeting, March 17
* New Commissioner orientation for Jessica Vilas Novas, March 23
* Virtual Executive Board meeting, March 29
* Virtual MLA Legislative Committee meeting, March 31
* Virtual PR Committee program: Inclusive Marketing for Equity in Library Services, April 1
* Virtual Legislative Day/s April 5, 6, 7

This has been a busy month culminating in the virtual Legislative Days on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday morning. On Tuesday, April 5, Sen. Jo Comerford and Rep.Todd Smola spoke. On Wednesday, Sen. Anne Gobi and Rep. Michael Soter spoke. Today, Sen Rush and Rep. Balser spoke in the first session, and Rep. Pat Haddad spoke at the later session.

At each session, James went over the Legislative Agenda, and I did the Call to Action at the end. The attendance was down a bit from last year, but that can be expected given that there were several Legislative Breakfasts this year, and also people are back at work in libraries that are open as opposed to closed for the pandemic a year ago.

I ran into Alice Peisch, my State Rep, this past Sunday while taking a walk, she said that she believed that among legislators there was considerable recognition of libraries' contribution due to the way they stepped up during the pandemic. That did appear to be confirmed by what legislators said at the Legislative Day events.

At today's meeting we will hearing from Lauren Stara and Andrea Bunker who will give us an overview of the Public Library Construction Program. This should be helpful for the newer Commissioners who have not had experience with how the MCLCP works. The program is complex, and if you look up the regulations for the program on the MBLC website, you'll notice that there are 20 pages of regs.

Perhaps you remember voting last spring to launch the MBLC Small Library Pilot Project to construct a new library building in a Massachusetts town of 2,000 or fewer residents. The Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP) has been providing construction grants for over 30 years, yet only 15 of the 225 grants have gone to towns in this population category.

The Small Library Pilot Project is intended for new construction only - no renovation or addition projects will qualify. The goal is to build a new public library building that is functional, efficient, flexible, durable, and economical. The planning of the building will be a collaborative effort between the selected town and MBLC staff. Today, we will learn of the first town selected for this grant.

So now, let's welcome our new Commissioner, Jessica Vilas Novas. Jessica was most recently Director of the Lawrence Public Library and is currently doing consulting work, but as you could see from the press release about her appointment, she is a busy woman with numerous other endeavors.

**Commissioner Activities**

**Commissioner Abraham**

* March 9, 2022- Attended PR Committee meeting
* March 29, 2022- MBLC Executive Committee Meeting (Virtual)
* April 1, 2022- Attended PD with Dr. Sonya Grier “Inclusive Marketing for Equity in Library Services” on behalf of PR Committee
* April 7, 2022- Legislative Day

**Commissioner Biancolo**

* March 9, 2022- Attended PR Committee meeting
* March 11, 2022- Spoke at WPL Legislative Breakfast
* April 1, 2022- Attended PD with Dr. Sonya Grier “Inclusive Marketing for Equity in Library Services” on behalf of PR Committee
* April 1, 2022- Attended MLS Live on DEI
* April 5, 2022- Attended Western Mass. Library Legislative Day
* April 6, 2022- Attended Central Mass. Library Legislative Day
* April 7, 2022- Attended Boston, Metrowest, and North of Boston Library Legislative Day
* April 7, 2022- Attended South of Boston, the Cape and Islands Library Legislative Day

**Commissioner Comeau**

* March 25, 2002- Spoke at the Boston Bruins PJ Drive Event at Macy’s with the First Lady, Lauren Baker

**Commissioner Conrad**

* March 7, 2022- Meeting with Representative Josh Cutler to discuss 2023 Legislative Agenda
* March 11, 2022- Legislative Breakfast – Worcester Public Library (Virtual)
* March 14, 2022- Massachusetts Library System Executive Board (Virtual)
* March 17, 2022- MLA Legislative Committee (Virtual)
* March 18, 2022- Merrimack Valley Legislative Breakfast (Speaker)
* March 25, 2022- Southeastern Massachusetts Legislative Breakfast (Speaker)
* March 29, 2022- MBLC Executive Committee Meeting (Virtual)
* April 1, 2022- Retirement reception for Uma Hiremath (director Ames Free Library)
* April 7, 2022- Legislative Day – South of Boston

**Commissioner DeBole**

* Participated in the Trustee Deep Dive Session with Maura Deedy
* April 7, 2022- Attended Legislative Day

**Commissioner Traub**

* March 9, 2022- MBLC Public Relations Committee meeting
* March 11, 2022- Worcester Legislative Breakfast
* March 14, 2022- MLS Meeting at the Northampton office
* March 19, 2022 - Greenfield Library steel beam signing for the new library.
* March 29, 2022- United for Libraries webinar “Keeping Governance on Track”

**Commissioner Vilas Novas**

* March 23, 2002- Participated in the New Commissioner Orientation at the MBLC Offices
* April 7, 2022- Attended Legislative Day

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Lonergan presented the following report:

* March 4—ALA webinar: “Facing the Challenge: Intellectual Freedom in Libraries”
* March 9—COSLINE (Council of State Library Agencies in the Northeast) meeting, virtual
* March 11—Central Massachusetts Legislative Breakfast, attended virtually
* March 14—MLS Executive Board Meeting, virtual
* March 15—CW MARS Users Council, virtual
* March 15—Mass. Center for the Book Executive Board meeting, virtual
* March 17— MLA Legislative Committee meeting, virtual
* March 17— COSLA “Polarized Conversations” discussion, virtual
* March 17— ALA Virtual Membership Meeting
* March 23—Orientation for Commissioner Vilas Novas
* March 25—SAILS Legislative Breakfast, virtual
* March 28— “Workforce Development: How Public Libraries are Making a Difference” webinar
* March 30— “Welcoming Deaf and Hard of Hearing Patrons to Your Library” webinar
* March 30— COSLA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Engagement Group meeting, virtual
* March 31—LSTA Five-Year Plan 2023-2027 Kick-Off meeting with QualityMetrics, LLC
* April 4—Statewide Database Procurement Strategy Meeting, virtual
* April 5, 6, 7—MLA/MSLA Virtual Library Legislative Day regional events

MLA and MSLA held four virtual **Library Legislative Day** events for different regions of the Commonwealth on April 5-7(during National Library Week). Members of the legislature’s Library Caucus spoke at each session. I gave the legislative agenda briefings and Commissioner Cluggish issued a call to action at the end of each session.

While we were told we would most likely hear from the Executive Office of Administration and Finance (A&F) by now as to whether they would be raising the **annual cap for the MPLCP** from $20 to $25 million for FY2023, they recently indicated that they are still reviewing the entire FY2023 Capital Investment Plan.

**LSTA Grant update:** Final drafts for the FY2023 Direct grant program were received on April 5, 2022. Overall, we have seen fewer applications than in previous years. Possible explanations for this include reduced in-person services due to COVID, libraries experiencing lower levels of staffing, and the unprecedented number of new public library directors across the state. Applications will be distributed to State Advisory Council on Libraries (SACL) review teams during April in preparation for the LSTA Direct Grant application review meeting on May 4, 2022. We are planning to hold this meeting at the MBLC office with remote access for SACL members who are unable to attend in person.

**LSTA Five-Year Plan Update:** We are working with QualityMetrics, LLC (the consultants who worked on the evaluation of our current plan) to prepare our new LSTA Five-Year Plan 2023-2027, due June 30. We held our kickoff meeting on April 1. We will be seeking additional feedback from MBLC stakeholders and staff during the planning process.

**Database Procurement Update:** The database procurement process enters its final stages in April as budget decisions are being finalized and databases are being selected. The procurement process has been a year-long effort starting with database feedback sessions in the Spring of 2021. The process has also involved the work of a procurement team made up of staff from the MBLC and MLS and a statewide evaluation team made up of librarians from all types of libraries. This multi-phased project required a high level of coordination between the MBLC Business Office, vendors and a statewide volunteer review board. The procurement process could not have happened without the strong leadership of Kate Butler from the MBLC and Tressa Santillo from MLS.

**“Welcoming Patrons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing to the Library” sessions:** On March 29 and 30 Shelley Quezada and Rob Favini hosted Jonathan O’Dell, Assistive Technology and Training Specialist for the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) for two training sessions for library staff that focused on how to engage with deaf, hard of hearing and late-deafened individuals. The two sessions drew a combined attendance of 146.

Attendees learned how to offer appropriate auxiliary aids such as audio induction loops, FM systems and personal amplifiers and gained an understanding about how to connect with American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, Certified Deaf Interpreters and Communication Access Realtime Captioners (CART) Services. The sessions featured the services of CART providers to give librarians the experience of seeing this service in action.

Maura Deedy continued programming to **library friends and trustees** with the following programs:

3/1: Friends Sharing with Friends Coffee Hour  
This general session drew 20 attendees.

3/16: Trustee Deep Dives: Library Foundations   
This timely and very well attended session featured guest speaker Heather Calvin, Senior Consultant at Keen Independent Research, LLC who shared research focusing on local library foundations. Heather also sits on the Board of the Arlington Libraries. (57 attendees)

3/29: Trustee Deep Dives: Collection Development and Intellectual Freedom. Maura presented and led a discussion on policy considerations pertaining to collection development and intellectual freedom. (59 attendees)

**Upcoming Programs in April**

4/12, 6:00pm: Maura Deedy will host the April Friends Sharing with Friends session. For more information and registration:  <https://mblc.libcal.com/event/8900570>

4/26, 10:00am: Maura Deedy will host the first **Library Foundation Forum** open to all interested in or working with a library foundation. This can include board members, foundation directors and staff, library trustees and/or directors, amongst others. The purpose of the Library Foundation Forum is to build connections with others across the commonwealth, share success stories, ask questions and learn best practices. These informal sessions will be held every other month. For more information and registration: <https://mblc.libcal.com/event/9009062>

4/27, 10:00am Maura Deedy will host **Trustee Deep Dives: Hiring a New Library Director**. This timely session will draw on the work of the advisory committee that has been updating the “MBLC Hiring a Director Guide”. For more information and registration: <https://mblc.libcal.com/event/8901186>

4/28 2:00pm **Helping to Bridge the Digital Divide Via the Affordable Connectivity Program: What Is It and How Can Libraries Help**?  Paul Kissman invites the library community to attend this session on federal funding available to libraries. The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a Federal Communications Commission benefit program that helps ensure that households can afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare and more. Part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), it replaces the Emergency Broadband Benefit program. Learn directly from FCC staff about how the ACP can help users obtain and afford low-cost Internet from home, how libraries can raise public awareness about this important benefit and possibly even help with the application process. For more information and registration: <https://mblc.libcal.com/event/9040073>

Evan Knightorganized, coordinated, and joined a meeting between the two main providers of phone help for collections advice in the event of emergency: Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC) and the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation (FAIC). Both of their phone assistance programs are funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities but have slightly different models and scopes. They discussed how they might work together more closely going forward in order to minimize duplication of efforts and maximize impact.

Evan also led the promotion and outreach for the Mass Emergency Management Agency’s (MEMA) **“Cultural Heritage Facilities Survey”** (<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/ec969cc149a14bcb90569a8f638bbcb1>). The survey seeks to identify cultural heritage facilities across the Commonwealth. To date over 60 institutions have already created a listing in this “participatory” database, 21 of which are public libraries. The map of participating institutions is available here:  <https://memamaps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=0087ad029abc4ce296a6838e875d40ac>).

**Environmental Monitoring Program Update**: In a survey of the first cohort of librarians going through this new self-directed environmental monitoring program, which started just this year, the following outcomes have been recorded:

* + 74% responded Yes to: “Have you learned better methods and standards for environmental monitoring?”
  + 68% responded Yes to: “Have you transformed the way you approach or practice environmental monitoring?”
  + 37% responded Yes to: “Are you employing new preservation skills as a result of this project?”

The **Communications Team** is working on several initiatives that align with one of the primary goals of the three-year plan: to engage new and diverse users. The team restarted our partnership with the **Office of Economic Empowerment.** The MBLC and OEE share the same interest in reaching underrepresented groups. The team worked with OEE to create a bookmark series on different topics of financial interest that libraries will be able to order. At the last PR Committee meeting, several members mentioned that teens were some of the most frequent borrowers of financial literacy books, so the team is working with OEE to set up a virtual financial workshop for teens. Virtual workshops are also planned for librarians to get information on OEE programs like Baby Steps and first-time homebuying. Overall, our goal with OEE is to feature a different economic topic each month that will appeal to a variety of ages and levels of financial literacy.  
  
**Summer reading** is again affected by uncertainty of whether libraries will be able to offer indoor programming. MBLC staff are working with the Bruins to try to do visits in ice rinks where kids could learn to skate. There would be no application process and we’re focusing on city locations. Perhaps in Springfield, Worcester, and New Bedford. In other areas we may offer Blades visits.

We’re also moving away from using attendance as a measure of summer success. While the numbers are important, they don’t tell the whole story. We’re creating a new summer social media campaign and website where people can upload their summer success stories—making it easy to share with legislators and funders.

We’re also making an effort to continue our partnership with the Premier Hockey Federation team. Pride management changed last year, which means we’re starting from square one, but we think it’s important to feature professional women athletes.  
  
We’re in the last push to get out the hotspot materials in languages other than English. We typically offer four languages besides English: Haitian Creole, Spanish, Portuguese, and Chinese-simplified. But this time, we asked libraries to tell us what languages they needed for their communities. We’ve translated materials into 11 languages: Bengali, Italian, Khmer, Hindi, Haitian Creole, Russian, Chinese-simplified, French, Arabic, Portuguese, Spanish.

We’re working with Paul Kissman on getting information out about the **Affordable Connectivity Program**. We’re doing that in two ways: for librarians, we’re creating a toolkit page with all the info and materials they need to become a community partner. We will also promote directly to the public through social media and a webpage on the consumer portal.  
  
The team also worked with Dr. Sonya Grier from American University to create a three-part series**: Inclusive Marketing for Equity in Library Services**. Members of the PR Committee attended our first session on April 1 along with directors and marketing librarians from several libraries. Our goal is to learn new ways to reach underrepresented audiences.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

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

Rep. Ruth Balser’s bill, H.4120, An Act modernizing library access to electronic books and digital audiobooks, remains in the Committee on Tourism, Arts, and Cultural Development. The small team made up of the MLA Legislative co-chairs, Jennifer Harris and Will Adamczyk, David Leonard (BPL/LFC) and Kyle Courtney (Harvard and Library Futures), continues to re-draft the language to avoid the copyright challenges that have befallen the legislation in other states. MLA remains hopeful that the bill will receive approval in Committee and be reported out favorably for a vote before the end of the current session.

Legislative Advocacy Events:

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| Event | Date/Time | Location |
| CLAMS lunchtime | Jan 21, 2022, 1:00pm | Virtual |
| Berkshire Breakfast | Jan 28, 2022, 8:00am | Virtual |
| WMLA Breakfast | Feb 11, 2022, 9:00am | Virtual |
| Worcester breakfast | March 11, 2022, 7:30am | Worcester Public Library |
| Littleton breakfast | March 18, 2022, 7:30am | Reuben Hoar Library |
| SAILS breakfast | March 25, 2022, 9:00am | Virtual |

Four MLA/MSLA Library Legislative Day online sessions:

April 5, 10:00 a.m. – featuring Western Massachusetts Library Advocates

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

April 7, 10:00 a.m. – featuring libraries from Boston, Metrowest, and North of Boston

April 7, 11:30 a.m.– featuring libraries from South of Boston, the Cape and Islands

The Library Community was encouraged to join the session that corresponded with their geographic area. MLA tried to match one or more Library Caucus members from each area to participate in the regional session that included their Districts.

**1-hour sessions included:**

Welcome and overview

* Jennifer Harris, Co-Chair, MLA Legislative Committee
* Regional Welcome & Introduction, WMLA/CMLA (April 6/April 7)
* Legislative Agenda Briefing, James Lonergan, Director, MBLC
* MSLA Briefing, Deborah Lang Froggatt, Ph.D. President, MSLA
* Remarks from Legislator(s), member of Library Caucus
* Call to Action, Mary Ann Cluggish, Chair, MBLC
* Formal session ends

Over the three days and four events, more than 250 people, including 66 legislators and aides were in attendance for Virtual Legislative Days. At the Western Massachusetts Legislative Day session, Rep. Todd Smola reminded attendees about the timeline for the House budget and continued advocacy and suggested even when Legislative Day is back at the State House, MLA should consider hosting virtual or hybrid events as well. Rep. Smola is the Minority Ranking Member on House Ways and Means and longest serving member on the budget Conference Committee and is a strong library supporter. He was joined in co-hosting duties by Sen. Jo Comerford who referred to libraries as “doorways to giant ideas”. Sen. Comerford called on her colleagues to support the MBLC Legislative Agenda. Sen. Anne Gobi and Rep. Michael Soter co-hosted the Central Massachusetts Virtual Legislative Day. The Senator talked about the ARPA fund hearing in Spencer where 45 residents testified about how the funds should be allocated with 30 of those speaking specifically about providing ARPA funds to the library and how important the services had been though COVID. Rep. Soter’s speech was a masterclass in advocacy for libraries and could be the legislative briefing at MLA Legislative Day at the State House next year. The Boston and North event was co-hosted by Sen. Michael Rush and Rep. Ruth Balser. Sen. Rush said he was “all in” for library funding and that Library Legislative Day was his favorite lobbying day at the State House. He called libraries “the light of all people”, referring to one of the many quotes at the Boston Public Library. Rep. Ruth Balser spoke about her most significant vote on the Board of Alderman in Newton was to support construction of the “new” Newton Free Library. She also discussed her bill H.4120 regarding e-books and e-audio books and encouraged attendees to advocate for its passage. Rep. Haddad hosted the South of Boston event which was held just prior to the MBLC Board meeting today. She confirmed that the Legislative Library Caucus continues to be an active voice for libraries and its members are encouraged to make libraries a priority when meeting with their respective Chairs of Ways and Means. She also reminded attendees that she has two libraries on the wait list and supports an increase in the bond cap. Sen. Michael Rodrigues, Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means was slated to co-host the Thursday South of Boston event but was called to the Senate floor for formal session. Sen. Rodriges is a staunch advocate for libraries in his District and across the Commonwealth and supports an increase in the construction bond cap. MLA Legislative will be posting the events on YouTube.

Annual Budget Process:

1. [House Ways & Means Budget:](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/HouseWaysMeansBudget) The House Committee on Ways and Means examines the [Governor's Proposal](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/FY2022/GovernorsBudget) and releases its own recommendations for the annual budget for deliberation by the House of Representatives (second week of April). House members are given two days to file amendments to the Ways and Means proposal and then about a week (sometimes less) to review.
2. [House Debate:](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/HouseDebate) The full body of the House of Representatives considers amendments to the [House Ways and Means recommendations](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/FY2022/HouseWaysMeansBudget), and debates privately their inclusion in the bill. This is a very busy time for the House of Representatives, as the Representatives and their staffs are constantly working to make sure the concerns and needs of their constituents are addressed in the final budget.
3. [House Budget:](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/HouseBudget) After debate on amendments to the [House Ways and Means recommendations](https://malegislature.gov/Budget/FY2022/HouseWaysMeansBudget), the House of Representatives then approves a final, amended version of the bill by the end of April which is then sent to the Senate for consideration.

The Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) announced that preliminary revenue collections for March 2022 totaled $3.858 billion, which is $802 million or 26.2% more than actual collections in March 2021, and $427 million or 12.5% more than benchmark. After adjusting for Pass-through Entity excise (PTE)\*, March 2022 collections are $423 million or 13.8% above actual collections in March 2021, and $455 million or 15.1% more than benchmark. FY2022 year-to-date collections totaled approximately $27.545 billion, which is $4.961 billion or 22.0% more than collections in the same period of FY2021, and $2.184 billion or 8.6% more than the year-to-date benchmark. After adjusting for PTE excise, FY2022 year-to-date collections are $3.324 billion or 14.7% more than collections in the same period of FY2021 and $1.515 billion or 6.2% more than the year-to-date benchmark.

NOTE:  
\*On September 30, 2021, the Massachusetts Legislature enacted an elective pass-through entity (PTE) excise in response to the $10,000 cap on the federal state and local tax (SALT) deduction added in the 2017 federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.   
Massachusetts joins several other states in enacting an entity-level excise that responds to the SALT cap. Under the new legislation, for tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2021, entities taxed as S corporations and partnerships, and certain trusts, may elect annually to be subject to the pass-through entity excise (PTE Excise) at a rate of 5%. The law will expire if the federal SALT deduction limitation expires or is repealed.

**Consideration of approval for the Small Library Pilot Project**

Commissioner Karen Traub left the Zoom Session during this portion of the meeting. She will be notified once this agenda item is complete.

Lauren Stara, Library Building Consultant presented the Small Library Pilot Project. This pilot project commenced on May 18, 2021, with the issuance of the Program Notice authorized by the Board at its May 5, 2021, meeting. Four Letters of Intent were received by the deadline of June 30, 2021. A series of meetings and interviews were held with the interested towns. Two grant applications were received by the deadline of December 3, 2021.

After consideration and discussion by the review team and final review by MBLC staff, one project is recommended for pilot project funding.

Each application was reviewed by a six-member review team consisting of both MPLCP Library Building Specialists, two former library directors familiar with the MPLCP grant program, the MBLC Grant Specialist, and one consulting architect. Review criteria included:

* Community needs as determined by the current facility and its inadequacy to meet the community’s library service needs. Deferred maintenance must not be the primary reason for inadequacy
* Demonstrated community readiness and support for a major capital project
* Availability of a suitable site
* Town/library willingness to work closely with the MBLC in the programming and design of the library
* Financial stability of the municipality, its bonding capacity, and any financial reserves

The team conducted a site visit and a hybrid interview with each town to ask follow-up questions from the applications. The applications and the interviews were scored by the four independent reviewers, excluding the Library Building Specialists, and an aggregate score was compiled and refined by a Community Need Factor as calculated using DOR’s 2022 data for EQV and income per capita.

According to construction program regulations, the agency director considers input from the review team and MBLC staff and recommends a provisional award to the Town of Shutesbury. The recommended motion is attached.

Because local funding has not yet been approved by either town, both have agreed to place an article for approval on their Town Meeting warrant in May 2022, based on the estimate prepared by Rider Levett Bucknall, a professional construction estimating firm. If the Town of Shutesbury is unable to accept the grant, and if the Town of Otis approves local funding, MBLC staff will bring a recommendation to a subsequent board meeting to fund that project.

Commissioner Biancolo moved and Commissioner Conrad seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves funding for the Town of Shutesbury in an amount equal to 75% of the actual eligible cost of constructing a new library as determined by the Small Library Pilot Project process. The final grant amount will be determined at the end of construction but will not exceed $6,000,000. The date by which the town must accept the award is June 30, 2022.

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| Commissioner Abraham- Yes | Commissioner Cluggish- Yes | Commissioner DeBole- Yes |
| Commissioner Ball- Absent | Commissioner Comeau- Yes | Commissioner Traub- Abstained |
| Commissioner Biancolo- Yes | Commissioner Conrad- Yes | Commissioner Vilas Novas- Yes |

**The motion passed.**

**Consideration of an appointment to the Public Relations Committee**

Celeste Bruno, Communications Director presented the Board with an appointment to the PR Committee.

Andrea Puglisi is currently the Systems & Electronic Resources Librarian at Middlesex Community College. She is an active and engaged member of the library community and has served on public relations committees for both the Massachusetts Library Association and the New England Library Association. The Statewide Public Relations Advisory Committee is working to reach underserved populations. Ms. Puglisi’s position at Middlesex Community College as well her depth of experience will be an asset to the committee in our efforts. She would fill a seat left by a member who left the library field.

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Conrad seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners appoints Andrea Puglisi to serve on the Statewide Public Relations Advisory Committee for a two-year term ending in June, 2024.

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

**Presentation of the FY2023 Plan of Service and Program and Budget for the Massachusetts Center for the Book**

Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director presented the customary program budget and line item forms on the projected plan of service if we must operate with level funding in FY2023.

The forms we have been asked to use were created for regional library services assuming budgets that were much larger than that of Massachusetts Center for the Book (MCB or “the Center” variously). While we comply with the request, we feel that the forms do not convey our budget story, and so we are using this covering narrative to talk about what level-funding will mean for our little line item and covering the MBLC forms with a spreadsheet that reflects our current thinking about our budget.

Per our line-item budget language, MCB has a two-prong mission, to fulfill the mandated activities of a center for the book affiliate of the Library of Congress and to serve in some small way as a component of library service in Massachusetts. These are rather tall orders to an organization that has been dramatically underfunded during its 23 years of operations.

For many years, the Center tried to punch above its weight class, working entrepreneurially to get to “proof of concept,” with the expectation that once the capabilities of the organization had been demonstrated, investment would follow. The investment has been slow and inadequate, and the only way that MCB managed to perform as well as it did was to prioritize programming over people and place. We skimped on office space and we exploited staff.

During our last strategic planning project, the MCB board interrogated this strategy, which was not yielding the necessary results in funding. The board determined that it would adopt a Theory of Change document in lieu of a strategic plan. In that change document, the board affirmed the need for fairness in employment and made equity a goal for future compensation.

The health crisis of the past two years has made it all the more apparent that asking people to work full-time without healthcare benefits is unconscionable. Further, the competitive job market makes attempting to hire new employees without offering any retirement plan difficult, putting our organization at a disadvantage that is compounded by its relatively low salaries. Further, in what may be extended times of social distancing, the office site for MCB needs to meet minimum standards for more than one worker.

All of these necessary infrastructure investments are now prioritized in our budget, making for a much more honest accounting of the costs of having MCB act as a standalone organization without access to or benefit from the economies of scale that would have resulted had room been found in any of the other library line-items for this national-commonwealth initiative.

What you will see in this document is that MCB has made great strides in its action items:

* We have moved into new office space in the center of Northampton, Massachusetts.
* We have hired a full-time program coordinator who will begin working on July 1.
* We have embarked on a project to provide customary small-nonprofit benefits. The package we are developing is much smaller and less attractive than those offered in other areas of statewide library services, unfortunately, but is nevertheless a vast improvement over the absence of benefits.

We anticipate growth in the future with these investments, but the coming year will be one of difficult transition to our new operational practice if we are level funded.

There will be new grant opportunities we can avail ourselves of, yes, but grants must be written, accepted, and then funded, and there is often a lag of anywhere from 8 to 12 months before funds flow. Thus, our projected plan of service for 2023, at this point, does not count on any grants other than those we have already secured.

With level-funding, our programming position in FY2023 will be severely impacted, no doubt. And we therefore fervently hope that our line-item will be increased to $400,000, which still means we are the smallest line-item under the MBLC purview, but it will allow us to restore some of the activity that has come to be expected among our constituents.

While we manage this transition year, we look to a committed board to guide our priorities. You already know two tested library leaders, Krista McLeod and Molly Fogarty, who serve as directors as well as Gateway City library leaders. Along with them we have an academic book historian, James Wald, two authors who are also academics, Alexandra Marshall and Steve Yarbrough. (You may also know Ms. Marshall’s husband, James Carroll, who served for many years as a trustee of Boston Public Library.) We have another author who is also an investment banker, Moying Li, bringing to bear important financial advice, and an academic in Child Psychology and Development who is also a book artist, Martha Pott. Happily, we now have a new member of the board to announce with this report, Tim Cherubini, formerly the first Executive Director of COSLA, is joining our board in June of this year. We continue to develop our board carefully and strategically.

The minimum accomplishments for a level-funded budget will be a dramatically reduced book awards program, a curtailed Letters About Literature program (virtual culmination), and minimal support for initiatives that we are launching in the summer and fall, Mass Book Trails and Tours for the web, Traveling Exhibit on the History of Papermaking in Massachusetts, and little to no investment for the coming year in our Library of Congress network activities. It’s not ideal, but it is necessary as we grow into an organization that treats its workers fairly and that operates in a sustainable fashion.

The Commissioners will vote on the FY2023 Program and Budget for the Center for the Book at the May 5, 2022 Board Meeting.

**Report from Massachusetts library system (MLS)**

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

**Strategic Initiative 1**

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

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| Goal | Actions | Measurement of Success | **Monthly work towards 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.* | ●Road trip with Sarah Sogigian and Rob Favini (MBLC) has resumed. Visits to member libraries are currently being scheduled.  ●3 MLS staff members are currently serving on the MBLC Database Procurement committee, which has seen presentations by nine vendors proposing 91 products. The committee is now working on the evaluation process. |
| MLS will continue to strengthen its partnerships and collaborations to allow MLS to focus on what it does uniquely well. | MLS will establish a partnership process, including a rubric, liaisons, expectations, policy and evaluations of current and new partnerships for opportunities and overlap. | *MLS will report out annually on the value of their partnerships.* | ●MLS partnered with the Boston Public Library to offer an informational webinar about the Excel Adult High School program.  ●MLS partnered with the MBLC to offer our third New Director Community Chat.  ●MLS continued working with the other New England states to plan for the Summer Summit in March, and online brainstorming sessions are scheduled for library staff to collaborate on programming ideas for this critical program. |
| 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/impact of the service.* | ●For the first time, the program reached and exceeded 1 million checkouts for the year! The OverDrive K-12 Shared Sora Collection ranks #1 in New England, and 3rd in both the US and World for OverDrive K12 school shared collections. |

**Strategic Initiative 2**

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

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| Goal | Actions | Measurement of Success | **Monthly work towards 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*. | ●MLS has utilized a standard post- workshop evaluation and is working with external consultants to build standard evaluations into the developing learning management system. |
| 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 Initiative 1, Goal 1: 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. | *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.* | ● MLS completed a winter series (Jan. – Feb.) on Leadership & Management topics.  ● Given the high level of registrations for the upcoming Human Resources series (Mar. – June), MLS is working to schedule another round of the workshops offered by the Employers Association of the NorthEast. |

**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.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goal | Actions | Measurement of Success | **Monthly work towards 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 will host a livestream in March to share news about some of the internal work we’ve completed. There will also be discussion from the members on the work they are doing. |
| 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.* | ● MLS completed a winter series (Jan. – Feb.) on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion topics. |

Additional notes:

* MLS staff are present at the virtual and in person legislative events happening around the state.

Member Update:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Librarian Name | Library | Town/City | Email |
| Mathew Holt | John D. McGovern Elementary School | Medway | [mholt@medwayschools.org](mailto:mholt@medwayschools.org) |
| Mathew Holt | Francis J. Burke Memorial Elementary School | Medway | mholt@medwayschools.org |
| \*\*Megan Peters | Clarksburg Town Library | Clarksburg | [library@clarksburgma.gov](mailto:library@clarksburgma.gov) |
| Karen O'Brien | Raynham Public Library | Raynham | [kobrien@sailsinc.org](mailto:kobrien@sailsinc.org) |
| Loretta Johnson | Flint Public Library | Middleton | [ljohnson@flintpublib.org](mailto:ljohnson@flintpublib.org) |
| Jill Mercurio | Newton Free Library | Newton | [jmercurio@minlib.net](mailto:jmercurio@minlib.net) |
| Meaghan Tully | Dartmouth High School | Dartmouth | [meaghantully@dartmouthschools.org](mailto:meaghantully@dartmouthschools.org) |
| Caitlin Browne | Watertown Free Public Library | Watertown | [cbrowne@watertown-ma.gov](mailto:cbrowne@watertown-ma.gov) |
|  |  |  |  |
| \*\*Megan Peters actually started in Aug. 2021 but we just found out | | | |
| This color print= Interim /acting Director- public libraries | | | |
| This color print= new library director but not new to library world | | | |
| This color print= new members | | | |
| This color print= new librarians/ director | | | |
| This color print= returning schools | | | |
| This color print= returning school but not new librarian (new color code this month) | | | |

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

Angela Veizaga, Director of Strategic Partnerships presented the Board with the following report from LFC:

**Leventhal Map & Education Center New Exhibition**

The Leventhal Map & Education Center opened their latest exhibit, More or Less in Common, which examines how questions of social justice and injustice are essential topics to confront when trying to understand the human landscape. Through maps as well as photographs, images, and data visualizations, this exhibition encourages you to confront stories about how environmental conditions have sometimes served to worsen inequalities along lines of social division. At the same time, our shared environment offers the possibility to bring people together across differences and the inspiration to forge new kinds of common action.

The exhibit is free to all visitors. For open hours, [visit the Map Center's website](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fr20.rs6.net%2Ftn.jsp%3Ff%3D001sgWBqorBIixH8NQulj7p_C34k_j4Eoz7ZipC46X8rxkgxP77Upcq4TA0ckl61fNgBC0SxPeFRbkJpmWmVcpxSRxLj6BrXhbopYd1Rs75l0vD-eiRYPSGMyP_UY4UqCVegLkgDn--NNIF1IvsepeWQ-ZtioCJn6KZNv5OaX_SvHGg7XzLA5dyYA%3D%3D%26c%3Ds7y71H2q4mE3-jexRLlkLb9T-27viAmv9gSJmDJiQZ4LHCZw4B7FZA%3D%3D%26ch%3DtZj37kci1yxwmXEiU1LRJWMLtE6Uepq3yhOpWUotNdxjR855dQVEdg%3D%3D&data=04%7C01%7Caveizaga%40bpl.org%7Cafacd51c91154bdd361508da133f15c9%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C637843458975399484%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=6WiIgx3vNaSmqHVNTZB%2FMk3IY4RfzoOmZ5N7hOKcgS0%3D&reserved=0). Free guided tours of More or Less in Common are available on Mondays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 11:30 am. [More information on tours is available here.](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fr20.rs6.net%2Ftn.jsp%3Ff%3D001sgWBqorBIixH8NQulj7p_C34k_j4Eoz7ZipC46X8rxkgxP77Upcq4TA0ckl61fNgBC0SxPeFRbkJpmWmVcpxSRxLj6BrXhbopYd1Rs75l0vD-eiRYPSGMyP_UY4UqCVegLkgDn--NNIF1IvsepeWQ-ZtioCJn6KZNv5OaX_SvHGg7XzLA5dyYA%3D%3D%26c%3Ds7y71H2q4mE3-jexRLlkLb9T-27viAmv9gSJmDJiQZ4LHCZw4B7FZA%3D%3D%26ch%3DtZj37kci1yxwmXEiU1LRJWMLtE6Uepq3yhOpWUotNdxjR855dQVEdg%3D%3D&data=04%7C01%7Caveizaga%40bpl.org%7Cafacd51c91154bdd361508da133f15c9%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C637843458975399484%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=6WiIgx3vNaSmqHVNTZB%2FMk3IY4RfzoOmZ5N7hOKcgS0%3D&reserved=0)

More or Less in Common is also available as a [digital exhibition](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fr20.rs6.net%2Ftn.jsp%3Ff%3D001sgWBqorBIixH8NQulj7p_C34k_j4Eoz7ZipC46X8rxkgxP77Upcq4RsFSum_nj8iLWCJR_AS5v2IWtCRVTGfpN4e5t1iqJIfcBkN7JQvnTTL7hqyBEDruZpUtlv0U4Zkq-cKYlpUX02C8RA-PU0g2wVTtj1Z_iVduvGonjGiLeiMsjPa4YDTH7C-IA1drDYq9pPGTAxG8MyWEBEf360PJA%3D%3D%26c%3Ds7y71H2q4mE3-jexRLlkLb9T-27viAmv9gSJmDJiQZ4LHCZw4B7FZA%3D%3D%26ch%3DtZj37kci1yxwmXEiU1LRJWMLtE6Uepq3yhOpWUotNdxjR855dQVEdg%3D%3D&data=04%7C01%7Caveizaga%40bpl.org%7Cafacd51c91154bdd361508da133f15c9%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C637843458975399484%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=XtWdLIHcMmy3U7eUoZgCoRsuqr6hCdYCTDBkJpqyMoQ%3D&reserved=0) to explore on your computer, tablet, or phone.

**ComicPlus**

We have a new online resource available called ComicsPlus. Patrons can enjoy unlimited access to thousands of digital comics, graphic novels, and manage without holds, wait lists, or monthly limits. To access the resource, you can visit: <https://www.bpl.org/stream-and-download/>. Patrons will need a BPL library card and pin to access the resource.

**Arts Department LibGuide**

The Arts Department is excited to share the first LibGuide that consolidates our special collections holdings related to music, photography, prints and drawings, paintings, and sculpture. The guide offers a general orientation to the hundreds of thousands of rare and unique items that we care for.

This is a “living guide, " meaning over time the Arts Department will post new acquisitions, and new resources that will help patrons delve into the huge range of subjects available to explore.

As we prepare to open the new reading room next fall, we’re glad to offer this additional glimpse into BPL’s incredible holdings, and we look forward to welcoming you and our patrons to see more, soon. Please share widely! Learn more about the new offerings here: <https://guides.bpl.org/arts/>

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**List of documents for the April 7, 2022, Regular Monthly Board Meeting:**

1. Agenda for the April 7, 2022, Regular Monthly Board Meeting
2. Draft Minutes from the March 3, 2022 Regular Monthly Board Meeting
3. Agenda #7- Overview/ summary of the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP)
4. Agenda #8- Consideration of approval for the Small Library Pilot Project
5. Agenda #9- Consideration of an appointment to the Public Relations Committee
6. Agenda #10- Presentation of the FY2023 Plan of Service and Program and Budget for the Massachusetts Center for the Book
7. Agenda #11- Report from the Massachusetts Library System (MLS)
8. Agenda #12- Report from Library for the Commonwealth (LFC)

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Cluggish asked for motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Conrad moved and Commissioner Abraham seconded to adjourn the April 7, 2022 MBLC Monthly Board Meeting 2:49 P.M.

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

Letter

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Deb Abraham

Secretary