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

**Date** : Thursday, November 3, 2022

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

**Place** : East Forest Park Branch of the Springfield City Library

 Springfield, MA

**Present** : Debby Conrad, Chair; Deb Abraham, Vice Chair; Les Ball; Vicky Biancolo; Mary Ann Cluggish; George Comeau, Esq.; Karen Traub

**Zoom** : Stacy DeBole, Secretary; Jessica Vilas Novas

**Staff Present:**

James Lonergan, Director; Andrea Bono-Bunker, Library Building Specialist; Celeste Bruno, Communications Director; Kate Butler, Electronic Services Specialist; Maura Deedy, Library Advisory Specialist; Rob Favini, Head of Library Advisory and Development; Paul Kissman, Library Information Systems Specialist; Rachel Masse, Assistant to the Director; Mary Rose Quinn, Head of State Programs; Lauren Stara, Library Building Specialist

**Staff Zoom:**

Tracey Dimant, Head of Operations & Budget; Jen Inglis, State Aid Specialist

**Observers Present:**

Matt Blumenfeld, Executive Director Library Foundation, Springfield City Libraries; Jean Canosa Albano, Assistant Director of Public Services, Springfield City Libraries; Molly Fogarty, Library Director, Springfield City Libraries; Mary Kronholm, Former MBLC Commissioner, Resident of Blandford; Jan Resnick, Former MBLC Commissioner, Resident of South Hadley; Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director, Massachusetts Library System (MLS)

**Observers Zoom:**

Eileen Chandler, Administrator, Cape Libraries Automated Materials Sharing Network (CLAMS); Michael Colford, Director of Library Services, Boston Public Library; Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director, Massachusetts Center for the Book; David Slater, Network Administrator, Old Colony Library Network (OCLN)

**Meeting called to order by Chair Conrad**

Chair Conrad called the meeting to order at 10:06 A.M.

**Roll Call of Commissioners**

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

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| Commissioner Abraham- Present | Commissioner Cluggish- Present  | Commissioner DeBole- Present Zoom  |
| Commissioner Ball- Present | Commissioner Comeau- Present  | Commissioner Traub- Present  |
| Commissioner Biancolo- Present | Commissioner Conrad- Present  | Commissioner Vilas Novas- Present Zoom |

Chair Conrad 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 Conrad moved to adopt a consent agenda for agenda items #2- Approval of minutes; #7- Consideration of approval of the municipalities meeting the requirements for the FY2023 State Aid to Public Libraries; #8- Consideration of approval of the municipalities meeting the requirements for the FY2023 State Aid to Public Libraries Consideration of approval of policies for the FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries Program; #9- Consideration of approval of the FY2024 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Direct Grant Round Program & Budget; #10- Consideration of appointment to the State Advisory Council on Libraries (SACL) Committee; #18- Adjournment. Commissioner Comeau seconded.

Chair Conrad 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 Traub- Yes |
| Commissioner Biancolo- Yes | Commissioner Conrad- Yes | Commissioner Vilas Novas- Yes |

**The motion passed.**

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

**October 6, 2022**

Chair Conrad asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 6, 2022 Monthly Meeting.

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Ball seconded to approve the minutes from the October 6, 2022, Regular Monthly Meeting with minor edits.

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

**Chair’s Report**

Chair Conrad presented the following report:

October 16 – 22 was National Friends of the Library week this year. For my part, I feel that all of October was Friends month. If you follow me on Facebook, you know I have been working with my local friends’ group on book sales and an annual fundraising event. At the state level I attended the annual Massachusetts Friends of the Library meeting held on October 29 at the Worcester Public Library.

After the MFOL meeting I began thinking that we have not taken advantage of the enthusiasm and commitment these “friends” have to libraries as we develop our legislative agenda and advocacy efforts. The members of these groups typically are not on our email distribution lists, are not members of MLA, and are not aware of the impact state funding has on their local library for which they work so hard. And yet we all know that legislators are very attentive to the communications they receive from their constituents – imagine what impact it would have if everyone in a friends group sent an email, letter, or met with a legislator all supporting our FY2024 Legislative Agenda. As work continues on the Legislative Agenda, I suggest that we ensure that communications are sent out directed to Friends explaining how the agenda impacts their local library and supplements their efforts. this should explain how they can contact their legislators in support of our budget requests. We could ask MFOL to send this to their members and send a copy to public library directors specifically asking that they share it with their Friends. I feel that these groups are an untapped source for public support if we have a clear and simple message geared towards their interests.

The MLA Legislative Committee met on October 28 and a date has been set for an in person Legislative Day at the State House – March 15. Tentative dates have been discussed for one or two virtual dates as well and various groups are beginning to plan local advocacy events as well. I know that Board staff will keep the Commissioners informed of dates as they become firm to ensure that we are well represented at all of these events. There was continued discussion about the legislation related to e-books which Rep. Balser has committed to filing for MLA again. No meeting would be complete without talking about the increase in book challenges across the state – Massachusetts is not immune from these types of efforts. It was good to hear about the coordinated efforts being taken to support libraries facing these challenges.

And on November 1 I chaired the first public hearing of the proposed changes to the rules and regulations for the next round of the Massachusetts public library construction program. I know I am repeating what has been said by other commissioners, but I am so impressed by the amount of thought and work that went into these revisions. I look forward to attending the hearing this afternoon and I fully expect participants to be as enthusiastic and supportive of the changes as those who attended the meeting on November 1.

**Commissioner Activities**

**Commissioner Cluggish**

* October 22—MLTA Annual Meeting, Shrewsbury
* October 29—MFOL Annual Meeting, Worcester

**Commissioner DeBole**

* October 25- Participated in Executive Committee Meeting
* November 2- Attended MPLCP Regulatory Hearing, virtual

**Commissioner Traub**

* October 17—MLS Executive Board meeting, virtual
* October 20—WMLA Annual Meeting, Northampton
* October 22—MLTA Annual Meeting, Shrewsbury
* October 29—MFOL Annual Meeting, Worcester
* November 1—MPLCP Regulatory Hearing, virtual

**Commissioner Vilas Novas**

* November 1—MPLCP Regulatory Hearing, virtual

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Lonergan presented the following report:

Meetings/activities highlights since the last monthly Board meeting:

* October 7— COSLA EDI Working Group meeting, virtual
* October 12—COSLINE Fall Meeting, Inn on Boltwood, Amherst, MA
* October 14—MLA Executive Board meeting, virtual
* October 17—MLS Executive Board meeting, MLS Office, Marlborough
* October 18—Trustee Deep Dive: Collection Development and Intellectual Freedom, virtual
* October 19—SAILS Membership meeting, virtual
* October 20—WMLA Annual Meeting, virtual
* October 20—NOBLE Membership meeting, virtual
* October 20—"Digital Inclusion and Libraries in North America” webinar
* October 21—Simmons Univ. Leadership & Management Conversations--Motivation and Evaluation: Some Ideas, Practices, and Considerations, virtual
* October 23-26—COSLA Fall Meeting, Chico Hot Springs, Pray, Montana
* October 31—Office of the State Auditor/MBLC Audit Informal Exit Conference, virtual
* November 1—MPLCP Regulatory Hearing, virtual
* November 2—Second Interviews for Communications Specialist position
* November 2—Meeting with Jen Varney, MSLA president, MBLC Office
* November 2— “Book Banning, Censorship, and the American Library: A Conversation with the New York Times” webinar

The **COSLA Fall Conference** was held in person for the first time since 2019 from Sunday, October 23 through Wednesday, October 26 at the Chico Hot Spring Hotel/Resort in Pray, Montana. The bulk of the meeting was focused on preparing COSLA’s next strategic plan and the annual membership meeting and elections. IMLS Director Crosby Kemper and ALA Executive Director Tracey Hall provided updates, and sessions included discussions titled “Navigating Polarizing Situations” and “Exploring Shared Values & Action.” Regional councils (including COSLINE, the Council of State Library Agencies in the Northeast) held separate meetings and we visited the Yellowstone National Park Heritage and Resource Center.

The MBLC hosted **COSLINE** library development staff for their fall meeting at the Inn on Boltwood in Amherst, MA from Wednesday, October 12 through Friday, October 14. The meeting included representatives from all 12 member states: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia.

The COSLINE meeting covered a variety of topics, including the role of the state library agency as it relates to intellectual freedom, legal issues in policy writing for meeting rooms, collections, bulletin boards, and also an overview of services from Perkins Access. During state reports, we heard about the use of ARPA and CARES act funds, challenges of local libraries recruiting staff due to low municipal wages compared to the private sector, and challenges of anti-racism work in communities not responsive to it. Many states shared these concerns, highlighting opportunities to share information and work together. The meeting ended with a tour of the Emily Dickinson House Museum

Speakers included:

* **Dr. Martin Garnar**
Martin Garnar, PhD, is director of the Amherst College Library and editor of the 10th edition of the Intellectual Freedom Manual.
* **Tomas A. Lipinski (Tom)**Dr. Lipinski is Current Professor and former Dean of the School of Information Studies, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee where he teaches and researches in the area of information law and policy, especially those issues impacting libraries.
* **Jennifer Sagalyn, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Perkins Access**
With a career commitment to accessibility of more than 25 years, Jennifer helps organizations of all sizes achieve their full potential by serving people of all abilities.
* **Geoff Freed, Director of Digital Accessibility, Perkins Access**With more than 35 years of digital accessibility experience, Geoff is a senior advisor to organizations working to ensure their digital experiences are usable by people with disabilities and are compliant with accessibility standards and recommendations.

In two years of Zoom, the COSLINE folks were thankful to come together in person to learn and connect. **A big thank you to Maura, Rob, Tracey, and Tanesha for all their efforts towards planning and organizing the COSLINE meeting!**

**Digital Equity Efforts:** Paul Kissman and Rob Favini met with representatives from the Digital Equity Alliance on 10/3 to discuss their project application to the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI). We will continue to be in contact with them as they move forward with their application as it applies to libraries in Western MA.

Rob, Paul, and I are in regular communications with MBI regarding the role of libraries as anchor institutions for digital equity projects. We are currently planning an informational webinar in December (date TBD) with MBI tailored to libraries.

The **SACL** October meeting was held on 10/18 as a hybrid event with staff and several SACL members meeting at the MBLC offices. The October meeting was a platform to discuss changes to the upcoming LSTA Direct Grant round, report highlights of last year’s grant round, and to address any SACL organizational issues. SACL’s next scheduled meeting will be in May for the annual grant review and recommendation meeting.

**Trustee/Friends/Foundations**

10/18: Trustee Deep Dive: Collection Development and Intellectual Freedom (27 attendees)

10/26: Library Foundation Forum: Open Topic (16 attendees)

**Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth working with Libraries**On 10/19 Shelley Quezada and Rob Favini met with LGBTQ Youth Commission executive Director Rayna Hill and Program Manager Kimm Topping, and Massachusetts Library Association Intellectual Freedom & Social Responsibilities Committee co-chair Andrea Fiorillo to discuss potential programs and initiatives aimed at LGBTQ youth served by school and public libraries. Planning will continue around training opportunities for librarians provided by the LGBTQ Commission and the development of a potential one-day symposium.

Rob participated in Central Mass Library Advocated trivia night hosted by Senator Ann Gobi. His team came in a very respectable 3rd place.

Rob also attended the Massachusetts Library Trustee Association Annual Meeting held at the Shrewsbury Public Library on 10/22 and the Massachusetts Friends of the Library Association Fall Meeting held at the Worcester Public Library on 10/29 and delivered MBLC updates at both meetings.

MBLC staff attended and presented at the **2022 New England Library Association Annual Conference** in Manchester, NH., Oct. 23-25.

Shelley presented Reimaging School Readiness Toolkit: Exploring New Research-Based Resources with Deborah Dutcher, Library Services Consultant, NH State Library. The Reimagining School Readiness Toolkit was created for library staff to help families prepare children ages 0 to 8 for success in school and in life. This training introduced library staff to the research, practical implications, and resources offered in the toolkit, which is available for free online.

Lauren presented a session titled Healthy Library Buildings, based on the WELL Building Standard (https://www.wellcertified.com/about-iwbi) to help libraries create an environment that promotes occupant health, safety, and choice.

Andrea joined Lauren as part of a panel presenting on libraries and sustainability. They are both contributing authors to the book “Libraries & Sustainability: Programs and Practices for Community Impact,” recently published by ALA Editions.

Rob participated on a panel Responding to the Pandemic: IMLS ARPA Funds & Our New England Libraries along with representatives from all the New England state library agencies. They discussed how we each used IMLS ARPA funds to help libraries address pandemic needs to foster better community relationships and engagement. They also discussed how these funds will have a long-term impact on our state's communities, and future projects that are emerging or sunsetting for their constituents due to this funding. (23 attendees)

**MPLCP Update:**

* Deerfield- 2/3 majority voted to approve project at town meeting in October; vote for debt exclusion on December 6
* Gloucester- Unanimous approval from City Council (9-0) for a Loan Order in October
* Westborough- Lost 2/3 vote at town meeting by 6 or 7 votes in October; citizens have pulled a petition for a special town meeting and are gathering signatures
* Seekonk- Lost 2/3 vote at town meeting by 3 votes in October; no news on holding a special town meeting
* Westford- 2/3 majority (436-141) voted to approve project at town meeting in October; vote for debt exclusion on November 8
* Orange- votes are on November 8 for the debt exclusion and December 8 for the Special Town Meeting
* Fitchburg- Not offered a provisional award yet; City Council approved ARPA money for local funding portion of the project in October
* Swansea- Not offered a provisional award yet; 2/3 majority voted to approve project at town meeting in October; no debt exclusion needed
* Brewster- Not offered a provisional award yet, but reportedly officially withdrawing from the grant round (we haven’t yet received the official withdrawal letter)

Communications Director Celeste Bruno has been working with the SAILS Network on a resource sharing campaign that encourages people to visit and use libraries outside their own home library. The campaign called “The Ultimate Library Road Trip” will launch in the spring and is being designed so that other networks can adapt it to their own area.

Interviews for the Communications Specialist continue and we’re hopeful that we’ll be able to make an offer before Thanksgiving.

Celeste worked with Tanesha and Tracey to write the Crisis Communications RFQ which was posted on Tuesday. The goal is to provide statewide crisis communications training for librarians and trustees so that they are better equipped to handle crisis situations that arise in libraries.

Finally, Celeste is working with Buyer on making the legislative agenda accessible and creating the legislative agenda website.

**Legislative Report**

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

On November 1, the Department of Revenue (DOR) began distributing $2.941 billion in tax refunds in accordance with [Chapter 62F](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleIX/Chapter62F), a Massachusetts law that requires tax revenue collected in excess of an annual cap to be returned to taxpayers. Refunds will be provided in proportion to Massachusetts income tax liability incurred by taxpayers in the immediately preceding taxable year – Tax Year 2021. In the coming weeks, an estimated 3 million taxpayers will receive a refund equal to 14% of their 2021 Massachusetts income tax liability.

Total Tax collections for mid-October were $924 million, up $45 million or 5.1% versus the same period in October 2021. Income taxes totaled $711 million, up $68 million or 10.7% versus the same period in October 2021. Preliminary revenue collections for September totaled $4.187 billion, $194 million or 4.9% more than the actual collections in September 2021, and $224 million or 5.7% more than benchmark. FY2023 year-to-date collections totaled approximately $9.194 billion, which is $443 million or 5.1% more than collections in the same period of FY2022 and $224 million or 2.5% more than year-to-date benchmark.

More than a dozen libraries and their municipalities, including those that received provisional grants from the MBLC in July, the remaining waitlisted projects, and a few that have not broken ground, are looking for additional financial resources for their library building projects to fill the gap between the MPLCP grant and local funding due to cost escalations over the last few years. They have asked Legislators for state surplus revenues or ARPA funds to bridge the gap. Members of the MBLC management and construction teams met with 25 House and Senate members and aides to discuss the possibility of additional funding from the Commonwealth from ARPA or revenue surplus. At the request of these legislators, the MBLC (Andrea Bono-Bunker) revised the spreadsheet developed by the libraries to establish a baseline funding formula and provide some context for the figures under consideration. The House and Senate approaches to this process differ; the group of House members are looking for ways to extend the deadline to accept grant awards and reduce the scope of projects while the Senators are considering a “pothole” type fund, using ARPA to add funds to the projects outside of the grant funding and process but administered by the MBLC. These libraries have decided to continue their efforts into the next legislative session. The Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) Legislative Committee has sent out advocacy alerts on their behalf in recent weeks. There is no guarantee that these legislative efforts or other approaches will yield results as there is a long line of programs requesting the additional ARPA and surplus funding.

Moving forward, the MBLC will need to focus on a new bond bill and ongoing increases to the annual bond cap to fund the next round of grants. The MBLC new construction bond and cap increase requests should be submitted to the new Governor and Legislature early in the new calendar year to be considered for funding during the next two-year session of the 193rd General Court. At least 40 libraries have expressed interest in the next grant round.

More than three months into the new fiscal year, the House and Senate came to an agreement on a major economic development spending proposal which should reach Governor Baker's desk by the end of the day Thursday, November 3. The economic development bill, which includes the close out funding for FY 2022, does not offer the additional construction funds libraries sought.

The nearly $3.8 billion bill ([H 5374](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/192/H5374)) is technically a conference committee report and cannot be amended. The bill will be considered during informal sessions in the House and Senate and can be blocked with a single objection. The legislation provides $1.4 billion for the human services, including $350 million for hospitals, $200 million for ongoing COVID-19 response, and $195 million for nursing facilities and rest homes, $540 million to support clean energy and climate resilience programs, and $409.5 million to support affordable housing. The package also provides an additional $112 million towards the transit system which has already received $666 million for the MBTA to make safety repairs ordered by the Federal Transit Administration.

Representative Ruth Balser requested that the small group of MLA Legislative Committee members and e-book stakeholders reconvene to discuss a proposed re-draft of last session’s H.4120, An Act modernizing library access to electronic books and digital audiobooks. She is very interested in filing legislation this next session to support e-Book and e-Audiobook access for all types of libraries. The committee includes Kyle Courtney and Juliya Ziskina from Library Futures, David Leonard, President of the Boston Public Library, Will Adamczyk and Eileen Dyer, co-chairs of the MLA Legislative Committee, and Mary Rose Quinn. The group recently met with Representative Balser’s legislative counsel, Brendan Morris and is currently reviewing the reworked bill drafted by Kyle Courtney. Representative Balser needs the redraft in the next few weeks in order to submit it the bill by the filing deadline early in the new legislative session.

**Consideration of approval of the municipalities meeting the requirements for the FY2023 State Aid to Public Libraries based on eligibility established in FY2023 for the Municipal Appropriation Requirement and in FY2022 for the minimum standards**

Jen Inglis, State Aid Specialist, presented for certification 96 municipalities meeting the requirements for the FY2023 State Aid to Public Libraries program.

Ms. Inglis reminded the Commissioners that these awards are half payments. The remainder is paid at the end of the grant cycle. The total first half payments for the first group of municipalities is $1,697,694.42.

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Cluggish seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners certifies that the communities on the attached list have met minimum standards of free public library service and awards each a FY2023 Library Incentive Grant (LIG), a FY2023 Municipal Equalization Grant (MEG)and a FY2023 Nonresident Circulation (NRC) offset in the indicated amounts, totaling $ 1,697,694.42, and authorizes any additional FY2023 State Aid to Public Libraries disbursements that may be possible toward the end of the grant cycle.

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

**Consideration of approval of policies for the FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries Program**

**EXTENDING A GRACE PERIOD FOR INCREASED POPULATION-BASED**

**MINIMUM STANDARDS**

1) To be eligible for the extension of a grace period for increased population-based requirements due to new population figures, the library must:

 a. be in compliance with or receive a waiver of the FY2025 Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MGL, c.78, s.19A).

 b. meet the other minimum library standards required for receipt of FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries (MGL, c.78, s.19B):

*(1)* *“be open to all residents of the commonwealth,*”

*(2)* *“make no charge for normal library services*,”

*(6)* *“lend books to other libraries in the commonwealth and extend privileges to the holders of cards issued by other public libraries in the commonwealth on a reciprocal basis.*”

2) If a municipality is in a different population group according to the population estimates mandated by the General Court for use with the FY2025 State Aid program, it is eligible for a grace period of up to three years to meet the increased standard for hours open or materials expenditure. This grace period is for the FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries grant round. Compliance for State Aid to Public Libraries in the FY2025 grant round is measured by library performance in FY2024. To be eligible for this grace period the library must be meeting the prior lower standard.

3) A library director whose educational requirement is now “graduation with a degree from an approved library school” because the population of that community has gone above 10,000 will be exempt (*legacied*) from the increased requirement. However, any work in progress by the director on prior educational/professional requirements of the Basic Library Techniques must be completed within the previously established time limits. When a *legacied* director leaves the library, their replacement must meet the changed requirement at the time of appointment as library director.

**Initial Approval of Policy: January 9, 1997**

**Policy wording updated: November 3, 2022**

**FY2024 Approval Date: November 3, 2022**

**State Aid Policies are reviewed annually.**

**MINIMUM STANDARDS OF HOURS OF SERVICE FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

Minimum Hours Open Per Week:

In keeping with the regulation that "library service should be available to the community a minimum number of hours per week," (605 CMR 4.0) the minimum hours requirement will apply during each week of the compliance period. To meet the requirement, a public library must be open the required hours, days and evenings during each week of the compliance period.

Compliance Period

The compliance period will be defined as 38 consecutive weeks per year. The 38 weeks may span two fiscal years if compliance includes summer months.

Massachusetts Legal Holidays:

Libraries may close on Massachusetts legal holidays and local municipal holidays, and not affect their compliance with the hours of service standards.

**Initial Approval of Policy: February 4, 1993**

**Revision of Definition: March 22, 2017**

**FY2025 Approval Date: November 3, 2022**

**State Aid Policies are reviewed annually.**

**MINIMUM MATERIALS EXPENDITURE STANDARD CALCULATION**

The minimum materials expenditure standard is computed for all municipalities using the amount appropriated by the municipality to the library for operations and the percentage requirement as stated in regulation. (MGL, c.78, s.19B; 605 CMR 4.01(5))

Operating expenditures include:

1. Personnel

 *Salaries only.*

2. Library Materials

 *The cost of books, serials, audio materials, materials in electronic format, and other non-print materials that circulate to library patrons or are used by library patrons within the library. Included are items in Library of Things collections, the cost of electronic collections and money paid to networks for digital content, and museum passes. Supplies used to prepare library materials for circulation are not included (e.g. bar codes, book pockets, etc.) and the monetary value of donated books may not be included.*

 *In addition, up to 10% of the materials expenditure requirement may be used to purchase hardware in the library for direct patron use. This includes but is not limited to public computer desktops and laptops, peripherals (mouse, keyboard, etc.), adaptive technology, and scanners. Hotspot connection fees are also included.*

3. Other Operating Expenditures

 *The current and recurrent costs necessary to support the provision of library services. These include expenditures made by the library that are not capital, personnel, or for library materials. Other operating expenditures include building maintenance, energy and utilities, network membership, supplies, repair or replacement of existing furnishing and equipment, and other miscellaneous expenditures.*

Please note: Only materials that circulate to all residents of municipalities certified for State Aid to Public Libraries count toward meeting the Minimum Materials Expenditure Standard unless there are special circumstances, such as a stipulation in a vendor contract or a Trust that is designated for special purposes.

**Initial Approval of Policy: January 9, 1997**

**Revision of Policy: November 3, 2022**

**FY2025 Initial Approval Date: November 3, 2022**

**State Aid Policies are reviewed annually.**

**MATERIALS EXPENDITURE AND HOURS OPEN ACCOMMODATION POLICY**

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 represented by the minimum standards of public library service.

A municipality will receive certification for FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries if it:

meets the FY2025 Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR), or receives a waiver of the FY2025 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 or the Hours Open standards included a minimum level of compliance (80%). The 80% level for accommodation for materials is no longer in effect since all municipalities are currently at 90% or higher. 90% is now considered the minimum level.**

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 FY2025 grant round, no additional award of State Aid to Public Libraries will be made to a municipality using this policy of accommodation.

Example: 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 expend15% 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 FY2024 State Aid award will be reduced to 75% of the Cherry Sheet total.

**Initial Approval of Policy: April 3, 2003**

**FY2025 Approval Date: November 3, 2022**

**State Aid Policies are reviewed annually**

**Adjusted Awards**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Award 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 onestandard and **Minimum-level** (90%) compliance with the otherstandard. |
| **75%** | **Minimum-Level** (90%) compliance with both standards. |

**Materials Expenditure Requirement**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Population Group** | **Full****Compliance****(100%)** | **Minimum-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%)** | **Minimum-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 |

**MUNICIPAL APPROPRIATION REQUIREMENT CALCULATION**

The Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR) for each award year is computed using figures for the three prior fiscal years. For each of those three years that a municipality received a State Aid to Public Libraries award, the figure used will be either the MAR or the Total Appropriated Municipal Income, (TAMI), whichever is higher. If the municipality was not certified for State Aid to Public Libraries in any year, the actual TAMI for that year will be used.

For the **FY2025** grant round:

The **FY2022** figure will be either the **FY2022 MAR** or the **FY2022 TAMI**, whichever is **higher**. If the municipality was not certified for State Aid to Public Libraries in FY2022, the actual final FY2022 TAMI will be used.

The **FY2023** figure will be either the **FY2023 MAR** or the **FY2023 TAMI**, whichever is **higher**. If the municipality was not certified for State Aid to Public Libraries in FY2023, the actual final FY2023 TAMI will be used.

The **FY2024** figure will be either the **FY2024 MAR** or the **FY2024 TAMI**, whichever is **higher**. If the municipality was not certified for State Aid to Public Libraries in FY2024, the actual final FY2024 TAMI will be used.

**FY2025 Municipal Appropriation Requirement Calculation:**

(FY2022 + FY2023 + FY2024) / 3 = average of three years

average x 1.025 = FY2024 MAR (average of three years plus 2.5 %)

**Initial Approval of Policy: August 8, 1991**

**FY2025 Approval Date: November 3, 2022**

**State Aid Policies are reviewed annually.**

**DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY FOR A WAIVER OF THE FY2025 MUNICIPAL APPROPRIATION REQUIREMENT (MAR)**

The Board of Library Commissioners will consider requests for waivers of the FY2025 Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR) from municipalities that demonstrate fiscal hardship. Requests for waivers must include the following documentation and must be received by the MBLC State Aid and Data Coordination Unit **with a postmark no later than October 3, 2024:**

1. a signed *Petition for Waiver of the FY2025 Municipal Appropriation Requirement.*

**And…with a postmark no later than November 7, 2024:**

**For Municipalities applying for a waiver of the FY2025 MAR that met full requirements (no waiver) of the FY2024 MAR):**

2. a completed *FY2024/FY2025 Total Municipal Operating Budget Worksheet*, and

3. supporting municipal budget document(s) (such as copies of warrant articles or summary pages from the municipal budget), listing for FY2024 and FY2025 both the total operating and departmental budgets for the municipality,

4. a statement from a senior municipal official:

a. citing the fiscal hardship surrounding the municipality’s inability to meet the FY2025 MAR,

b. explaining the municipality's FY2025 budget process regarding the library,

c. providing evidence that any reduction to the library budget is not disproportionate relative to changes in other municipal departments and the overall municipal budget.

5. a cover letter from the library director and trustee chair, with enclosures if appropriate, explaining the library's FY2025 budget process and reasons why the community did not comply with the FY2025 MAR. (Examples of enclosures include: narratives from municipal officials describing the fiscal situation, text of referenda.)

**For Municipalities that received a waiver of the FY2024 MAR, in addition to documents 2-5 as listed above:**

6. a Five Year MAR Waiver Plan (for Year Two) or an update (for Years Three-Five) written by a senior municipal official in conjunction with library director and trustees.

**NOTE: Municipalities are limited to 5 consecutive fiscal years as a waiver applicant. Commissioners have the discretion to request that any waiver applicant present their petition in person.**

**The Waiver Review Process**

According to Massachusetts General Laws, c.78, s19A:

No city or town shall receive any money under this section in any year when the appropriation of said city or town for free public library services is below an amount equal to the average of its appropriation for free public library service for the three years immediately preceding, increased by two and one‑half per cent of said average. Said board may, upon petition of a community, waive aforesaid requirement upon demonstration of fiscal hardship.

The number of waivers available for FY2025 will not be determined until the budget language is final for FY2025.

1. Petitions for a waiver will be reviewed by the Board of Library Commissioners at their January 2025 meeting.

2. All petitioners for a waiver determined to have a disproportionate cut to their budget must present their petition in person at the January 2025 meeting.

3. All petitioners for a waiver who received a disproportionate cut in the prior fiscal year must present their petition in person at the January 2025 meeting.

4. The Board will review FY2025 MAR Waiver Petitions based on:

a. evidence of municipal fiscal hardship, and

b. demonstration by the municipality that the library’s budget was not disproportionately reduced.

5. The Board will vote on the petitions for waivers of the FY2025 MAR at their February 2025 meeting.

6. The Board will hear any appeals of the denial of an FY2025 MAR waiver at their March 2025 meeting.

7. The Board will act on any appeal at their April 2025 meeting.

8. The FY2025 State Aid to Public Library Program officially concludes at the conclusion of the April 2025 Board of Library Commissioners meeting.

**Initial Approval of Policy: February 7, 2002**

**Revision of Policy: November 3, 2022**

**FY2025 Approval Date: November 3, 2022**

**State Aid Policies are reviewed annually.**

**THE CLOSURE OF A PUBLIC LIBRARY**

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners considers any municipality that closes its main public library or ceases offering library service to the public for any reason other than the undertaking of a project to improve library services (such as construction, automation preparation or inventory) or the occurrence of a natural catastrophe (including a limited emergency closing due to illness, death or pandemic) to be, as of the date of that termination of service, no longer a certified participant in the State Aid to Public Libraries program.

The Commissioners will confirm the municipality's loss of certification at their next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

Once the municipality has lost certification, it cannot be recertified as meeting the minimum standards of public library service for State Aid to Public Libraries (as set forth in MGL c.78, s. 19A and 19B, 605 CMR 4.0, and current budget language) until the municipality's library has been meeting the standards for one complete fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) and proper application for State Aid to Public Libraries is made to the Board of Library Commissioners.

**Initial Approval of Policy: March 5, 1993**

**FY2025 Approval Date: November 3, 2022**

**State Aid Policies are reviewed annually.**

**FIVE YEAR MAR WAIVER PLAN POLICY**

The Board of Library Commissioners recognizes that municipalities that demonstrate fiscal hardship may need to request a waiver of the FY2025 Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR). Requests for waivers must include documentation as outlined in the *DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY FOR A WAIVER OF THE FY2025 MUNICIPAL APPROPRIATION REQUIREMENT (MAR)* policy.

**NOTE: Municipalities are limited to 5 consecutive fiscal years as a waiver applicant. Commissioners have the discretion to request that any waiver applicant present their petition in person.**

For Municipalities that received a waiver of the FY2024 MAR (Year One), and are petitioning for a waiver of the FY2025 MAR (Year Two), a plan must be submitted, written by a senior municipal official in conjunction with the library’s director and trustees. This plan outlines the steps to be made in FY2025 (and for the next three fiscal years) which will bring the municipality’s library appropriation back to the required level of funding, the MAR.

For Municipalities that received a waiver of the FY2023 MAR (Year One), and FY2024 (Year Two) and are petitioning for a waiver of the FY2025 MAR (Year Three), an update to the plan created in Year Two must be submitted, written by a senior municipal official in conjunction with the library’s director and trustees. This update reviews the steps that were made in FY2024 (and outlines the steps to be made for the next two fiscal years which will bring the municipality’s library appropriation back to the required level of funding, the MAR.)

For Municipalities that received a waiver of the FY2024 MAR with reservation, i.e. the library’s budget was DISPROPORTIONATELY CUT in FY2024, and are petitioning for a waiver of the FY2025 MAR, a plan or update as described above must be submitted, written by a senior municipal official in conjunction with the library’s director and trustees, and IN ADDITION, they must present their petition in person at the Board of Library Commissioners meeting in January, 2025.

**Initial Approval of Policy: October 4, 2018**

**FY2025 Approval Date: November 3, 2022**

**State Aid Policies are reviewed annually.**

Commissioner Traub moved and Commissioner Biancolo seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioner adopt for the FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries program the following proposed policy: Extending a Grace Period for Increased Population-Based Minimum Standards.

Commissioner Ball moved and Commissioner Cluggish seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners adopt for the FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries program the following proposed policy: Minimum Standards of Hours of Service for Public Libraries.

Commissioner Cluggish moved and Commissioner Comeau seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners adopt for the FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries program the following proposed policy: Minimum Materials Expenditure Standard Calculation.

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Ball seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners adopt for the FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries program the following proposed policy: Materials Expenditure and Hours Open Accommodation Policy.

Commissioner Biancolo moved and Commissioner Ball seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners adopt tor the FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries program the following proposed policy: Municipal Appropriation Requirement Calculation.

Commissioner Abraham moved and Commissioner Traub seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners adopt for the FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries program the following proposed policy: Determining Eligibility for a Waiver of the FY2024 Municipal Appropriation Requirement.

Commissioner Vilas Novas moved and Commissioner Traub seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners adopt for the FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries program the following proposed policy: The Closure of a Public Library.

Commissioner DeBole moved and Commissioner Ball seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners adopt for the FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries program the following proposed policy: Five Year Waiver Plan Policy.

**Hearing no objections, Chair Conrad declared the motions passed under the consent agenda.**

**Consideration of approval of the FY2024 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Direct Grant Round Program & Budget**

Rob Favini, Head of Library Advisory and Development presented the Board with SACL’s recommendations for the FY2024 Grant Program.

The State Advisory Committee on Libraries (SACL) met on October 18 and discussed the FY2024 grant round. For this year’s grant round the emphasis will be on creativity and flexibility to ensure that libraries deliver the programming and services that have been a hallmark of the MBLC’s direct grant program.

SACL is extremely pleased to announce the FY2024 LSTA Direct Grant Program opportunities:

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| * Access for All
* Amplifying Digitized Special Collections
* Anytime STEM Learning
* Archives Arrangement and Description
* At the Table
* Citizenship Corners and Expanded English Language Services
* Civic Hub
* Creative Communities
* Dig In
* Financial Literacy
 | * Go Local
* Health and Wellness
* Managing Fine and Decorative Arts
* Mind in the Making
* Open
* Open for Business: Supporting Small Business Development and Entrepreneurs
* Pathways to Success
* Protecting Priority Collections
* Strength in Families
 |

Fact sheets with full descriptions of grant offerings can be found on the MBLC website: <https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/lsta-grants/opportunities.php>

The grant round will be announced next week with Letters of Intent due December 6, 2022 and grant applications due April 11, 2023. The budget for the FY2024 program is $500,000. Please contact me with questions, if you would like additional information, or if you need assistance accessing grant fact sheets.

Commissioner Ball moved and Commissioner DeBole seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the Program and Budget for the FY2024 Library Services and Technology Act direct grant round in the amount of $500,000 as recommended by the State Advisory Council on Libraries and detailed in the documentation presented in agenda item 9.

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

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

Rob Favini, Head of Library Advisory and Development presented the Board with the following recommendation for the SACL Committee.

The Statewide Advisory Council on Libraries has an opening for a SACL representative for libraries serving traditionally under-served populations. The LSTA staff is pleased to present Olivia Melo, Library Director, New Bedford Public Library, as a candidate for your consideration:

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

Commissioner Cluggish moved and Commissioner Ball seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners appoints Olivia Melo to the State Advisory Council on Libraries Committee with term ending on September 30, 2024.

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

**Adoption of State Advisory Council on Libraries (SACL) By-laws**

Rob Favini, Head of Library Advisory and Development presented the Board with the updated by-laws from the SACL Committee for review.

He noted that the Board would vote on the SACL By-Laws at the December 1, 2022 meeting.

**Discussion of Statewide Public Relations Committee’s Equity Recommendations**

Celeste Bruno, Communications Director presented the Board with the PR Committee’s Equity Recommendations:

**Background**

With the excellent three-part diversity series given by Dr. Sonya A. Grier as inspiration, members of the MBLC’s statewide public relations committee recommend the following to the leadership and Board of the MBLC as first-step actions the agency can take to increase equity in Massachusetts libraries. There is a great deal of work that has to be done to achieve genuine equity, so these recommendations are considered yearlong themes to pursue in SFY2023 and further. New and different themes or emphases/initiatives can be chosen for future years. These recommendations actively support the MBLC’s core principles of equity, diversity, inclusivity, and belonging as well as the goal to strengthen the Massachusetts library community as [stated in the current strategic plan](https://mblc.state.ma.us/about-us/strategic-plan/index.php).

**Recommendations***Recommendation 1 – Lead Massachusetts to become the first fully overdue fine-free state in the U.S.*

* MBLC leadership to make statements in support of and amplify the positive outcomes at libraries in cities, towns, and schools that have gone fine-free for overdue materials.
* Link the elimination of library overdue fines to the reduction of barriers and increase of equitable access to reliable information and social support.
* Link the elimination of library overdue fines to expected outcomes seen elsewhere: increased use of libraries, improved perception of libraries.
* Convene and/or facilitate peer-to-peer learning opportunities, coaching, or one-on-one matches between and among library leaders who have gone overdue fine-free and those who are interested in it.
* Support the leadership statements and peer-to-peer learning opportunities by tracking news articles and industry articles that illustrate the outcomes of going overdue fine-free in Massachusetts and beyond.

*Recommendation 2 – Launch an effort to build a more inclusive and reflective Massachusetts library professional community.*

* MBLC leadership to make statements in support of creating a diverse workforce that chooses to find careers in the library community.
* Establish new partnership/paid internship opportunities with Simmons School of Library and Information Science with a focus on attracting emerging library professionals to Massachusetts and/or to stay and work in Massachusetts.
* Identify 3-4 other library science schools to build partnerships/paid internship/fellowship opportunities with such as the University of Rhode Island, Southern Connecticut University, University at Buffalo–SUNY, University at Albany–SUNY, and Salem State.
* Establish new partnerships with TBD Massachusetts colleges and universities to build a network of career opportunity sharing for library jobs.
* Share and promote information about the wide range of roles and career paths available in the library profession, profile actual Massachusetts library workers, establish a network of library professionals and volunteers who are willing to serve as mentors/answer questions, and give behind-the-scenes looks at working in academic, school, public, and special libraries.

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

Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director presented the following report to the Board.

**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 create new avenues for active member engagement, including task forces, class leaders, and project engagements. | *MLS will report to member libraries on an annual basis the number of active member engagements.* | We will create a process to engage with member library staff on leading learning opportunities.We collaborated with the Cushman Library and Winchester Public Library on blog posts about their website redesigns. |
| MLS will continue to strengthen its partnerships and collaborations to allow MLS to focus on what it does uniquely well. | Utilizing the newly created partnership policy and process, MLS will explore possible partnership work with the Library for the Commonwealth and other organizations. | *MLS will report to member libraries on an annual basis the value of their partnerships.* | MLS collaborated with the Employers Association of the NorthEast to bring member benefits to MLS members (see next box for details) |
| New services will be designed to deliver the greatest statewide impact, able to expand and contract due to available funding and need. | MLS will evaluate current, new, and proposed services using a new internal service review process. | *MLS will ensure that services are able to expand and contract due to available funding, need, and capacity.* | We launched a collaboration with the Employers Association of the NorthEast (EANE), including an HR Hotline for public library members, discounts on EANE membership and services for all members, and HR-related learning opportunities. Join us for an informational webinar about these new services on September 15 at 10 am. |

**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. | Together with our partners, MLS will lead the planning of learning opportunities on leadership and management topics and ensure networking options in our engagements. | *MLS will report to member libraries on an annual basis the leadership and management learning opportunities hosted and the reflection from participants.* | MLS will host our first in-person workshops since the beginning of the pandemic. On September 14 and 15 we are hosting “Sing Me a Story” with Emilia Dahlin in the Marlborough and Northampton MLS offices. We have had strong registrations with waitlists for these classes. |
| Leadership, professional development, and networking opportunities will have flexible offerings in order to include participants from various library types, library sizes, and resources. | MLS will explore the creation of grants and/or scholarship opportunities to support member library staff in their professional development work. | *MLS will report to member libraries on an annual basis the number of opportunities available, awarded, and the reflection from participants.* |  |

**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. | Utilizing learnings from our work last year, MLS will continue its review of documents, resources and practices to ensure they align with core values.In partnership with trusted experts, MLS will begin an accessibility audit of MLS services. | *MLS will demonstrate both increased resource allocation as well as substantive, visible progress in representation throughout MLS services.* | We drafted an accessibility statement for events that we will begin using to inform members about the process for requesting an accommodation to attend an event. |
| 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. | Utilizing established services, MLS will showcase member libraries that are using the core values of DEI within their communities. | *MLS will report to member libraries on an annual basis the DEI learning opportunities hosted and the reflection from participants.* |  |

**Save the date:** MLS Annual Meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 7, 2022 at Devens Common Center.

**Report from Library for the Commonwealth**

Michael Colford, Director of Library Services submitted the following report:

We’ve submitted documentation to the BPL Business office for two projects:

1. A $200,000 request for proposal to process approximately 600,000 pages of newspaper content digitized by MyHeritage. This work will involve taking previously-digitized page images and creating primary files and derivatives conforming to standards and specifications established by the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP). We have been focusing on inventorying digitized titles and creating preliminary metadata so that we can hit the ground running once the RFP is posted and a contract is signed.
2. A $20,000 bid (“working quote contract”) to digitize approximately 70,000 pages of newspaper content from microfilm. This work will be also conducted using standards and specifications established by the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) to ensure maximum compatibility and preservation outlook for the digital images and associated OCR and metadata. We have identified vendors for this bid and the posting should be available soon.

We are in the preliminary stages of title selection for these projects, the goal will be to target a mix of long-running “papers of record” from major urban centers, smaller local titles from a broad geographic range, and papers documenting the experiences of traditionally marginalized communities.

Other items of note:

We’ve recently made available the first significant collections of audio and video in Digital Commonwealth. These are (respectively):

* Temple Israel of Boston’s “Past Voices, Audio Recordings, 1934-1979” collection, featuring recordings of worship services, sermons, radio programs, and community events, mostly from the mid-20th century.
* Boston Public Library’s “WHDH Collection,” a collection of digitized film clips featuring news coverage and special programming relating mainly to people, events, and scenes of the Boston area, including school busing, local politics, and social movements.

We have been focusing on increasing outreach to organizations and digitization of materials documenting the experiences of traditionally marginalized communities, including:

* The Black United Front Collection (Roxbury Community College), which documents the struggle of the Black community within the city of Boston in the 1970s, highlighting political activity and community development.
* The Lawrence Sykes Collection (National Center of Afro-American Artists), featuring photographs and artwork created by Lawrence Sykes, a prominent Boston-based artist and professor at Rhode Island College who photographed the African diaspora across multiple continents.
* The Woman's Era (Boston Public Library), which was the first publication published by and for Black women in the U.S., from 1894-1897.
* L’Eco d’Italia (Boston Public Library), one of the earliest Italian-language newspapers published in the United States.

**Excel Online High School**

We have over 50 active enrollments (aka those who are still in the high school program including the 30 day probationary period) and out of these, 14 individuals live outside of Boston. Our numbers indicate that most who are out of state live in Springfield, or the Beverly/North Shore area, but most areas of the state have some representation.

We also have had 3 students who have fully graduated from the program, including recently a graduate named Lillian Belcher who passed the program this week and she is excited to apply for college now that she has achieved the diploma.  (I’ve written to Lillian who happens to be from Canton MA to see if I can get some quotes for you and I’ll give her a call a little later this afternoon)

We have held joint webinars with library staff from Springfield and Chelsea to talk about the program, and have reached out to contacts throughout the state including in the Cape Cod area and several libraries throughout Bristol County.  We also had a big push during the last MLA conference and are anticipating doing the same at the next one.  The recent press release (attached) has also attracted an uptick in applications recently.

Most of the applicants we have heard from who inquire about the program or for whom we interview before awarding the scholarship say they want to achieve this for the following reasons:

* Many are single parents, mostly women, who became pregnant in high school and had to drop out due to raising a family.
* Some have said that high school just wasn’t such a priority for them due to other commitments (usually working, or raising families) or that traditional high school just didn’t work out for them for several reasons.
* Interestingly, we hear a lot from students that their children are either in high school or about to start, and they want to achieve the high school diploma to prove to their families that they too can do this, and that if their kids can, so can the parents.  These students also usually have a LOT of support from their family members once they decide this is the right time for them.

**Collections**

**Databases**

We have the Boston Herald, The Lowell Sun, and the (Fitchburg) Sentinal & Enterprise online (it was the package with the Herald to include the other two journals) – full online access to the daily newspaper. The Herald is slightly different in that you can have 24 hours access with no herald account login, 72 with your account.

Boston Globe is now available through Press Reader: [https://www.pressreader.com/australia/the-boston-globe-1018](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pressreader.com%2Faustralia%2Fthe-boston-globe-1018&data=05%7C01%7Cmcolford%40bpl.org%7C3de767fa633b40eb672608dabc3b729d%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638029260767190603%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=0kKEQd6I43ZnKD0j0tFDobltgb0gnuJlA2BK2mHlyC0%3D&reserved=0)

**Some ebook facts:**

Expect to loan over 3.5 million items through Overdrive this year, a 7% increase over 2021

This year (so far in 2022) we have loaned over 500,000 items to visiting patrons through the LEA (Statewide Reciprocal lending) program (18% of or total circulation).

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**List of documents for the November 3, 2022, Regular Monthly Board Meeting:**

1. Agenda for the November 3, 2022, Regular Monthly Board Meeting
2. Draft Minutes from the October 6, 2022 Regular Monthly Board Meeting
3. Agenda #7 Consideration of approval of the municipalities meeting the requirements for the FY2023 State Aid to Public Libraries based on eligibility established in FY2023 for the Municipal Appropriation Requirement and in FY2022 for the minimum standards
4. Agenda #8- Consideration of approval of policies for the FY2025 State Aid to Public Libraries Program
5. Agenda #9- Consideration of approval of the FY2024 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Direct Grant Round Program & Budget
6. Agenda #10- Consideration of appointment to the State Advisory Council on Libraries (SACL) Committee
7. Agenda #11- Adoption of State Advisory Council on Libraries (SACL) By-laws
8. Agenda #12- Discussion of Statewide Public Relations Committee’s Equity Recommendations
9. Agenda #13- Update to the Construction Regulations Amendment Process

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:46 P.M.



Stacy DeBole

Secretary