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

**Date** : Thursday, March 7, 2024

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

**Place** : Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners Offices

Boston, MA

**Board**

**Present** : Debby Conrad, Chair; Vicky Biancolo, Vice Chair; Timothy Cherubini; Joyce Linehan

**Board** : Karen Traub, Secretary; George Comeau, Esq.; Jessica Vilas Novas

**Present**

**Zoom**

**Absent :** Barbara Barros; Kate Chang

**Staff Present:**

James Lonergan, Director; Heather Backman, Library Building Specialist; Celeste Bruno, Communications Director; Andrea Bono-Bunker, Library Building Specialist; Allyson Dowds, Consultant to Special Populations; Sue Faiella, Accountant; Rob Favini, Head of Library Advisory & Development; Rachel Masse, Assistant to the Director; Cate Merlin, Head of State Programs; June Thammasnong, Communications Specialist

**Staff Zoom:**

Kate Butler, Library Information Systems Specialist; Jennifer Inglis, State Aid Specialist; Tracey Dimant, Head of Operations and Budget; Lillian Sutton, Administrative Assistant

**Observers Zoom:**

Courtney Andree, Executive Director, Massachusetts Center for the Book; Eileen Chandler, Network Administrator, Cape Libraries Automated Materials Sharing (CLAMS); Mary Ann Cluggish, Former Commissioner, Wellesley; Al Hayden, Acting Director, Peabody Institute Library, Peabody; Phil McNulty, Network Administrator, Minuteman Library Network; Fae Saulenas, Saugus Citizen; Dave Slater, Network Administrator, Old Colony Library Network (OCLN); Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director, Massachusetts Library System

**Meeting called to order by Chair Conrad**

Chair Conrad called the meeting to order at 10:01 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.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Commissioner Barros- Absent | Commissioner Cherubini- Present | Commissioner Linehan- Present |
| Commissioner Biancolo- Present | Commissioner Comeau- Present Zoom | Commissioner Traub- Present Zoom |
| Commissioner Chang- Absent | 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- February 1, 2024 Minutes; Agenda 8- Consideration of approval of appointment to the Statewide PR Committee; Agenda 9- Consideration of approval for Social Media Policy and Terms of Use Policy; Agenda 10- Consideration of approval of the FY2025 Plan of Service and Program and Budget for the Library for the Commonwealth (LFC) and Monthly Report

#14- Adjournment.

Commissioner Linehan seconded.

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

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Commissioner Barros- Absent | Commissioner Cherubini- Yes | Commissioner Linehan- Yes |
| Commissioner Biancolo- Yes | Commissioner Comeau- Yes | Commissioner Traub- Yes |
| Commissioner Chang- Absent | Commissioner Conrad- Yes | Commissioner Vilas Novas- Yes |

**The motion passed.**

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

**February 1, 2024**

Chair Conrad asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 1, 2024 Monthly Meeting as presented.

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Linehan seconded to approve the minutes from the February 1, 2024, Regular Monthly Meeting as presented.

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

**Chair’s Report**

Chair Conrad presented the following report:

The theme for this month is “Oh The Places You Will Go.” It certainly has been a month for travel for commissioners and Board staff as the big push to advocate for the MBLC FY2025 Legislative Agenda took place. The MLA Legislative Committee and libraries across the Commonwealth have done an amazing job scheduling legislative advocacy events and I was happy to be able to attend some of them. I know other commissioners will include these visits in their reports as well.

On February 9 I spoke at the legislative breakfast at the Wilmington Memorial Library. On February 12 I attended remotely the MLS Executive Board meeting. On February 16 I attended the MLA Legislative Committee meeting held over Zoom. On February 21 I attended the Boston Bruins PJ Drive Kick-Off at the Hanson Public Library. Senator Brady and Representative DeCoste were there as well and I did have a chance to speak to both of them about our Legislative Agenda. On February 23 I spoke at the legislative breakfast at the Cambridge Public Library. On February 27 I attended the Board Executive Committee meeting held over Zoom. On February 28 I attended the commissioner orientation for Timothy Cherubini at the MBLC Office. On March 1 I spoke at the Southeast Libraries Legislative Breakfast at the Westport Free Public Library during which time I was taken for a ride in the New Bedford Free Public Library’s new mobile library – a customized van purchased with a combination of the ARPA Communities Hard Hit by Covid Grant and State Aid. And on March 6 I spoke at the legislative briefing at the State House regarding the MBLC budget request.

I have some observations from these events. At every breakfast I was approached by a library trustee and/or member of the Friends asking about how they should contact their legislators about the freedom to read legislation. MLA has been posting information as it is available but it might be time to send out some basic information about this to the Trustees and Friends lists. I know it isn’t time to mentions specific bills but it could be enough just to let them know they should be talking to their reps about the need to get something done this fiscal year. I also spoke to Representative Hawkins who is the sponsor of one of the bills under consideration who is adamant something needs to be done now. Frankly there is a lot of concern that legislation be put in place before the fall election cycle begins.

I also spoke to several legislators about the eBook bill. My impression is that they were sympathetic but didn’t feel any great urgency about getting this done which caused me some concern. One person told me it wasn’t as “sexy” as the freedom to read issue.

Every legislator to whom I spoke mentioned this would be a difficult budget year and that they had been generous with funding our line items the past 5 years. I agreed but asked them that to keep our requests in mind if something opens up and that any reductions could be difficult to absorb.

In summary, I am not particularly hopeful about the eBook legislation, I am more hopeful that something will come out of the Freedom to Read issue at least as far as public libraries are concerned, and we can only hope we can hold the line for the budget. However things turn out, these events have been well attended, well received, and provide a better opportunity to have one on one conversations with decision makers than a large State House event as much as I like those.

**Commissioner Activities**

**Commissioner Biancolo**

* February 2, 2024: Spoke at Worcester Public Library legislative breakfast
* February 9, 2024: Watched Michael D’Ortenzio’s presentation on First Amendment Audits for Public Libraries, hosted by MBLC
* February 13, 2024: Chaired the second meeting of the full Director Search Committee, virtual
* February 16, 2024: Spoke at Agawam Public Library legislative breakfast
* February 20-26, 2024: With the director search committee, conducted first round screening interviews with selected candidates
* February 23, 2024: Spoke at Springfield City Library, Brightwood branch legislative breakfast
* February 27, 2024: Attended meeting of Executive Board, virtual
* February 29, 2024: Attended meeting of Central Mass Library Advocates, virtual
* March 1, 2024: Chaired the third meeting of the full Director Search Committee, virtual
* March 6, 2024: Watched the library caucus legislative briefing at the State House on our FY25 legislative agenda, virtual
* March 6, 2024: With the director search committee, began second round interviews with selected candidates

**Commissioner Linehan**

* February 20- 25: First round of Interviews

**Commissioner Traub**

* February 13: Mass Library Trustee Association meeting
* February 13: Director Search Committee mtg
* February 20- 25: First round of Interviews
* February 21: Western Mass Library Advocates Board mtg
* February 27: MBLC Executive Board Mtg
* February 29: Central Mass Library Advocates Board mtg
* March 1: Search Committee review mtg
* March 6: Second round interview
* March 6: Legislative Briefing
* March 8: Library Legislative Breakfast Wayland

**Commissioner Vilas Novas**

* February 9- Legislative Breakfast in Wilmington

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Lonergan presented the following report:

* February 1—New Commissioner Orientation for Commissioner Chang
* February 6—Interview with James Paleologopoulos from WAMC News: Northeast Public Radio re: book challenges/bans
* February 9—Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) Executive Board meeting, virtual
* February 12—Massachusetts Library System (MLS) Executive Board meeting, virtual
* February 14—Council of State Library Agencies in the Northeast (COSLINE) meeting, virtual
* February 22—Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) Member Update, virtual
* February 23—Cambridge Public Library Legislative Breakfast
* February 27— MBLC Executive Committee meeting, virtual
* February 28—New Commissioner Orientation for Commissioner Cherubini
* March 1—SAILS Network Legislative Breakfast, Westport Public Library
* March 6—MBLC FY2025 Legislative Agenda briefing, State House

Chair Conrad and I will be testifying about our FY2025 Legislative Agenda/budget request in front of the **Joint Ways and Means Committee** this Friday, March 8, at Gloucester City Hall. The event starts at 10:30 a.m. and will be livestreamed at: <https://malegislature.gov/Events/Hearings/Detail/4880> We aren’t scheduled to testify until the later part of the hearing in the afternoon. A recording of the hearing will be available soon after the event.

Chair Conrad and I are scheduled to speak about our FY2025 Legislative Agenda to members of the legislature and staff at the State House on Wednesday, March 6 as part of a briefing organized by MLA and the Library Legislative Caucus leadership. Other speakers include Courtney Andree, the Massachusetts Center for the Book’s Executive Director, who will speak about our requested increase for the MCB line, and Alex Reczkowski, the director of the Berkshire Athenaeum, and Nicole Daviau, the director of the Porter Memorial Library in Blandford, who will both speak about the importance of State Aid to Public Libraries for their communities.

Governor Healey filed “An Act Relative to Strengthening Massachusetts’ Economic Leadership” on March 1, which includes $150 million for the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP):

*Board of Library Commissioners*

7000-9093 For a program of grants to cities and towns for approved public library projects

pursuant to sections 19G to 19J, inclusive, of chapter 78 of the General Laws; provided, that grants may be awarded to municipalities submitting applications jointly or through a regional planning agency.....………………………………………………............................ $150,000,000

The bill (H.4459) has been referred to the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies. We will work with the Construction Team and with libraries that have submitted letters of intent (and others) to prepare to provide testimony at upcoming hearings and to demonstrate support for this funding. A big thank you to Tracey Dimant, Andrea Bono-Bunker, and our former colleague Lauren Stara for their outreach efforts with the Executive Office of Administration and Finance (A&F) regarding our need for a new bond authorization and their quick and comprehensive responses to questions from A&F to support our funding request.

As mentioned last month, this year the **American Library Association** (ALA) is again supporting advocates from key states/Congressional Districts to go to Washington, DC for a **“Fly-in” event** on March 6-7 to meet with members of their federal delegations. Jason Homer, the Worcester Public Library Director and Maria McCauley, the Cambridge Public Library Director plan to meet with staff from Senator Warren and Markey’s offices and with staff from Representative Clark and McGovern’s offices, too. The priorities for this year include increasing funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services’ (IMLS) Grants to States program to $232 million for FY2024, an increase of $21 million from the $211 million funding allocated for FY2023. In addition, ALA and COSLA are asking Congress to support reauthorization of the Museum and Library Services Act in the coming year in order to assure continued federal funding for libraries nationwide and to support the activities of IMLS.

**LSTA FY2025 Direct Grant Update:** Draft grant applications were due to the MBLC on February 28th. We received 20 draft applications. Draft applications will be reviewed by MBLC’s LSTA grant consultants and will be returned to applicants on March 27th with comments. Final applications will be due on April 10, 2024.

We recently announced that we are accepting **Preservation Assessment grants**. This program provides eligible libraries funds to engage with a qualified preservation assessor for site visit(s) and a formal Preservation Assessment report. The Preservation Assessment report will identify short-term and long-term preservation priorities from a third-party expert. Additional information about the grant program, eligibility requirements, and the application process can be [found on our website.](https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/lsta/grant-opportunities/mini-preservation-assessment.php)  Applications will close on March 25, 2024.

The Communications Team is working with our partners the Boston Bruins on the annual **PJ Drive** to collect donated pajamas through libraries across the state. The PJs are given to local DCF offices and Cradles to Crayons. DCF estimates that at any given time, 40,000 kids are receiving DCF services. Rachel Masse headed up the MBLC team at the PJ Drive Kickoff at Hanson Public Library. New staff worked with veteran staff, Chair Debby Conrad, and state legislators to make the event a success. The team is also developing Bruins summer materials and is planning summer events.

The team is also working with our partner the **Office of Economic Empowerment** on financial literacy materials for the month of April. June Thammasnong is coordinating efforts that include financial literacy bookmarks that lead people to helpful OEE programs and services as well as to free library resources. There is also a financial literacy workbook for libraries with activities and resources that libraries can use year-round.

The team also launched a new microsite designed to help library trustees as they start the process of hiring a new director <https://librarydirectorsearch.com/>  Maura Deedy worked with the team before she left to develop the site and provide feedback.

**Staffing Update:**

The first round of virtual interviews is underway to fill the open Library Advisory Specialist position and will wrap up the second week of March 2024. Second round, in-person interviews will take place in mid-March. The hiring committee hopes to have a new Library Advisory Specialist named by the end of March.

The first round of virtual interviews to fill the open Preservation Specialist position is scheduled to begin the week of March 11, 2024. The hiring committee hopes to have the interview process wrapped up with a new preservation specialist named at the end of March.

**Legislative Report**

Rob Favini, Government Liaison presented the following report:

**Legislative Breakfast Recap**

February was a very busy month on the Legislative Breakfast front. In general attendance has been averaging between 30 and 50 people per event. In addition, all events have featured state Senators, Representatives, and legislative staff. Many thanks to the Commissioners and MBLC staff that have attended the following events:

* Feb 9th at the Wilmington Memorial Library
* Feb 16th at the Agawam Public Library
* Feb 23rd at the Brightwood Brach, Springfield Public Library and the Cambridge Public Library
* March 1st at the Frederick Pilot Middle School Library and the Westport Free Public Library

In case you missed it, the breakfast at the Brightwood Branch, Springfield Public Library attracted the following media coverage:

<https://www.wwlp.com/news/local-news/springfield-city-library-to-host-legislative-breakfast>

<https://www.wamc.org/news/2024-02-26/western-mass-state-legislators-discuss-their-priorities-with-springfield-library-community>

The 2024 Library Legislative breakfast season is winding down with the following upcoming events:

* March 8th at the Wayland Public Library and the Medway Public Library
* March 22nd at the Diane M. Halle Library, Endicott College
* March 29th at the Holbrook Public Library

Note: There is still an opportunity for Commissioners to speak at the Endicott College and Holbrook Public Library events. For complete scheduling and library contact information consult the MBLC’s Legislative Calendar spreadsheet: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1oKNnRlQjduGEpt8CNLqJt_oM8kPLK_XthpU4PpeiiX8/edit#gid=0>

**Library Bills Update**

All bills relating to book banning and E Book access remain in committee having been extended to June 1, 2024. At the time of writing this report, no additional hearing or briefings have been scheduled. There is still time to reach out to legislators to encourage them to sign on to these bills:

[S.2447](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S2447) An Act protecting against attempts to ban, remove, or restrict library access to materials  
[S.2528](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S2528) An Act regarding free expression  
[H.3239](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H3239) An Act empowering library access to electronic books and digital audiobooks  
[H.4229](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H4229) An Act regarding free expression  
[H.4235](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H4235) An Act protecting against attempts to ban, remove, or restrict library access to materials

**MLA Legislative Briefing on the MBLC Legislative Agenda**

On March 6, 2024, at 1:00pm, the Massachusetts Library Association in partnership with the Library Legislative Caucus will be holding a briefing on the MBLC’s Legislative Agenda. The briefing will give the MBLC and our affiliates the opportunity to discuss this year’s budget areas of focus: The MBLC’s administrative line, State Aid to public libraries, and the Massachusetts Center for the Book.

The following are scheduled to speak at the briefing:

* James Lonergan, Director, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners
* Courtney Andree, Executive Director, Massachusetts Center for the Book
* Nicole Daviau, Director, Porter Memorial Library, Blanford
* Alex Reczkowski, Director, Berkshire Athenaeum, Pittsfield
* Debby Conrad, Chair, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

The briefing will take place in Room 222 at the Massachusetts State House from 1:00pm-2:00pm. To attend virtually, use this Microsoft Teams link: Microsoft Teams meeting: [Click here to join the meeting](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19*3ameeting_M2VmMjdhMDEtZTk5ZC00NzZmLThjODAtODRkNzg5MGU1Njg3*40thread.v2/0?context=*7b*22Tid*22*3a*220b947e6b-ff26-4b13-ae1c-573c6750c888*22*2c*22Oid*22*3a*2286df375f-f8ba-42dd-b5d2-bfc81b87c373*22*7d__;JSUlJSUlJSUlJSUlJSUl!!CPANwP4y!RyblIrjgeXVk-mcCxu9LGMb1u03kTTbf89O6DE-p_HCbkQS7tZSyLEBeyu4N3cbMRbMlxdccloOtKCIiUIZSNipF3ZM$)   
Meeting ID: 215 094 210 358; Passcode: syEYXJ

**State Budget Update**

The state budget process is moving ahead since the Governor released her [FY25 budget recommendation](https://www.mass.gov/news/governor-healey-and-lieutenant-governor-driscoll-file-561-billion-fiscal-year-2025-budget). The next phase of the budget process will see the formulation of House and Senate versions. Leading up to this, the Joint Ways and Means Committee will hear testimony from state agencies and Secretariats. The MBLC is scheduled to testify on Friday March 8, 2024, at Gloucester City Hall. Commissioner Conrad and Director Lonergan will deliver testimony on behalf of the MBLC.

Bubble chart

Description automatically generated with medium confidence  
Source: <https://massbudget.org/state-budget/>

**Report from the Director’s Search Committee**

Commissioner Biancolo, Search Committee Chair presented the following update on the Director’s Search.

**Makeup of Search Committee**

The Search Committee was created by Chair of the MBLC Debby Conrad and approved by the full Board at the January 4, 2024 Board meeting. Chair Conrad reached out to the following organizations to ask them to select a representative to the search committee: Massachusetts Library Association (MLA), Massachusetts School Library Association (MSLA), Massachusetts Commonwealth Consortium of Libraries in Public Higher Education Institutions (MCCLPHEI), and the MBLC staff. Representatives from the MBLC affiliates were invited to join, as well as three commissioners:

* Chair–Vicky Biancolo, Vice Chair, Board of Library Commissioners
* Karen Traub, Secretary, Board of Library Commissioners
* Joyce Linehan, Board of Library Commissioners
* Courtney Andree, Executive Director, Massachusetts Center for the Book
* Celeste Bruno, Communications Director, MBLC Staff
* Kim Charlson, Executive Director, Perkins School Library
* Debbie Froggatt, MSLA
* Millie Gonzalez, Library Dean, Framingham State University, MCCLPHEI
* David Leonard, President, Boston Public Library (Library for the Commonwealth)
* Tina McAndrew, Secretary, Massachusetts Library Association
* Alex Reczkowski, Library Director, Berkshire Athenaeum, Pittsfield
* David Slater, Network Administrator, Old Colony Library Network (OCLN)
* Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director, MLS

On January 9, Debbie Froggatt, representing MSLA, resigned from the committee and was replaced by Ella Stocker of Amherst-Pelham Regional High School by MSLA.

On February 19, David Leonard, representing the Library for the Commonwealth, resigned from the committee. He did not name an alternate.

On February 20, Millie Gonzalez, representing MCCLPHEI, resigned from the committee. She did not name an alternate.

The final Search Committee:

* Chair–Vicky Biancolo, Vice Chair, Board of Library Commissioners
* Karen Traub, Secretary, Board of Library Commissioners
* Joyce Linehan, Board of Library Commissioners
* Courtney Andree, Executive Director, Massachusetts Center for the Book
* Celeste Bruno, Communications Director, MBLC Staff
* Kim Charlson, Executive Director, Perkins School Library
* Tina McAndrew, Secretary, MLA
* Alex Reczkowski, Library Director, Berkshire Athenaeum, Pittsfield & CWMARS
* David Slater, Network Administrator, Old Colony Library Network (OCLN)
* Sarah Sogigian, Executive Director, MLS
* Ella Stocker, Amherst-Pelham Regional High School, MSLA

The committee was supported by MBLC staff Head of Operations & Budget/Business Office Tracey Dimant and Assistant to the Director Rachel Masse.

**Timeline**

* January 8, 2024: the job was posted on the following outlets: ALA JobList, Diversity.com, LinkedIn, Simmons JobLine, and the MBLC site
* January 19: First candidate materials made available to the Search Committee members. Materials of all candidates who met the minimum requirements were forwarded to the Committee.
* January 22: Search Committee meeting #1, virtual

Agenda:

1. Roll Call of Committee Members
2. Welcome & Introductions
3. Review of Charge
4. Timeline
5. Candidate Materials
   * *N.B.* ***All review forms must be returned to the MBLC; this is a state requirement***
   * *N.B.* ***If you print a cover letter and/or resume they also either must be returned or shredded***
   * *Where:* cover letters and resumes will be posted to Google Drive
     + Job description and review forms will also be there
     + If you need review forms mailed to you, please let Rachel know
   * *When:* plan is to post on Tuesdays and Fridays
   * *How:* Completed review forms can be scanned and emailed to Rachel. Once she has received them, she will contact you and let you know that they are good to shred–if you don’t have access to a scanner or shredder, she can send you a prepaid UPS label for them to be sent to her that way
6. Questions?
7. Next Steps
   * Solicitation & Review of 1st Round Interview Questions
     + Select deadline
   * Select dates for 1st interviews

* January 24: Shared Google Folder created titled “2024 MBLC Director Search,” to hold candidate materials, interview questions, meeting agenda, and documents
* February 9: Deadline for submitting materials to MBLC Director Search; there were 16 candidates who met the minimum criteria
* February 13: Search Committee meeting #2, virtual

Agenda:

1. Roll Call of Committee Members
2. Poll: Name top candidates (up to 8)
3. Discussion of candidates
4. Calendar item: Select 1st round interview dates between February 19-23
5. Calendar item: Select finalists for 2nd round interview between February 26-March 1
6. Discuss 1st round interview questions
   * Decide who will ask questions
7. Questions/Comments

* February 14: Meeting of Search Committee subcommittee (by volunteer) to finalize 1st round questions (Vicky Biancolo, Celeste Bruno, Sarah Sogigian, Karen Traub), virtual
* February 22: Communication to applicants not selected to interview by Committee Chair
* February 20-26: Search Committee held 1st round screening interviews, virtual
* February 28: Deadline for Search Committee to send 1st Round interview number rankings to Committee Chair for compilation, then shared with Committee
* March 1: Search Committee met to select candidates to invite to 2nd round interviews, virtual
* March 4: Communication by Search Committee chair via Tracey Dimant to 1st round candidates regarding status in the process
* March 4: Meeting of Search Committee subcommittee (by volunteer) to finalize 2nd round questions (Vicky Biancolo, Celeste Bruno, Sarah Sogigian), virtual
* March 6-11: Search Committee conducted 2nd round interviews, virtual
* March 11: Deadline for Search Committee to send 2nd Round interview number rankings to Committee Chair for compilation, then shared with Committee
* March 12: Search Committee met to discuss the candidates, settle on three finalists, and disband Committee, virtual
* March 12: Communication by Search Committee chair via Tracey Dimant to 2nd round candidates regarding status in the process

**Notes on the Work of the Search Committee**

Candidate Rating Sheet scores reflect only the candidate answers to questions, not the deliberations or anything that came to light during those discussions.

The factors that went into the decisions on candidate advancement included candidate materials, interview scores and ranking by Search Committee members, and meeting discussions. Meeting discussions included the sharing of relevant, corroborated information about the candidates based on past experience.

**Appreciation**

Thank you to the members of the Search Committee and the MBLC staff for their incredible work. The Committee was made up of experienced library leaders from across the state, and every one of them contributed substantially to the work with insight and empathy. We have the finalists we have because of this marvelous group, and because of the work of MBLC staffers Tracey Dimant and Rachel Masse.

Tracey answered seemingly endless questions and provided extraordinarily helpful guidance and direction as we moved through the process. Rachel organized and scheduled the many meetings, kept us to our tight timeline, and tracked down helpful information.

Commissioners Lenihan, Traub and I are satisfied with the finalist candidates, and are looking forward to concluding the process in April with the full Board.

**Consideration of approval of appointment to the Statewide PR Committee**

Celeste Bruno, Communications Director presented the following recommended motion to the Statewide PR Committee.

Jack Martin recently joined the Massachusetts Library System as the new Communications Manager. Prior to his role at MLS, he was the Communications Manager at the State Treasurer’s office where MBLC staff had the pleasure of working with him on several initiatives. The MBLC and MLS have many shared goals and Jack would be an asset to the statewide Public Relations Advisory Committee’s efforts.

Commissioner Cherubini moved and Commissioner Biancolo seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners appointments Jack Martin to serve on the Statewide Public Relations Advisory Committee for a term ending in June, 2025.

**Consideration of approval for Social Media Policy and Terms of Use Policy**

June Thammasnong, Communications Specialist presented the following motion about the Social Media Policy.

The MBLC’s social media presence began in 2008 with the approval of the Social Media Policy and Terms of Use Policies. Both were based on Commonwealth’s Social Media Legal Guidelines set by the Executive Office of Technology and Security (EOTTS) and continue to align with state standards. The Social Media Policy outlines how the MBLC utilizes social media to promote the agency, libraries, partner programs and initiatives. The Terms of Use Policy provides guidelines for appropriate use by visitors of our websites and social media accounts. The policies, which have remained largely unchanged since their initial approval, expire every 5 years.   
  
This year there are several slight changes to the social media policy. First is the addition of LinkedIn as a platform to connect professionally with library staff and libraries. The next update is removing Pinterest since it is no longer used by any current MBLC staff, and the last update is re-labeling Twitter as X.

We are seeking the Board’s approval of the policies as well as the removal of the requirement that the policies be brought to the board every 5 years for approval. Instead, the Communications Team will review the policies internally and bring forward any significant changes to the Board for approval as necessary.

Commissioner Linehan moved and Commissioner Cherubini seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the updated Social Media Policy and the Terms of Use Policy, and removes the requirement for Board approval of these policies every 5 years.

**Consideration of approval of the FY2025 Plan of Service and Program and Budget for the Library for the Commonwealth (LFC)**

Commissioner Biancolo moved and Commissioner Linehan seconded that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners approves the FY2025 Plan of Service and Program and Budget filed on March 7, 2024 for the Library for the Commonwealth, as presented in agenda item 10 as presented last month.

**Report from Massachusetts Library System**

**Strategic Initiative 1**

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

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goal | Actions | Measurement of Success | **Monthly work 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.* | Changes made by the new School Library Membership Policy are being implemented.  Sarah Sogigian and Rob Favini (MBLC) launched their 2024 Road Trip program  Two Masscat public library members (Huntington and Becket) have signed contracts to join C/WMARS, with support from MLS. |
| 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.* | We launched the five-part webinar series with ALA on intellectual freedom topics. Three webinars occurred in February with 176 participants at the live events and 94 views of the recordings. Two additional webinars will occur in March. Recordings of the webinars will be available for 18 months.  We continued working with MBLC and other organizations to host a webinar series on mental health supports and libraries. One webinar occurred in February and two will occur in March.  Staff from MLS, MBLC, public libraries, and other New England state libraries began the *Touchpoints for Libraries* train- the-trainer program to teach the Touchpoints program to Massachusetts library staff. The training will continue in March.  We continued working with other New England states on this year’s Summer Summit, to help libraries prepare for the youth and adult summer library program. The event is scheduled for March 31. |
| 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.* |  |

# **Strategic Initiative 2**

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

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goal | Actions | Measurement of Success | **Monthly work 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.* | We scheduled a series of four workshops with the Employers Association of the NorthEast on HR topics relevant for libraries (employment Law, interviewing, performance management, and documentation skills). They will take place March through May.  We are working with EANE to schedule four community chats on HR related topics. |
| 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.* | We launched the Language Learning Grant program and approved 20 applications in February. |

# **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.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 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.* |  |
| 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.* |  |

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**NEW BUSINESS**

* Commissioner Biancolo suggested that CMLA & WMLA be added to reports for Board Meetings. It was suggested that they just be included with Commissioner Activities
* CMLA suggests that more trustees and friends attend breakfasts and be held in the fall

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:40 A.M.



Karen Traub

Secretary