

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

**Date** : Thursday, July 10, 2025

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

**Place** : Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners Offices- Boston, MA

**Board**

**Present** : Vicky Biancolo, Chair; Timothy Cherubini, Vice-Chair; George Comeau, Esq.

 Debby Conrad; Joyce Linehan; Kemarah Sika

**Absent :** Karen Traub, Secretary; Kate Chang; Jessica Vilas Novas

**Staff Present:**

Maureen Amyot, Director; Heather Backman, Library Building Specialist; Andrea Bono-Bunker, Library Building Consultant; Kate Butler, Library Information Systems Specialist; Celeste Bruno, Communications Director; Jess Colati, Preservation Specialist; Terry D'Angelo, Administrative Assistant / Business Office; Tracey Dimant, Head of Operations & Budget / Business Office; Allyson Dowds, Consultant to Special Populations; Jen Inglis, State Aid Specialist; Rob Favini, Head of Library Advisory and Development; Al Hayden, Library Advisory Specialist; Rachel Masse, Assistant to the Director; Jaccavrie McNeely, Electronic Services Specialist; Cate Merlin, Head of State Programs; Aparna Ramachandran, Data Analyst / IT Support Specialist; June Thammasnong, Communications Specialist

**Observers Present:**

Courtney Andree, Massachusetts Center for the Book; Eileen Chandler, CLAMS Library Network; Sarah Jackson, Boston Public Library; Karen Livingston, Public Library of Brookline; Philip McNulty, Minuteman Library Network; David Slater, OCLN; Sarah Sogigian, Massachusetts Library System

**Meeting called to order by Chair Biancolo**

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

**Roll Call of Commissioners**

Chair Biancolo 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 Biancolo - Present | Commissioner Comeau- Present Zoom | Commissioner Sika- Present  |
| Commissioner Chang - Absent | Commissioner Conrad- Present  | Commissioner Traub- Absent |
| Commissioner Cherubini- Present Zoom | Commissioner Linehan- Present Zoom | Commissioner Vilas Novas- Absent |

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

**June 5, 2025**

Chair Biancolo asked if there were any corrections to the June 5, 2025 minutes as presented.

There were no corrections.

Minutes were approved as presented.

**Chair Report**

Chair Biancolo provided the following report.

June 18: I attended the groundbreaking in Amherst of the Jones Library restoration and expansion. Commissioner Cherubini, Congressman Jim McGovern, and others spoke to a packed house. A highlight for me was hearing an Amherst resident talk about how important the library has been and still is to 3 generations of her family – herself, her son, and her mother. Also, I had the opportunity to see the vaunted carved molding in the building, which I’m sure everyone is relieved to discover is not mahogany after all, but pine with a mahogany stain.

June 24: I attended the monthly Zoom meeting of the executive board.

June 27-July 1: I attended my first ALA conference, this year in Philadelphia. I have been a working librarian for 20 years, but this was my first opportunity to attend the big conference. I attended many sessions on AI, especially generative AI, and responsible innovation. Highlights include cheering for Worcester Public Library as they were presented with a John Cotton Dana Award, which honors libraries for their exceptional achievements in strategic communications. Then, at the end of the conference, cheering for Maria McCauley, director of Cambridge Public Library, as she took the main stage as 2025-2026 president-elect of ALA.

One idea I would like to take away from the conference is the spirit of an acronym fine jar. Basically, if any of us use an acronym in a meeting without saying what it is, any of us can interrupt the speaker for an explanation. In the spirit of inclusion, I hope we all abide by and take advantage of that.

July 7: I zoomed with Director Amyot to go over her MassPerform Rating.

On the 4th of July, the president of the United States signed into law the most disgusting display of greed and cruelty I’ve seen in my lifetime. Because of this, we can expect a lot of changes. They will affect us personally. They will affect us professionally. Many of the new millions without health care and vital social programs will likely turn to their public libraries for help – any help. The expected increase in the harassment, abduction, and tearing apart of families will affect school and public libraries. Many public libraries have food pantries, and with millions likely to lose access to school meals and summer food programs, as well as food security at home, there will be more pressure on those pantries and they will be even more essential.

It’s a dark time, for sure, but we know what we have to do. We have to take care of our communities, as we always have. We have to show up for our libraries. We have to remember that hope is not a strategy. Perhaps most importantly, we have to take care of ourselves. Brene Brown at the ALA conference reminded us that you cannot give what you don’t have. We are all on the front lines. She asked us to get small and local, where we can make a difference. The small wins matter, and they add up.

That being said, the FY26 budget for federal agencies is still in the dock, which means that IMLS can still be saved. The subcommittee overseeing funding for IMLS is on deck for Monday, July 21, so before then please contact your legislators and all 17 members on the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies subcommittees. We need legislators to understand how vital library services are to people across the country. If you want a good overview and more information, including the names of the legislators referenced here, check out Book Riot’s article “We Can Still Save the Institute for Museum and Library Services.”

**Commissioner Activities**

**Commissioner Cherubini**

* June 9 - Attended (virtually) the Massachusetts Library System Executive Board meeting
* June 18 - Attended and spoke at the Jones Library (Amherst, MA) groundbreaking for their renovation and expansion project
* June 24 - Attended (virtually) the Executive Board meeting of the MBLC

**Commissioner Conrad**

* June 10 – Virtual meeting of the MLA Legislative Committee overview of current activities and pending legislation
* June 23 – Virtual meeting of the MLA Legislative Committee – subgroup planning for fall advocacy training workshop
* July 8 – Summer reading program at the Attleboro Public Library

**Commissioner Linehan**

* On June 8, I visited the Needham Public Library at the invitation of one of their trustees. While there, I had a tour of the library, and enjoyed seeing their extensive library of things, including cookware, crafting tools, and camping equipment. I also enjoyed attending a talk by Bruce Springsteen and Tom Petty biographer Warren Zanes.

* On June 18, I visited the Medford Public Library for a program called “teach-In: Freedom of Expression and Banned Books, which featured local authors reading from a range of frequently challenged books, as a presentation by BU’s Christina Dobbs on what people can do to push back.

**Commissioner Traub**

* June 17- MBLC nominating committee
* June 17- Roles and Responsibilities subcommittee
* June 24- Executive Committee
* June 28- Mass Friends of Libraries board meeting

**Commissioner Vilas Novas**

* June 11 - Lawrence Public Library strategic planning meeting (as a community member/former director)
* June 17 - MBLC nominating committee
* June 18 - MA Digital Equity Coalition
* June 23 - Westford groundbreaking - speaker
* June 24 - Toured Haverhill PL to learn of their capital projects, and share digital equity resources (via ECCF)
* July 1 - Woburn PL summer reading kickoff - speaker

**Director’s Report**

Director Amyot provided the following report:

**Business Office**

The Business Office team is still hard at work on the close-out of FY2025 and awaiting the final budget for FY2026. We have several budget projections underway as we work to anticipate what the future of IMLS and the Grants to States Program will look like in federal fiscal year 2026 and beyond.

In June, the agency conducted the staff performance evaluation process for FY2025 and will open the initial stage for FY2026 this month.

The Business Office team is working closely with the Library Advisory and Development team, as well as the management team, regarding the upcoming IMLS site visit, which is tentatively scheduled for mid-September. It was initially scheduled as a multi-day, in-person visit to take place in July, however the changes at IMLS led to them altering it to a two-hour virtual site visit over Zoom. The last site visit we had was in 2019.

We’ll be doing monthly reminders about the BEST (Business Enterprise System Transformation) project, which is the Commonwealth’s multi-year initiative to implement a modernization of the state finance and Human Resources systems. Go-live for the first phase – the state finance system – will take place in January. The Business Office team is working to be fully prepared for this initiative and has been meeting with the BEST team. The summer will be busy for our team as we are involved in continued meetings and user testing for the new system. The Commonwealth is taking an intentional approach to this project and the BEST team is comprised of 70 contractors who have been hired specifically to ensure the success of the new system.

**Communications**

The Communications Team has been preparing for two major launches in July: **Bruins summer reading visits and *MassArt at the Library.*** Summer with the Boston Bruins starts with a kickoff at the Woburn Public Library on July 1. Bruins rookie players join roughly 100 kids in three rotations: story, hockey and craft. Rachel Masse has coordinated invitations to VIPs to this event and all summer events. House Ways and Means Analysts and former NCAA hockey player Sarah King will be in attendance at the kickoff. Commissioner Jessica Vilas Novas will attend and conduct the welcome activities.

The Bruins summer player is goalie Jeremy Swayman who is featured on the READ poster and Outstanding Reader certificate. These are created in 5 languages: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, and Haitian Creole. Libraries have ordered over 25,000 posters and special player cards featuring David Pastrnak, Jeremy Swayman, and Charlie McAvoy that were created for this summer’s theme: Level Up at Your Library.

Libraries were selected for the MassArt workshops series, and the team is in the process of developing promotional materials with MassArt. Commissioners are welcome to attend. Workshops are as follows:

**MassArt Sustainable Fashion Workshop** Pollard Memorial Library, Lowell, July 22, 6:30 p.m.
At this fun and interactive workshop participants learn about sustainable fashion and ways to get involved to be a voice for positive change. MassArt Fashion Design Chair and Professor Jennifer Varekamp will share some exciting sustainable fashion ideas and lead participants in an interactive and creative project where each participant can contribute their own creative ideas and learn how to make an impact toward a more sustainable future.

**MassArt Aluminum Pour** Fall River Public Library, August 6, 2:00 pm
Under the guidance of MassArt Fine Arts 3D faculty Marjee-Anne Levine and current MassArt students, participants carve their own design into a “scratch block” (a pre-formed mold made of resin-bonded sand) and watch as the design is cast in metal. Aluminum will be melted on site and poured into the scratch blocks created by each participant. Within minutes the metal will solidify and be cooled and finished by the MassArt team. Each participant will walk away with their own custom cast aluminum art.

**MassArt Comic Arts Workshop** Malden Public Library, August 14, 4:00 pm
The workshop provides an opportunity to deconstruct the comic creation process in an engaging and accessible way that applies to a wide range of skill sets. It introduces the storytelling structure and starts with a simple activity where students sketch different shapes on their pages. MassArt Comic Arts instructor LJ Baptiste will demonstrate how these shapes can be fleshed out into full characters. Participants will learn techniques they can utilize to understand a character they're creating and develop their own 4 panel comic strip featuring one of their original characters.

For the federal response, the team coordinated with Boston Public Library and MBLC staffers Jaccavrie McNeeley and Kate Butler to create a flyer that libraries could use to explain database reductions and offer helpful resources.

For Pride month and beyond, the team created a *Welcome to the Library* poster in 11 languages with inclusive colors. It is available on the [MBLC Awarehouse](https://awarehouse.mblc.state.ma.us/) under Campaigns – Posters.

**Library Advisory and Development**

**Digital Equity Update**

June 25, 2025, Rob Favini attended [Digital Equity Day](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/www.massdigitalequity.org/about-digital-equity-day-2025__;!!CPANwP4y!Vi3LYC5EYAPCaLAq5zW24zwthLg0a3NG45cPY1iSTHsBkrz4uK966ppTw03sZTlioAOoVXXl4pVJgpnlKBkFwmpNpY4480-GIDY$) at the State House. The day featured a legislative briefing on the following bills:

* S.2318/H.3527: [An Act preserving broadband service for low-income consumers sponsored](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/drive.google.com/file/d/1KXnasO2euD2Agj8KKGzAgh160IZkoVZh/view__;!!CPANwP4y!Vi3LYC5EYAPCaLAq5zW24zwthLg0a3NG45cPY1iSTHsBkrz4uK966ppTw03sZTlioAOoVXXl4pVJgpnlKBkFwmpNpY44HFkzEuA$) by Sen. Payno and Rep. Mendes
* S.763/H.1130: [An Act relative to telehealth and digital equity for patients](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/drive.google.com/file/d/1CxuEbQpFshUiLtAeWpJeer3_97gu2Cn3/view__;!!CPANwP4y!Vi3LYC5EYAPCaLAq5zW24zwthLg0a3NG45cPY1iSTHsBkrz4uK966ppTw03sZTlioAOoVXXl4pVJgpnlKBkFwmpNpY443b-15Rs$) sponsored by Rep. Marjorie Decker and Sen. Adam Gomez
* H.100: [An Act establishing a commission to study a statewide credentialing program for digital navigators](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/alliancefordigitalequity.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/ALL-oneSheet-digitalNavigation_2025-03-12.pdf__;!!CPANwP4y!Vi3LYC5EYAPCaLAq5zW24zwthLg0a3NG45cPY1iSTHsBkrz4uK966ppTw03sZTlioAOoVXXl4pVJgpnlKBkFwmpNpY44JoK7UdA$) sponsored by Rep. Sabadosa

Because these bills work to increase broadband connectivity and digital skill training they are important to the library community, especially in light of threatened E-Rate and Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program federal funding. If passed these bills will have a positive impact on libraries in Massachusetts to continue to play a critical role in closing the digital divide that impacts all too many of their users.

**MBLC and the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)**

Ally Dowds and Rob Favini met with Jonathan O'Dell, Supervisor, Communication Access, Technology and Training Services at the [MCDHH](https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-commission-for-the-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing) to exchange updates and begin planning for MCDHH training sessions and distribution of resources to the library community beginning this Fall.

**June Programming**

Trustee Orientation Series

AL Hayden presented a 4-session trustee orientation that covered the roles and responsibilities of Library Trustees. The series format represented a new concept in delivering trustee orientations. Over 4 consecutive Wednesday evening webinars discrete orientation topics were presented. Breaking the orientation into 4 sessions allowed attendees to focus on topical areas of interest and provided for more Q&A time. The sessions covered the following topics:

* Session 1: Roles & Responsibilities covered public library structure in Massachusetts including powers outlined in statute, how libraries fit into municipal structure, and the common duties of a trustee.
* Session 2: Being a Trustee focused on board duties and best practices including the importance of open meeting law.
* Session 3: Library Policy examined the roles that trustees play in the creation, adoption, and implementation of library policy.
* Session 4: Advocacy identified key state and local stakeholders to tell the library’s story

While these sessions were designed for new trustees, both new and veteran trustees attended with an average of 30 attendees each night. Recordings of the presentations from the series will be made available on the MBLC’s Trustee [Resource Guide](https://guides.mblc.state.ma.us/trustees?_gl=1*zks64v*_ga*MTc5MzAwODMwNS4xNzQ3OTIzOTM1*_ga_PE12MXH8ZC*czE3NTEwNDU1ODckbzM0JGcxJHQxNzUxMDQ1NTg5JGo1OCRsMCRoMA..).

Know Your State Government

In June Ally Dowds continued her Know Your State Government webinar series by hosting sessions featuring presentations from MassHealth and MassHire.

* *Unlocking MassHealth: What you need to know to help your patrons* (40 attendees) featured MassHealth Community Engagement and Education staff for a webinar designed to help Massachusetts residents, caregivers, and service providers better understand MassHealth—the state’s Medicaid and CHIP program. The session highlighted tools and resources designed to increase understanding and access for library communities.
* *Supporting Library Patrons with Re-employment Needs* (30 attendees) provided library staff with tools, resources, and knowledge to support patrons navigating unemployment, layoffs, and re-employment opportunities available at over 25 MassHire Career Centers across that state. The session highlighted the role of the MassHire Rapid Response Team that provides early intervention re-employment services to employees affected by layoffs and closings.

 **State Programs**

**Construction**

The construction team celebrated the last two groundbreakings for the 2016-2017 grant round in Amherst and Westford, both of which are renovation and expansion projects anticipated to be completed in eighteen (18) months.

Andrea had a site visit at Swansea and assisted Andover with high-level space planning, and both Heather and Andrea visited Shutesbury to see their progress. They continue to assist all projects under construction and in the Planning and Design phase, and they worked with Tanesha Deane to prepare the procurement documents for the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP) Level of Design Independent Reviewers, which are slated for a July 7 release. Additionally, they met with the Northeast Summit on Climate Adaptation for Library Facilities cohort to plan the 2025-2026 slate of webinars.

**State Aid**

The State Aid team held 5 Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS) trainings in June, with Jen Inglis leading the trainings, Uechi Ng scheduling and facilitating, and Cate Merlin and Aparna Ramachandran attending and supporting. Each training session had an attendance of 30-50 people. Uechi moderated two other Agency meetings, finalized all ARIS data for the July 1 opening date, sent all ARIS passwords to library directors, completed the last FY25 librarian certifications (including revenue reports), and continued work on the State Aid archive project, including the final rearranging of the back conference room.

Aparna continued to assist staff with updating VPN software, and continued upgrading the backup laptops to Windows 11. She continued work on updating and finalizing the new IT master inventory spreadsheet and is working with Custom Tech to coordinate onsite and offsite IT support for the beginning of FY26.

Jen finalized last minute tweaks to the ARIS survey itself, finished the documentation that goes alongside the survey, and assisted library directors with end-of-fiscal-year materials spending questions.

Cate continued to work with libraries facing budget challenges for FY26, including speaking with Directors, Trustees, and municipal officials regarding State Aid regulations and policies in individual meetings and at her twice-monthly State Aid Office Hours.

**Director Activities**This month I spent quite a bit of time on planning. There were a few notable focus areas I want to share. First, I attended the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies in the Northeast (COSLINE) virtual monthly meeting, where we did some high level planning and drafted an agenda for a Chiefs Summit in August in Providence. The summit will be held in conjunction with the COSLINE Continuing Education Coordinators’ annual meeting. We will be discussing how we can work regionally on grants and other projects, in a future we anticipate without federal funding. (Although out-of-state travel is cancelled for this year, expenses for this event are paid fully by COSLINE, so there will be no cost to the agency for my travel.)

I also spent time on prep work for an agency Strategic Plan. Using the expertise we have on staff, we are going to create our own short-term plan that will guide us for 2-3 years. I’ve put a Steering Committee together, created a draft timeline, and started a deep review into past plans, surveys, and focus group data.

I attended the CW MARS Users Council virtual meeting and the Minuteman Library Network annual meeting (in person) this month to talk about the progress of the state budget and the newest information about federal funding and database cuts. The response to the cuts has generally been as positive as it could be – directors and school librarians understand why we have to cut databases, and they appreciate all the information that is coming from MBLC on a frequent basis. A few had concerns about the process we used to make the decisions. One of my clear takeaways was that there’s some misunderstanding about the relationship between the Massachusetts Library System (MLS) and MBLC. One question was why we can’t just “take” money from MLS and use it for databases, for example. I am already talking with Sarah about how we can communicate our roles and relationship differently to make it clearer.

I was able to attend the Amherst groundbreaking, which was a wonderful morning full of library joy. I got to chat briefly with Representative Jim McGovern about library issues and thank him for his support and all the work he’s doing in Congress to help residents in Massachusetts. Commissioners Cherubini and Biancolo and I also met aides who work for State Representative Mindy Domb and State Senator Jo Comerford and had great conversations with them as well.

As the fiscal year and my first year as director are coming to a close, I have been reflecting on the past year -- and what a year it has been. July 8 will be my one-year anniversary with the agency. In some ways my first day feels like it was a decade ago, and in other ways I feel like it has only been a few days. I have learned so much in the past year, and I am immensely proud of the way our staff worked together to face the challenges that were thrown at us left and right. It was a chaotic year, but I am so very thankful to be here doing this work every single day, and for the steadfast support of the board. I am excited to see what the new fiscal year brings.

**Legislative Report**

Rob Favini provided following report:

**State Budget Process**

The State budget was signed by Governor on Friday, July 4th. In the end the MBLC budget lines were level funded except for a $21,341 cut in 7000-9101 *Board of Library Commissioners* and a $3,210 increase in 7000-9506 *Technology & Resource Sharing*.

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| **MBLC FY 2026 Budget** | **FY25 Budget** | **FY26 Legislative Agenda Ask** | **FY26 Governor's Budget** | **FY26 H.4001** | **Fy26 S.2525** | **FY26 House Senate Final** | **Governor Signed FY26 Budget** |
| **9101 - Board of Library Commissioners** | $2,074,268  | $2,489,122 | $2,074,268  | $2,073,664 | $2,074,268 | $2,052,927 | $2,052,927 |
| **9401 - Regional Libraries Local Aid** | $19,000,000 | $19,950,000 | $19,000,000 | $19,075,000 | $19,500,000 | $19,000,000 | $19,000,000 |
| **9402 - Talking Book Program Worcester** | $711,942  | $747,539 | $711,942  | $711,942 | $711,942 | $711,942 | $711,942 |
| **9406 - Talking Book Program Watertown** | $4,053,441  | $4,256,113 | $4,053,441  | $4,053,441 | $4,053,441 | $4,053,441 | $4,053,441 |
| **9501 - Public Libraries Local Aid** | $20,000,000 | $22,000,000 | $20,000,000 | $20,000,000 | $20,000,000 | $20,000,000 | $20,000,000 |
| **9506 - Technology & Resource Sharing** | $6,169,480  | $6,477,954 | $6,172,690  | $6,197,690 | $6,172,690 | $6,172,690 | $6,172,690 |
| **9508 - Center for the Book** | $420,000  | $550,000 | $420,000  | $420,000 | $420,000 | $420,000 | $420,000 |
| **Totals** | **$52,429,131** | **$56,470,728** | **$52,432,341** | **$52,531,737** | **$52,932,341** | **$52,411,000** | **$52,411,000** |
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**Status of IMLS Funding**

On July 4, 2025, the president signed the budget reconciliation bill into law. In it the IMLS budget was reported at $6 million for the purpose of shutting down the agency. The reconciliation bill serves as a roadmap for the federal budget. The House Appropriations Committee sets budget numbers and will begin to mark up the Fiscal Year 2026 budget over the next several weeks. IMLS funding will be taken up by the subcommittees charged with that portion of the budget, specifically the [Appropriations subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies](https://appropriations.house.gov/subcommittees/labor-health-and-human-services-education-and-related-agencies-118th-congress). It is the job of this committee to recommend increased IMLS funding. In addition to funding, the IMLS faces another hurdle with the need for reauthorization of the Museum and Library Services Act in September. This [Book Riot article](https://bookriot.com/we-can-still-save-the-institute-for-museum-and-library-services/) outlines the current situation and provides talking points and strategies to amplify the need for IMLS funding and reauthorization.

**Library Related Bills**

Upcoming Hearings

On July 10, 2025, the [Joint Committee on Advanced Information Technology, the Internet and Cybersecurity](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J33/194) will hold a hearing on [H.100](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/194/H100) *An Act establishing a commission to study a statewide credentialing program for digital navigators*. This bill is important to libraries as it will help to increase digital skill training to the library community. Many libraries have used Digital Navigators to help close the digital divide that impacts all too many of their users.

On July 22, 2025, the [Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development](https://malegislature.gov/Committees/Detail/J30/194) will hold a hearing on library related bills before the legislature. Bills tentatively scheduled to be addressed at this hearing are [S.2328](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/194/S2328)/ [H.3594](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/194/H3594) *An Act regarding free expression* and [S.2330](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/194/S2330) / [H.3595](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/194/H3595) *An Act addressing challenges facing public libraries and digital resource collections*. Contact MLA’s Legislative Committee for more information.

**Report from Massachusetts Library System**

**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.* | Changes made by the new School Library Membership Policy are being implemented.Sarah Sogigian and Rob Favini (MBLC) launched their 2023 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.**

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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.* | 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.**

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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.* |  |
| 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.* |  |

**Report from the Library of the Commonwealth**

Sarah Jackson provided the following report:

**Community Learning Department Update**

Excel High School:

Current demographic data (as of 06-30-25)

Student Age

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Age** | **Count** | **Percent** |
| 20-24 | 17 | 19% |
| 25-29 | 15 | 17% |
| 30-34 | 18 | 20% |
| 35-39 | 16 | 18% |
| 40-44 | 10 | 11% |
| 45-49 | 5 | 6% |
| 50-54 | 6 | 7% |
| 55+ | 3 | 3% |
|  | **90** |  |

Student Race/Ethnicity

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Race/Ethnicity** | **Count** | **Percent** |
| American Indian | 1 | 1% |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 4 | 4% |
| Black/African American | 34 | 38% |
| Caucasian/White | 21 | 23% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 22 | 24% |
| Other | 7 | 8% |
| No Response | 1 | 1% |
|  | **90** |  |

Student City/Town

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **City/Town** | **Count** | **Percent** |
| Boston | 55 | 61% |
| Cambridge | 1 | 1% |
| Chelsea | 1 | 1% |
| Chicopee | 2 | 2% |
| Dracut | 1 | 1% |
| Everett | 1 | 1% |
| Fall River | 1 | 1% |
| Foxboro | 1 | 1% |
| Haverhill | 1 | 1% |
| Hingham | 1 | 1% |
| Lawrence | 1 | 1% |
| Lynn | 1 | 1% |
| Malden | 3 | 3% |
| Marlborough | 1 | 1% |
| Orange | 1 | 1% |
| Palmer | 1 | 1% |
| Quincy | 2 | 2% |
| Randolph | 1 | 1% |
| Revere | 2 | 2% |
| Salem | 1 | 1% |
| Shrewsbury | 1 | 1% |
| Springfield | 1 | 1% |
| Stoughton | 1 | 1% |
| Waltham | 1 | 1% |
| Ware | 1 | 1% |
| Weymouth | 5 | 6% |
| Winchester | 1 | 1% |
|  | **90** |  |

**Research Services Department Update**

*Respectfully submitted, Nicole Santiago, Manager of Research Services*

**Research Services Analytics**

Reference Analytics statistics for June 2025: Most requestors were from MA or the US. The most popular subjects were microfilmed newspapers, obituaries and family history/genealogy (not obits). When patrons identified themselves it was most frequently as a Family History Researcher or an Author/Researcher. The most popular types of material requested in June were for copies of newspaper information from a microfilmed source, copy of newspaper information from digital source and genealogical info (not including obituary requests).

**Research Services Author Talks:**

06.05.25: Author Talk: Jeffrey Orens - Selling Baseball: How Superstars George Wright and Albert Spalding Impacted Sports in America - 20 attendees

06.26.25: Author Talk: Daniel Gonzalez - The Rise and Fall of Boston Pride - 53 attendees

**Special Collections Public Services**

The Rare Books Team held a cookbook open house in April and a photography formatting over time exhibit in May.

**Community History Update**

*Respectfully submitted, Dory Klein, Community History Supervisor*

**May program statistics:** 3 programs (62 patrons); 2 outreach events (70 patrons); 3 project consultations (9 patrons)

# Program Highlights:

**The Art of the Micro-Memoir**

Honan-Allston hosted a short writing series in May titled “The Art of the Micro-Memoir.” Participants attended two workshops and one-on-one “office hours” with local poet and writing instructor Otto Vock. With Vock's guidance, six participants wrote personal pieces with themes of local history woven in. Their work was celebrated with a final reading and the creation of a chapter book that we aim to add to the BPL collection.

# BRC Highlights:

On May 29, the [Boston Research Center was awarded the Heart of Community Collaboration of the Year Award](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fnews.northeastern.edu%2F2025%2F05%2F30%2Fheart-of-community-awards-2025%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cdklein%40bpl.org%7C7a453f5f97174010e34008dda92074e2%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638852679045895842%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=0Mxc0MALbeuV3qkme9fpadbN%2FGU2NFbuyCpruw%2FtakM%3D&reserved=0) in recognition of our partnership with Greater Grove Hall Main Streets (GGHMS) on [The Boston Black Women Lead (BosBWL) Project](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.greatergrovehall.org%2Fblack-women-lead%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cdklein%40bpl.org%7C7a453f5f97174010e34008dda92074e2%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638852679045927634%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=eGxkJyQc9Ki3K%2Br%2BOW1wTtXew%2B%2Fb6IlaJjNb%2BicOo1w%3D&reserved=0). The Boston Research Center (BRC) is a digital community history and archives lab, based at Northeastern University Library, in partnership with BPL Community History, and funded by the Mellon Foundation. Boston Black Women Lead is a community initiative focused on celebrating Black women as changemakers, highlighting their individual accomplishments and contributions to the city of Boston and its neighborhoods. Through a $15,000 subgrant, supported by the Mellon Foundation, the BRC has helped curate and launch a robust [community WikiProject](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.wikidata.org%2Fwiki%2FWikidata%3ABoston_Black_Women_Lead&data=05%7C02%7Cdklein%40bpl.org%7C7a453f5f97174010e34008dda92074e2%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638852679045945962%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=zljs%2Fr2AGgDSTQfMN1ayxdf2PELk7aAH%2B9clwtSttQ4%3D&reserved=0) focused on documenting these women’s histories.

**Digital Commonwealth Update**

A monthly report on collections added to Digital Commonwealth; this month will include reports for April, May and June of 2025.

**April’s Report**

Hosted collections added:

Boston Public Library:

* [The Boston Herald](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Acc08r459j&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044542968%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=jb8owXgsRjuTdUMvn8DVKpncjuXaQOElorbatWME%2BOw%3D&reserved=0) (2,450 items; issues of the daily newspaper from 1858-1877)
* [The Boston Traveler](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Azc780x32d&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044567256%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=4Cjoi%2BgWju3umlfppiVwneA4P64d9CpifsnVsgfBeqw%3D&reserved=0) (2,341 items; issues of the daily newspaper from 1931-1946)

Massachusetts Archives:

* [Accounts of Guardians of the Dudley Indians, 1801-1857 (bulk 1801-1846)](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Av9802p66w&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044592089%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=FpNGBMdiSsSqy6xkrm%2FF%2FaiW6gEPcDML%2B1L3sx5OP84%3D&reserved=0) (46 items; financial accounts from 1799-1857 of government oversight of members of the Nipmuc tribe residing in Dudley)
* [Report of the commissioner appointed under the act concerning the Indians, 1763-1861 (bulk 1859-1861)](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Amc87xc666&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044616237%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=tRPu5lQ3Wx01axtrHdvBtsszPFRPl%2FfblkY1hPArMA0%3D&reserved=0) (41 items; census reports from 1763-1861 on Native Americans living in Massachusetts)

Noble & Cooley Center for Historic Preservation:

* [Noble & Cooley Catalog Collection](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Aqj72pd97v&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044639515%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=4flp1oVidX2gh4NskprBQ7s3qBkTR2Xz3wtUjfTF3To%3D&reserved=0) (1 item; 19th century catalog produced by the Granville-based manufacturer)

Wayland Free Public Library:

* [History of Wayland Free Public Library](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Af1888742s&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044655299%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=OO7Xkt%2FdbZE6tvSiYDTO9Vu2TB8kFuEEHvhx%2FlFyfdQ%3D&reserved=0) (12 items; scrapbooks of news clippings about the library from 1944-2005)

**Harvested collections added:**

No harvests in April

**Stats:**

Item views: 144,493

Total item-level records: 1,380,375

Total hosted items: 697,459

**May’s Report:**

Hosted collections added:

Boston Public Library:

* [The Boston Herald](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Acc08r459j&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044364451%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=6eI59Lcco%2BQDKyr95qwhOTwubvoIP%2Bh5aoIMkWEmEZg%3D&reserved=0) (4837 items; issues of the daily newspaper from 1878-1909)
* [In Lieu of Flowers: Photographs by Caleb Cole](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Axw42w235d&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044396216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=m4Y6wM7CSSDmMAeOu7WNVxESrujoYy%2BfxrU%2BGyVpzn8%3D&reserved=0) (6 items; memorial portraits of trans people murdered in the United States and Puerto Rico from 2024)
* [Leslie Jones Collection](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3A2j62s484w&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044421477%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=dUfLRS6oi7ArabNayFOr0P9d3wgzhQfsPu8kNtthiXE%3D&reserved=0) (2507 items; photographs from the former Boston-based news photographer from 1917-1934)
* [Medieval and Early Renaissance Manuscripts](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Anp193j758&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044446170%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=yeQEy80yaFgAgBox8%2B6YLLUtOxCDke%2B5V%2F%2B71ciuf3o%3D&reserved=0) (4 items; breviaries, psalters, and other manuscripts from the 14th-16th centuries)

Ipswich Public Library:

* [Ipswich Middle School Grease cast photo, 1989](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3At435q885p&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044470379%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=oBcc%2BIffxU3JxDg5gcedL7H0tPu4syI9ZG%2Bc%2FfaD4mE%3D&reserved=0) (1 item)

Spinner Publications:

* [The Photography of E. Milton Silvia](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3A3j335r04f&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044494773%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=OtkZXAnGTmDtmqXFabcNHM4YQ%2BgzNkXYYlf6kwP2bfc%3D&reserved=0) (850 items; photographs of New Bedford from 1966 from a photographer for the New Bedford Standard-Times)

**Harvested collections added:**

[Springfield College Archives and Special Collections](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Finstitutions%2Fcommonwealth%3Ar207tt61p&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7C74712b540ee54683a0d808dda3973519%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638846592044519016%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=koR%2FbpsrcXhYoTqg759QUMUhBLwRM5cSjKP%2B0gy5luE%3D&reserved=0) - 6 collections, 5,621 new items

**Stats:**

Item views: 153,286

Total item-level records: 1,397,474

Total hosted items: 707,997

**June’s Report:**

Hosted collections added:

Boston Public Library:

* [Boston Herald](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Ahx125d623&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7Cf9b3f6b2096f4f4fb95908ddb8d4d4a2%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638869946459478401%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=CupwGRgdS8F0C0QPTz41ZtqQQ3l4KQvULYQPTNQ203w%3D&reserved=0) (1,181 items; issues of the daily newspaper from 1919-1922)
* [The Boston Herald](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Acc08r459j&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7Cf9b3f6b2096f4f4fb95908ddb8d4d4a2%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638869946459503242%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=8z8YHOdHjSG7LeW7rdnb3lObE8Q1zaLAQx5wWbWiJmo%3D&reserved=0) (3,009 items; issues of the daily newspaper from 1909-1917)
* [Boston Herald and Boston Journal](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Ab564cq30t&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7Cf9b3f6b2096f4f4fb95908ddb8d4d4a2%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638869946459519801%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=9opYbXf3os6GSth67U5fT5D83DTUeyyNBgUIUDk6tp0%3D&reserved=0) (433 items; issues of the daily newspaper from 1917-1918)
* [Medieval and Early Renaissance Manuscripts](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3Anp193j758&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7Cf9b3f6b2096f4f4fb95908ddb8d4d4a2%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638869946459536092%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=qNJSIUXwij1%2FK7j6V7jluIuhfhwjuV83r%2FebY3qFuUI%3D&reserved=0) (5 items; liturgical manuscripts from 15th- and 16th-century)
* [WHDH Collection](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.digitalcommonwealth.org%2Fcollections%2Fcommonwealth%3A5138jw454&data=05%7C02%7Csjackson%40bpl.org%7Cf9b3f6b2096f4f4fb95908ddb8d4d4a2%7Cfa735c71d7954c01b0ae09fa7415b2b1%7C0%7C0%7C638869946459552124%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=FMWCCImRXQTeXcQ7EU3mlAjKtrQE%2BMYS0cVbwNRLywE%3D&reserved=0) (128 items; film segments from the former local Boston TV station from the 1960s and 1970s)

**Harvested collections added:**

No harvests in June

**Stats:**

Item views: 137,700

Total item-level records: 1,402,230

Total hosted items: 712,753

**Quarterly Report from the Massachusetts Center for the Book**

Courtney Andree, Executive Director presented the following quarterly report:

Mass Center for the Book is developing a long-range fundraising plan with Financial Development Agency (FDA). In June, the MCB Board reviewed a draft three-year plan focused on several key elements, including major gifts, event and program underwriting, grants, and annual appeals. FDA believes that the most impact will come from corporate underwriting of programs and events. Phase II work is expected to commence this summer, wherein FDA will solicit corporate gifts and approach key funders from the Massachusetts business community. In conjunction with MCB’s efforts to build fundraising infrastructure, we have subscribed to Little Green Light, a low-cost and easy to implement donor management system, and are in the process of building a donor database.

**Mass Book Trails and the Construction of a Statewide Literary Map**

Sara Siegel, the Mass Book Trails Project Lead, started with MCB in April. She has successfully migrated all data from the existing trails to our new platform on Mapme and has begun to build out listings from the paper map that MCB developed in the early 2000s. In late May, we put out a call to Massachusetts-based historical societies, libraries, museums, and our e-newsletter list for recommendations for literary landmarks, author homes, literary museums, monuments, gravesites, and more. Since the call went out, we have received over 100 submissions and have now identified around 350 literary sites across the Commonwealth. We will spend the coming months continuing our research and working to build out assets and listings.

**PEEP and the Big Wide World Collaboration with GBH and MLS**

Mass Center for the Book has partnered with GBH and the Massachusetts Library System to get over 1500 English and Spanish-language book kits into the hands of families around the Commonwealth this summer. Tied to the successful PBS Kids STEM series, PEEP and the Big Wide World, the kits contain a hardcover copy of How to Say Hello to a Worm (Cómo decirle hola a una lombriz) from Massachusetts author Kari Percival, an activity guide, a journal and crayons, and a colorful drawstring knapsack. We are pleased to report that sixty-six Massachusetts libraries will be receiving books to distribute to their patrons.

**Great Reads MA Book Boxes**

MCB is once again offering Great Reads book boxes to libraries, museums, historical societies, and cultural centers across the state. Through this “one reads” program, we are distributing 500 copies of Stamped from the Beginning: A Graphic History of Racist Ideas in America for use in intergenerational book groups and have developed a detailed discussion guide, promotional assets, and a resource kit for hosts. The book was adapted and illustrated by BU professor Joel Christian Gill, who is a well-known graphic novelist and historian, and this September we will hold an exclusive virtual event and Q&A with Gill for all Great Reads partners. The application window for this initiative closed in early June and we selected 27 organizations out of the 56 that applied to receive book boxes.

**Massachusetts Book Awards**

Mass Book Award longlists for the fiction, nonfiction, poetry, picture book, and YA/middle grade categories were announced in early May and the recognized titles will continue to be promoted throughout the summer months. We expect to have final selections in hand from the judging panels by the second week in July, including winning titles for our new graphic novel and “notable contribution to publishing” awards. The Great Hall of the Massachusetts State House has been reserved for the ceremony, which will be held at 1pm on October 7.

**Letters About Literature**

MCB staff are working to collect feedback from educators who continue to participate in this writing program. Several teachers have met with us to offer details on how they run LAL in their classrooms, and have shared teaching materials and lesson plans. We are also in the process of commissioning a few brief videos where teachers speak to how LAL fits into the curriculum and how they set it up for their students. These videos will be used for program promotion as we work to attract new educators. While there is already a fairly robust teaching guide in place for the program, we are in the process of reviewing all materials and developing new tools in response to the feedback that we’ve received. It’s important to meet educators and students where they are now, and this means more scaffolding, worksheets, and turnkey resources.

**Mass Kids Lit Fest**

The second annual Festival reached nearly 1,200 young people and their families at twenty-five sites across Western Massachusetts—nearly a threefold increase in attendance over last year’s totals. Some highlights included author Sara Levine’s “Zoo Adventure Storytime” at the Zoo in Forest Park in Springfield. There, we partnered with a local early childhood group and had nearly 100 kids and parents in attendance. Mass Audubon’s Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary hosted Linda Booth Sweeney for “The Noisy Puddle: A Vernal Pool Exploration,” which drew out an audience of more than 40 intrepid readers, and Amherst College’s Mead Art Museum and the Jones Library hosted a full house of young creators for a comics workshop with graphic novelist Jonathan Todd.

**Reading Challenge**

The Student Reading Challenge was relaunched this spring with more robust partner support structures, assets, prizes, and more. Over 130 school and public libraries and bookstores have signed up as partners for the new program year and we have shipped nearly 12,000 sets of materials (compared to just under 3,000 for the 2024–2025 cycle).

**Upcoming Events/Activities**

September

National Book Festival exhibitor, Washington D.C. Convention Center, September 6, 2025.

Northampton Print & Book Fair sponsor and exhibitor, Northampton Center for the Arts, September 27, 2025.

October

Massachusetts Book Awards Ceremony, Massachusetts State House, October 7, 2025 at 1pm Boston Book Festival exhibitor, Copley Square, October 25, 2025.

**Election of Officers for FY2026** **(July 2025- July 2026)**

Commissioner Traub submitted her report that she chaired the nominating committee that discussed the FY2026 (July 2025- July 2026) Slate of Officers. Commissioner Comeau and Commissioner Vilas Novas were on this committee as well.

**Summary of Discussion:**

The nominating committee voted unanimously to put forward the following slate of candidates; Chair - Vicky Biancolo, Vice Chair- Tim Cherubini, Secretary- Joyce Linehan

Chair Biancolo asked for a motion then will take nominations from the floor.

Commissioner Comeau moved and Commissioner Conrad seconded that the FY2026 (July 2025- July 2026) Slate of Officers are Commissioner Biancolo for the office of Chair, Commissioner Cherubini for the office of Vice Chair, and Commissioner Linehan for the office of Secretary.

Chair Biancolo asked if there were any nominations for the floor. Hearing none.

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

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

**The motion passed.**

**Unfinished Business and General Orders**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:37 AM



Karen Traub

Secretary