

Massachusetts Library System
Executive Board Meeting Minutes – January 24, 2011

The meeting of the Massachusetts Library System (MLS) Executive Board at Olin College of Engineering was called to order at approximately 1:20 p.m. by Sal Genovese, President.

Present: MLS Executive Board Members: Sal Genovese, Pat Cirone (by phone), Karen Davidson Heller (by phone), Jim Douglas (by phone), Betty Johnson (by phone), Deborah Kelsey, Dee Magnoni, Jean Maguire, Sue Marsh, Patrick Marshall (by phone), Eric Poulin (by phone), Mike Somers

Ex-officio: Michael Colford, Boston Public Library/Library of Last Recourse (by phone); Rob Maier, Director MBLC; Greg Pronevitz, MLS Executive Director

Guests: Carolyn Noah, MLS Assistant Director

Minutes from November 15 meeting approved with one abstention from member who was not present at November meeting. Motion-Dee. Second-Mike.

MLS Committee/Task Force Recommendations

Greg reported that a group of board members had reviewed the recommendation document since our last meeting, and their comments were incorporated into the current revised document. Budget and Personnel Committees are already in place. MLS is in the process of forming a MassCat Committee. The work of the Autosort RFP Task Force is complete. Members of that task force were asked to join the Autosort Implementation Task Force, and almost all members agreed. We still need an Interlibrary Loan Task Force (need to make decision about mediated ILL service), a Strategic Planning Task Force (to be formed in FY2012), and the following committees: Bylaws, Online Content, Youth Services, Continuing Education, Delivery, and Nominating. Mike S. suggested that the Nominating Committee be comprised of those board members who are serving one-year terms. The rest of the Board agreed. We will need a slate by September for the November annual meeting, so the committee should start meeting this April.

It was proposed that, instead of forming task groups for each library type (academic, special, etc.), MLS organize retreats for each group for the purpose of providing input for strategic planning. These retreats could be held over a period of six months or so.

Motion to approve recommendations as amended to replace library-type task forces with retreats. Motion-Dee. Second-Sue. Unanimous.

Now that the Board has approved the recommendations, Greg and Carolyn will prioritize the committees and put together a few at a time and look for board members to serve as liaisons. Interested board members should contact Greg.

Staffing Update and Recommendation to Hire One Support Staff Member and Part-Time Delivery Specialists as Needed

Greg recommended that MLS hire a third full-time Member Services/Office Support Coordinator during this fiscal year after we see the House One budget. He explained that there is urgent need for this

additional staff member as the Member Services/Office Support team is extremely short-handed, and he views the position as essential to the success of MLS. Greg also recommended that MLS hire part-time drivers as needed to fill the gaps left by any drivers who may resign.

Motion to approve recommendation. Motion: Patrick. Second: Dee. Passed with one abstention.

Resource Sharing Contract Contingencies Approval

Greg wanted to make the board aware of budget-cut provisions that have been included in MLS interlibrary loan/document delivery agreements with contracting libraries. These provisions allow the service provider to reduce services or cease providing services in the event of severe budget cuts. In the case of BPL, MLS is guaranteeing full payment for this fiscal year.

Approve Dates for April, June, and December Meetings

The board decided to move the April meeting from the 25th to Friday the 29th, 1:00-4:00, at the MLA conference site in Danvers. Michael Colford will reserve a room.

The June meeting was moved from the 27th to the 20th because of a conflict with the ALA annual conference.

The December meeting will be held on the 5th. There will be a new board member orientation from 10:00 to 12:00 and a board meeting from 1:00 to 4:00.

Facilities Update

Greg reported that we are awaiting proposals from three sites for the new MLS headquarters in the vicinity of I-495 and I-90. Each space is approximately 3,000 square feet. Greg will let the board know when he and other MLS staff have narrowed down the sites. Board members can then go and take a look at the sites if they wish.

Greg recommended that MLS take occupancy of the new headquarters on June 1, 2011. This will allow us to prepare the computer/telecommunications infrastructure and set up offices prior to July 1. MLS will be very busy in July with implementation of the new delivery contract and we do not want to be trying to settle in simultaneously.

MLS is in discussion with realtors about finding tenants for unused space in Whately to keep the facility cost effective. We would like to retain the front part of the building for MLS use. Based on ballpark estimates of value and equity, selling the property would generate a significant loss. Greg recommends that we list the property with a realtor as soon as possible for occupancy beginning October 1, 2011.

Budget Priorities Discussion

The board discussed MLS budget priorities in anticipation of potential upcoming budget cuts. Board members cited the need to keep in mind that cuts will take place at libraries across the Commonwealth. Several board members viewed the protection of online content as a priority because individual libraries may not be able to afford database subscriptions. The Online Content Committee needs to be formed very soon to decide about Gale/Cengage databases. MLS will not be renewing all of them. Continuing education was also cited as a budget priority, especially in light of the reduced opportunities for CE in the state after the merger of NELINET with Lyris. The topic of delivery service was raised and the

board concluded that it should not be off the table for discussion. If budget cuts make it necessary, MLS could perhaps no longer pay 100% of the cost of delivery and could ask libraries to pay a portion. Another possibility would be to reduce the number of delivery days per week. We have flexibility with our delivery contract which will allow us to make adjustments. The contract is based on the reality of delivery. We pay for what we use. It was suggested that the Delivery Committee be one of the first ones formed. Mike S. proposed that MLS work with the BPL on these questions.

BiblioTemps Grant Application

Carolyn reported that MLS has written a proposal for an IMLS Leadership Grant to help MLS restore the BiblioTemps service. We are requesting \$90,000. We must have a one-third match, and the board pledged this amount at its October meeting. We will learn whether we have received the grant in summer 2011. The service would begin in October and could employ MLS students.

Legislative Breakfasts

Greg distributed a Legislative Breakfast Talking Points document. If any board members have additions to make to these talking points or would like to attend any of the breakfasts, please contact Greg. Also, please let your elected official know about the breakfasts you are attending. MLS staff members are being recruited to attend but it is even better to have board members there because they are MLS members.

Executive Director Report

Report attached at end of minutes

Financial Report

Greg reported that there is a budget surplus of over \$600,000. There was overspending in some areas as costs were more than anticipated.

Catherine will be meeting with the former regions' accountants to see which one of them might be a good fit for MLS and which end-of-year closing method would be best. Some regions closed cleanly on June 30, and others had an additional month to process invoices.

Greg will have a cost estimate for the headquarters move at the next board meeting.

Advisory Team Report

Carolyn reported that the Continuing Education staff is helping Digital Commonwealth and ACRL New England with their events. She also reported that online attendance at MLS continuing education events during the previous month exceeded in-person attendance for the first time.

MBLC Report

Rob reported that Cindy Roach has joined the MBLC staff as Head of Library Advisory and Development, beginning today.

The Library of Last Recourse received a supplementary budget appropriation of \$350,000 for operation of branch libraries, so those branches will remain open until June 30. The Governor's budget will separate LLR funding from MLS funding. LLR will have its own line item. The MBLC will immediately have to contradict it when they submit their budget to the Senate Ways and Means

Committee because Ways and Means requires that everyone use existing line items. The Governor has recommended a 7% cut in local aid and has suggested that towns join state benefit plans.

Library of Last Recourse (LLR) Report

Michael C. reported that LLR is looking at its budget for FY2012 and is working under the assumption of a 5.7% cut. LLR is working with Digital Commonwealth and thinks this partnership would be a good use of LLR funds. This past year, the BPL focused on retrospective conversion and digitization in an effort to make collections available statewide. They hope to extend this effort into the Digital Commonwealth partnership.

Meeting adjourned at 3:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Maguire

MLS Executive Director Report – January 2011

Staffing

1. MLS' next staff meeting will be a team-building event with an outside facilitator planned by Carolyn Noah.
2. Advisor/Technical Specialist, Diana Davis, based in Whately hired by Carolyn Noah, Assistant Director.
3. Member Services/Office Support Coordinator, Debra Rachlen, based in Waltham hired by Catherine Utt, Business Manager.
4. Temporary Member Services/Office Support Coordinator, placed by Catherine Utt, Business Manager.
5. Driver, David Ferland, resigned after completing a master's degree. He is changing careers and his leaving is not related to MLS business activities or changes.
6. One part-time Driver, Brian Marchese, made full-time; two other part-time drivers agreed to work additional hours; and part-time sorter agreed to be trained as driver for back up by Advisor, Mary King.

Budget Planning

1. MLS will be providing budget forecasts that should allow us to finalize the end of year budget by the Executive Board's April meeting for presentation to the MBLC at its May meeting (see attached MBLC policy). The current forecast (see drop box) indicates a surplus of over \$600,000 for this fiscal year.

Potential uses of these funds include:

- Technology and specialized furniture and/or build-out for new headquarters
- Technology upgrades
- New totes for statewide delivery service
- Prepay for part of next year's online content

As we look at next year, we need to decide where our priorities lie in case of budget reductions. At this point, we have the most discretion with the following areas:

- electronic content
- advisory and/or support staff
- contracted training

Highest Priority Recommendations:

Hire a third full-time Member Services/Office Support Coordinator during this fiscal year (after we see the House One budget). The Business/Member Services/Office Support Team is very short-handed. MLS is dealing with demanding business issues from the former regions as well as our own. We have a temp in place now that fills the gap to some extent. However, more stability will be provided by a permanent hire.

Hire part-time drivers as needed to replace any that resign. Providing delivery service is essential. We need back ups to fill the gaps left by resigning drivers and we need to give the current drivers incentive to stay. The incentive could be based on average hours worked during the final five months in conjunction with amount of vacation time used.

ILL/Journal Article Document Delivery

1. Agreements drafted, reviewed by attorney, and presented to contracting libraries. We are in final negotiations. All of the agreements have a provision to allow the service provider to reduce services or cease providing services in the event of budget cuts. While it is a good possibility that we can work together to limit services to meeting budget shortfalls, the possibility of ceasing service remains a possibility in a severe shortfall environment. In the case of BPL, MLS is guaranteeing full payment for this fiscal year.

Delivery RFP for Statewide Services

1. We are in negotiations with Optima to provide statewide delivery services beginning in July 2011. This was the Task Force's first choice. It solidifies our budget estimates for next year and will provide significant labor savings in libraries as they migrate to paperless shipping. This option provides networks and members with flexibility to join paperless shipping on a network-by-network basis, rather than all at once. Current customers of Optima are very satisfied with services in southeast Massachusetts and in the Boston area.
2. The drivers in Whately have been informed about the decision. We are working to provide them with resume/interviewing assistance. Optima will consider them for positions when the contract begins.
3. MLS will work with the reconfigured Task Force to plan implementation. We are seeking ways to encourage libraries to expand external barcoding and improve internal library workflow.

MLS Facilities

1. We are awaiting proposals from three sites for the new headquarters in the vicinity of I-495 and I-90. We are looking at spaces of approximately 3,000 square feet. Asking prices range from \$16-\$19/sf.
2. Recommendation: Take occupancy on June 1, 2011. This will allow us to prepare the computer/telecommunications infrastructure and set up offices prior to July 1st. We will be very

busy in July with implementation of the new delivery contract and do not want to be trying to settle in simultaneously.

3. We are discussion with realtors about finding tenants for unused space to keep the Whately facility cost effective. We would like to retain the front part of the building for MLS use. Current operating costs are about \$130,000 per year. Leasing unneeded space at estimated market rates could generate \$30,000-\$50,000 per year. Start up costs will include legal fees, realtor fees, and building renovation costs.
4. While we have not had an official appraisal, based on ballpark estimates of value and equity, selling the property would generate a significant loss.
5. **Recommendation: List the property asap with a realtor for occupancy October 1, 2011.** Why delay occupancy? We cannot lease the space until July 1 because we need it for delivery. We will have our hands full with implementation of the new delivery contract in July. We can begin renovations in August for October (perhaps September) occupancy.

Technology Infrastructure

1. MLS Management Team and Technical Specialist/Advisors are planning network/telecommunications/member services integration for new headquarters and Whately offices. A virtual private network will replace need for the drop box. Telecommuters will be linked to our offices with voice over IP telephones. Data back up will be simplified with increased security. We are investigating customer relationship management software to keep better track of services to members, staff productivity, and value of service reporting.

MassCat

1. Nora Blake, MassCat Manager, worked with ByWater, MassCat's new host to migrate services earlier this month. We expect better service at lower prices.