

Massachusetts Library System
Executive Board Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2010

The meeting of the Massachusetts Library System (MLS) at the Beverly Public Library was called to order at 1:05 PM by Sal Genovese, President.

Present: MLS Executive Board Members: Donna Beales, Pat Cirone, Karen Davidson-Heller (by phone), Jim Douglas (by phone), Deborah Lang Froggatt, Sal Genovese, Deborah Kelsey, Dee Magnoni, Jean Maguire (by phone),, Sue Marsh (by phone), Patrick Marshall, Eric Poulin (via net), Mike Somers

Ex-officio-Rob Maier, Director MBLC; Michael Colford, Boston Public Library, Library of Last Recourse, Greg Pronevitz, MLS Executive Director

Guests: Carolyn Noah, MLS Assistant Director, Catherine Utt, MLS Business Manager

Pat Cirone was appointed secretary in Betty's absence.

Minutes from August 23, 2010 approved with two abstentions from members who were not present at the August meeting.

Future Meetings: Following the results of the survey and other discussions it has been decided that meetings will be held on the 4th Monday of each month. Assume that each meeting will run from 1PM to 4PM, unless otherwise noted.

Nominating committee: Since it was decided to make first terms, which started July 1 rather than January 1, run for 18 months rather than 12 months, there will be no board members whose term will expire December 31, 2010. Therefore there is no need for a nominating committee at this time. It was suggested that outgoing members automatically serve on the nominating committee. Sal Genovese said that terms would be listed on the MLS website and that outgoing members would be so designated at the time (next fall).

Annual Meeting: Greg announced that they intend to broadcast the Annual Meeting, including the speaker. They are still investigating ways of doing this. Mike Somers suggested that the broadcast be available on the MLS website for at least two weeks following the meeting. A vote will be taken at the October meeting and then it will be posted. There followed some discussion regarding an open comment session and how to handle it. It was decided to let Greg handle the minutiae of when and how long this would take place, and whether there would be an option to submit questions in advance. There was also some discussion regarding the need to introduce the MLS board members; it was suggested that this would be best handled during Role Call. We also need to clarify the procedure for school voting. One method would be to designate the high school librarian as the district voting member.

ILL Contract: A question has come up in regards to whether out of state mediated ILL is considered a basic service and, as such, the cost cannot be passed along to patrons as many libraries have done in the wake of the State budget cuts to funding. Rob Maier indicated he would check on this and get back to us. The contract Greg is proposing is a two year contract with an option to renew for a third year. Patrick Marshall moved to approve the ILL contracts; Dee Magnoni seconded. The Motion was voted and approved.

There was discussion about the need to establish a committee to look at resource sharing in the near future, but consensus was not to move forward on that at this meeting.

Plan of Service and Budget: MLS is starting the planning process for online content. Michael asked if new members were allowed to join MassCat and Greg replied that they were actively encouraging new members to join. In formulating policy for online content, MLS will be formulating a collaboration statement that will include MBLC, LLR and the networks. There was a question on the moratorium for leaving a network before joining MassCat which Rob Maier addressed. He believes the time period when that applied is over but will check into anything that currently applies.

There are many factors that need to be considered regarding the budget, some of which are unknown at the moment. Greg stated they would like to add the MassCat libraries. They are trying to lease the Whately space and have had some interest, but need to wait until the Delivery issue is settled, since some of the responses to the RFP included the option of leasing it for sorting and/or delivery. There was discussion of the need to design and implement a brand and logo – but this is a process that would take staff time and possibly an outside consultant. Delivery will have the biggest effect on the budget and that will not be decided for some months yet. As of now, they are looking to allocate \$3000 for an in-house professional development collection and \$1.3 million in electronic content.

Delivery RFP: They received 14 responses; 8 for automated labelless sorting, 6 for labeled sorting. The Autosort RFP Committee has read and rated the submissions on multiple score sheets and Catherine is collating the results. The committee will decide which vendors will move forward to the next phase at the meeting on October 5th. Round 2 will involve a much closer look at the finances of the vendors and their proposals. Interviewing of the remaining Round 2 candidates will take place in November and a contract will be in place by next year.

Reports:

Greg reported that the budget, as it now stands, has enough for up to 3 more advisors. The financial report was handed out.

The status of the hiring committee and the merging documents committee was addressed. It was decided that the hiring committee should be officially dissolved as their function has been completed and future hirings are in the hands of Greg and the MLS staff. Patrick made the motion, it was seconded and approved.

Carolyn Noah reported that 129 people have attended MLS workshops already and that 270+ hours of consultation hours have been given to 185 libraries. Many of these have been Western region and MassCat libraries.

Rob Maier reported that MBLC is working with the Gates Foundation to secure funding for fiber optic connectivity. The original funding, intended for high speed connectivity, would now apply only to two remaining libraries so they (Gates and MBLC) are working together to switch the focus.

There is a potential for a \$2 Billion dollar shortfall in the MA state budget. If Question 3 passes, that will climb even higher, adding an additional 2.5 billion dollar deficit.

Celeste is working on the debrief of the Summer Reading Program to see how it worked and to start planning for next year.

The MBLC is currently seeking applicants for an Advisory position.

On the Legislative agenda: they are waiting for feedback from the Worcester meeting.

Michael Colford reported that the supplemental budget as it has gone forward contained no mention of the Library of Last Recourse. At this point it does not look like they will be getting additional money to keep the branches slated for closing, open. They will continue to receive money for being the LLR until the branches close. There has been considerable discourse on the subject of the Library of Last Recourse, and the possibility it is an outdated concept. They are looking for ways to reconfigure and they are still continuing ecard funding. Michael will bring a list of databases to the next meeting. They are also planning to keep going the retrospective digitizing of pre-1923 material.

Rob Maier mentioned that if the Boston branches close, and the funding to the LLR stopped, then that money would most likely go to the other recipient of funds for that line item, namely MLS. This would be similar to other cherry sheet funds which get distributed to other certified libraries in the last disbursement of remaining funds.

Dee passed along a "thank you" to the Board from several MLS staff members who appreciated the fact we dealt with the salary equity study so swiftly.

Discussion with Attorney Jeffrey M. Hurwit on Merger and Advocacy Issues

1. Finalizing the merger

The legal work is done for the four regions merging into Metrowest and then becoming MLS. There will still be filings to complete for the IRS, state, etc. for FY2010 and for the one month of FY2011. Legal matters are also on track for the Western region, with changing of the by-laws to reflect that the MLS board also serves as the board for the Western region.

2. The new Advocacy and lobbying law (Massachusetts state law)

1. Their finding is that no one on the board for MLS will have to register as a lobbyist for current board activities.

2. MLS might have to register as an organization.

Background: up until a year ago, Massachusetts followed the Federal lobbying law and guidelines for when an individual or organization had to register as a lobbyist. The new Massachusetts law specifies anyone paid more than \$2,500 in six month OR spending more than 25 hours on matters of policy, procurement or informing state officials on matters to do with legislation or potential legislation (including funding) is subject to registering as a lobbyist. This has resulted in many non-profits being caught by a law that is essentially too broad in its scope. The state is working to “undo” this by issuing opinions. Hurwit & Associates will continue to keep abreast of developments and inform Greg and MLS of any conflicts or decisions that could impact MLS.

Mr. Hurwit explained the steps that would take place if Greg/MLS had to register.

Rob Maier opined that the MBLC would most likely not like to have MLS have to register as a lobbyist and urged caution.

Board announcements: Greg testified at the recent MBLC hearing on the budget.

Adjournment: Patrick Marshall moved that the meeting adjourn, Dee Magnoni seconded. The vote was all in favor. The meeting adjourned at 4:10.