

Massachusetts Library System
Executive Board Meeting Minutes December 5, 2011

The meeting of the Massachusetts Library System (MLS) at the MLS-Marlborough office was called to order at approximately 1:03 p.m. by Dee Magnoni, President.

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

Incoming Board Members (non-voting for December): William L. Adamczyk, Charlotte Canelli, Tim Gerolami, Barb Lichtman, Margot Malachowski, Andrea S. Taupier, Suzanne Wargo, Sarah Watkins

Ex-officio- Greg Pronevitz, MLS Executive Director; Rob Maier, MBLC; Tom Blake, LFC

Minutes from October meeting approved. Motion-Patrick; Second-Deb K. Vote: 10-0-2

Revised Mediated ILL Policy

Feature films will be included; vision is to provide loans on a reciprocal basis including online content; involve all in resource sharing and share workload and cost; libraries are required to loan without charge.

Motion to approve revised ILL Policy. Motion-Patrick; Second-Sue M. Unanimous.

Funding for mediated ILL loan scenario study

Discussion and vote postponed until January.

Strategic Planning Update

Greg presented proposal to hire outside facilitator/consultant to interview other key players- ~30 organizations/individuals potentially; to lead 16-20 focus groups; task force will work with consultant to plan groups. Consultant to formulate questions and MLS Board will be first to answer to make sure questions are appropriate. Potential cost \$200/hour.

It was suggested that task force look at request closer and provide more information before committing this money. Need audit of current services to see if meeting Plan of Service. Environmental scan to determine which type of library is using which services. Strategic Planning Committee should have more time to develop "plan of attack". More detail needed.

Motion to table consultant hiring discussion and vote. Motion: Patrick; Second-Pat C.

MLS policy on removal of library from MLS membership

DRAFT PROCEDURE AND POLICY

"MLS conducts rolling member eligibility verification.

POLICY-MLS member libraries that do not provide evidence of eligibility will be removed from membership by a majority vote of the MLS Executive Board following the procedure outlined below.

PROCEDURE

- 1) MLS contacts members through the email address they have provided to request verification of their directory information and eligibility for membership. The membership eligibility requirements are available at <http://www.masslibsystem.org/about/mls-membership/>.

Searchable member directory information is hosted by the MBLC at:
<http://mblc.state.ma.us/libraries/directory/index.php>.

- 2) MLS sends a letter by US post addressed to “library director” or “principal” to libraries that do not respond within two weeks.
- 3) MLS sends a letter by certified, return-receipt US post addressed to “library director” or “principal” to libraries that do not respond within two additional weeks. This letter notifies the governing authority that lacking evidence of eligibility, the library’s membership will end at a date that will be no more than one month from the postmark. The library is invited to appear before the MLS Executive Board at a specific date, time and place to discuss remedies.
- 4) If no remedy is at hand, the MLS board will vote to remove the library from membership.”

Policy lets school district know there is a consequence if no qualified library professional is employed. Recertification information is included in letter. Plan is to re-launch process in January and check certification of all schools in calendar year. Records will be compared to DOE information. Regulations for school certification are established through MBLC.

Motion to approve Removal from MLS Membership Procedure and Policy. Motion-Patrick; Second-Vicky. Amended by Mike S. to read “Removal of School Library from MLS Membership.” Unanimous.

Letter to the Governor to advocate for funding increase

Eric provided overview of letter to Governor sent by the Western Massachusetts Library Advocates. There is a need for advocacy and earlier contact to Legislators. Discussion of draft letter-include total number of libraries receiving delivery. Email suggestions to Dee or Jim so letter can be mailed ASAP.

Motion to send a letter to Governor advocating support for increased funding in MBLC Legislative Agenda. Motion-Patrick; Second Pat C. Amended by Pat C. to approve sending edited letter with names of all MLS Board members (current and incoming). Unanimous.

Dates for future meetings

Greg reviewed Draft Calendar of MLS Board Activities

- March – Review Budget Revision for Current Year, if necessary
- April – Approve Budget Revision for Current Year, if necessary
Begin review of Executive Director performance
- May – Call for volunteers for next slate of candidates
- June – Finalize review of Executive Director performance
- August – Review draft Plan of Service and Budget for following year
- September - Approve Plan of Service and Budget for following year
- October – Announce Annual Meeting and Documentation
- November - Annual Meeting (elections)
- December – Orientation for new Executive Board members
- January – New Executive Board members and Officers take office

Meetings for 2012 Calendar year

- January 30 - MLS-Marlborough
- February 27 - Morning Retreat and Afternoon Meeting March 26 – MLS Marlborough
- April 30 - MLA Library Legislative Day; meet in Boston later in the afternoon at MBLC or BPL
- May 21 - MLS-Whately
- June 18 - MLS-Marlborough (we hope to skip this meeting)

July 23; August 27; September 24 Location TBA
October 22 - MLS-Whately
November 5 - Annual Meeting (skip this month's Ex Bd meeting)
December 3 - Joint meeting of old/new Board

Executive Board Retreat Planning

Dee presented proposal for a Board Retreat. Consultant will conduct

- an online pre-survey of all 20 members (15 Board members, 3 management members, 2 ex-officio members) to gather input in the following areas: What are Board's and Management's roles? Any other issues or concerns that should be addressed.
- facilitate a half-day retreat (4 hours) including an icebreaker exercise, role discussion with review of survey results, reach consensus on separate roles for Board and Management; perhaps prioritize most important issues that need further discussion
- conduct team survival exercise: a fun and interactive simulation to introduce members to the value of synergy. The simulation is set in an unfamiliar location to allow group members to participate as equals, regardless of rank or position.
- an electronic copy of the complete survey results will also be provided.
- fee for the proposed engagement: \$1,200 and cost of the survival exercise material ~\$10 per person.

Important to stretch "out of comfort" zone, do something to enliven interaction; consultant or not?
Location-extra cost for use of Tower Hill space. Need to learn to discuss difficult issues, reach consensus, and get to know each other. Dee will talk to potential consultant about other options and email Board. Send suggestions via email to Dee.

Annual Meeting Debriefing

Participants should be notified if no refreshments upon arrival. 14 school and 3 special libraries represented at meeting. Should send letter to school principals to inform them of the importance of school participation. Post results from strategic plan exercise on MLS website. Fine tune agenda and logistics to make business portion flow better. Library for the Commonwealth presentation was positive step in better understanding of BPL role.

Whately Facility Report

Realtor has listed building for lease. Catherine met with USDA (mortgage holder) and received a follow-up letter stating-

1. The entire vacant space may be leased.
2. The lease must reviewed by our office prior to execution and we can approve a one year term.
3. Should the lease need to be extended beyond two years, it will require approval by our National Office, prior to its execution.

We also discussed that sale of the facility as an option and should the sale proceeds not provide enough to pay off Agency debt; we may be able to consider a debt settlement action.

Need to present USDA with plan of how MLS is going to use the building in the long-term. Could the building be sold with a plan for MLS to lease back office space? Total space available about 11,000 sq. ft. with 3-4,000 in use. It was noted that location has political importance to members/legislators in Western part of state. Greg asked for volunteers to serve on subcommittee to discuss Whately facility and presence in the West both financially and politically. Betty, Patrick, Margot, Vicky, Andrea, and Will volunteered. A conference call will be held prior to January board meeting.

MLS Hiring Process Update

Deb K. as out-going treasurer noted that the Executive Board does not want to micro-manage the hiring process, but must have budget oversight. Hiring to fill a vacant authorized position is different from creating a new position as the Executive Board needs to authorize use of funds for new salary. Personnel and Budget Committee need to formalize process for creation of new position.

MLS Employee Policy on outside consulting

From the Personnel Handbook-Outside Consulting

“While employed by MLS, employees are not permitted to also work for or to contract as a paid consultant for any current, past (within a year), or prospective member library, vendor, or contractor to avoid the impression of conflict of interest. However an employee may request a special exception to this policy by making a request in writing to the Executive Director. The Executive Director may consult with the Executive Board as part of the decision-making process to consider granting an exception, which must be in writing.

Other employment or consulting work by employees that does not present any conflict of interest or impression thereof must be undertaken in a manner that does not interfere with MLS employment or use MLS resources. If in doubt, see the Executive Director.”

Reports

Executive Director’s Report attached at end of minutes.

CE and Advisory Report attached at end of minutes

Library for the Commonwealth (LFC)-Tom Blake

Board appreciated the LFC presentation at the annual meeting. LFC focus areas include partnership with the Digital Commonwealth-a LSTA grant funded project; provide state-wide access to reference and research via text and chat; e-book access via BPL E-card; new catalog system-Biblio-Commons. LFC is seeking MBLC approval of their Plan of Service (POS). POS is contingent on Legislative Agenda funding increase.

MBLC-Rob

Governor announced a -5% cap for the FY13 Budget. MBLC must submit budget within this guideline and then argue against the reduction and advocate for more funding.

Database procurement is under way. Trials will be set up for 12-15 products. Meeting next week with 50 people to look at and test choices. Database budget is \$10 million over 5 years.

LSTA 5 year plan in process. Himmel and Wilson to contact individuals, hold focus groups, conduct surveys.

State Aid to Public Libraries has the greatest number of applications ever. Hawley and Mount Washington are contracting for library service. Millville dealing with 95% cut in funding. 123 waivers are being considered.

Other business-

Mike S. reported on Virtual Catalog Task Force which is “meeting” by conference call every Friday. RFP expected by end of month. Fenway Libraries Online (FLO) overseeing project.

Motion to adjourn regular business meeting at 3:50 p.m. Motion-Mike S.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty P. Johnson

MLS Executive Director Report – December 2011

Hiring Activities-Anna Popp joined the staff on November 21 to provide continuing education and advisory services on public relations and communications as well as to help MLS with our own communications. She has extensive background in public relations and comes to us from the West Springfield Public Library.

-Deborah Hoadley joins the staff on November 28. Her advisory and CE focus is on working with governance boards and planning. Deb was most recently the library director at Langley-Adams Library in Groveland.

-We are in final discussions with a BiblioTemps – Advisor candidate and look forward to having an announcement very soon.

-Lindsey Danis, a graduate student at Simmons College, has joined the MLS staff part-time to assist with administrative help for the strategic planning taskforce. She will be working 8-12 hours per week for approximately 24 weeks to help analyze results of member library surveys, organize and present outcomes of large group planning sessions, assist with focus groups and perform other tasks as requested.

Online Content-The joint MBLC/MLS Online Content procurement is proceeding. The RFP team has narrowed down the field. Invitations have been sent to the top respondents for meetings in December. This will be followed by trials. This will result in contract(s) beginning July 1, 2012. Services under consideration: general content and newspapers; genealogy, language learning tools, and encyclopedias.

Collaborative Efforts-MLS has initiated communications with other library organizations to consider a series of continuing education events to expand the capacity of library advocates to communicate on library issues with elected officials and other stakeholders. Invited participants are as follows. Are there others we should invite? Someone suggested calling this group "The M&Ms."

MLTA (Massachusetts Library Trustees Association) *MFOL (Massachusetts Friends of Libraries)*
MSLA (Massachusetts School Library Association) *MLA (Massachusetts Library Association)*
MBLC (Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners) *and MLS (Massachusetts Library System)*

Whately Facility-We met with a representative of the USDA (our mortgager). She asked us about our plans to lease the surplus space and informed us that USDA normally restricts leasing to 25% of the space. She has offered a one-year waiver to allow us to rent the entire vacant space and there is a possibility that we can extend this another year. These limitations may make it harder to lease the space. She said they would like to see a plan for our future use of the space.

She said that a possible alternative would be to sell the building in a short sale. In this case MLS would give up its equity and the government would take a loss. I asked if such a short sale could include a lease-back arrangement that would provide incentive to a buyer because MLS would guarantee to lease a part of the building for a specific time. This would not be prohibited. These restrictions and options were not included in any of the documentation we had seen to date. Let's add this as a discussion item to the January agenda.

Delivery-Optima has implemented all MinuteMan libraries on sort-to-light. OCLN has reached the threshold of external barcoding. Implementation with OCLN has begun.

Professional Activities-I am working with a colleague, Valerie Horton from the Colorado Library Consortium, on an article about library delivery state of the art and to promote an upcoming NISO best practices document on library delivery

CE and Advisory Report - Carolyn Noah

October highlights included professional development on topics ranging from working with the media to occupational Spanish for libraries and from e-books for prison libraries to using Gale e-resources. We conducted 43 workshops attended by nearly 500 participants.

In a notable development, Member Services Specialist Amanda Fauver negotiated an agreement with Library Journal that allowed our members to participate in the annual E-book summit at their own locations at a very reasonable rate for MLS. LJ implemented a new system for consortial purchase at MLS's request. 61 people participated in on-line training.

Our staff spent 55 hours in travel to lead continuing education. We had 152 advisory contacts over 78 hours with members (about half by email) and made 10 site visits (requiring 22 hours on site and 11.25 hours of staff travel). Big advisory topics for October were summer reading 2012; personnel issues; trustee relations; and long range planning.

We continued the recruitment process for our advisory staff and were pleased to announce that Deborah Hoadley and Anna Popp joined our staff in November. The search for a BiblioTemps manager is nearing completion and an announcement should be coming soon. We are also very close to hiring a circuit rider who will work on the MBI implementation.