

MLA Legislative Committee
Meeting Minutes, December 7, 2012
Plymouth Public Library

Present: Susan McAlister, Co-chair; Beverly Shank, Co-chair; Deb Hadley, MLS; Robert Maier, MBLC; Greg Pronevitz, MLS; Jackie Rafferty, Cohasset; Nancy Rea, MLA; Cindy Roach, MBLC.

Tele-conference call participants: Millie Gonzalez; Kathy Lowe, MSLA; Mary Rose Quinn, MBLC.

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 am. Rob Maier distributed a one-page FY14 Legislative Agenda that was quickly formulated for distribution at the Boston Book Festival, because the longer Legislative Agenda was not yet fully developed. In October, the MA Board of Library Commissioners adopted two main funding priorities; state aid to public libraries, and electronic content (MLS, Library for the Commonwealth (LFC), and budget line 9506 (library technology & resource sharing). Because funding for Talking Books lines have been consistently increased, only minimum increases are factored in for the fy14 budget request.

Rob reported about the \$540 million projected state government FY13 budget deficit. If 9C budget cuts are needed, up to \$200 million could be borrowed from the rainy day funds, or there could be Chapter 90 local aid cuts. Legislation filed would enable the Governor to make 1% general cuts to state government. MBLC is no longer subject to 9C cuts, but this may be reversed making MBLC subject to possible 1% across the board cuts to all line items in the agency if it is included with the state agencies that can be cut. If MBLC is included in this group, there are two options: 1. Do nothing and 1% will be taken out generally, or, 2. File a statement with the House, Senate, and Administration regarding MBLC budget priorities and target the cuts. MBLC will learn in January 2013 if the library budget will be cut.

Rob reported on the FY14 budget scenario. A budget cap imposed by A & F represents a million dollar cut from FY13. The Talking Book programs would sustain a 40% cut. The Governor's budget will be presented at House 1 on January 23, 2013. An expanded online version of the legislative agenda will be published soon. This will include the core budget agenda, plus content about and links to allied organization such as MLS, Perkins, the networks, the trial court libraries, the State Library, the Center for the Book, MSLA, and the LFC. MBLC is also using Tumblr to tell our stories, and all libraries are encouraged to submit content.

Various committee members provided FY14 legislative breakfast updates. Details about all breakfasts, including toolkits, can be found on the MLA website @ <http://mla.memberlodge.org/ToolkitBreakfasts>.

Deb and Nancy reported on Take Action! Build Community Support. Feedback from program participants indicates success of the program as all articulated new confidence and enhanced interest in contacting legislators. The Sheffield and Osterville programs

both had 20 participants. The joint trustees/Friends program attracted 30-40 participants. It was suggested that the program be publicized to independent, private school libraries.

Greg reported that hiring for two positions at MLS is now delayed due to the possibility of fy13 state budget cuts. The positions, if funded, are to be dedicated to electronic content and virtual training. Expanding access to electronic content is a major MLS priority. Greg also reported that newspaper collaborative is not going forward due to lack of member interest. MLS is also going out to bid for outside services to handle billing as they do not have the staff to do it. The MLS executive board has lowered the price for joining MASSCAT. Nahant will be joining.

Following discussion about the future of Project Alert, Cindy suggested that we eliminate it because there is a joint Friends and trustees email list which was introduced in October. Committee members agreed that this makes sense.

MLS has completed its first school library recertification process in order to confirm eligibility for membership. Following the process, 172 programs did not meet certification requirements, either because they didn't respond or because they don't have qualified school librarians on staff. However, 32 have now re-joined having met requirements. Also, a large number of new school libraries have joined, resulting in a net loss of only 100 so that the total number of participating schools is 1,000.

Kathy Lowe of MSLA reported that the same school bill that was filed last year will again be filed. MSLA is encouraging members to host legislative breakfasts.

The State House Library is willing to host a tour of the State House. The tour will focus on how to connect with your legislator. Katie Baxter is heading this up.

Legislative Day is scheduled for March 26, 2013. Planning to date includes:

- MLA and MSLA programs will all take place in the Great Hall.
- Registration opens at 9:00 am and coffee will be available at that time.
- As usual, MBLC will assemble packets and distribute invitations in legislative mailboxes.
- Bookmark award contest is scheduled from 10 – 11 am.
- It was decided to hold one legislative briefing in the Great Hall at 11:00 am.
- The lunch program is at noon. Nancy Rea will give a presentation about Take Action! Build Community Support. This will be followed by the Legislative Advocacy Award. Following discussion, the committee voted to recommend Springfield City Councilor Tim Allen for the award. Rep. Cheryl Coakley-Rivera of the 10th Hampden District was also considered, but committee consensus was that due to the extensive advocacy by Mr. Allen and subsequent success in keeping Springfield city branches open, he should be honored. Greg agreed to convey the news to Molly Fogarty, Springfield Library Director. If MLA Executive Board agrees, Molly will be asked to introduce Mr. Allen. Rep. Kate Hogan will be asked to speak about the Library Caucus and Rep. Byron Rushing

will be asked to speak about the BPL e-card. Dinah O'Brien, MLA President, will introduce all legislators present.

- The lunch program will be followed by visits to legislators. Room assignment listings will be made available to participants.

Krista updated the committee on the Candidate Surveys. There were a similar amount of responses as two years ago. It was agreed that the real benefit of the surveys is in the distribution of candidate responses to constituents. Cindy and Krista will tie it all together and distribute to Friends and librarians in the districts of the responding legislators. They will also let Rep. Hogan know of any legislators that expressed interest in joining the Library Caucus.

The next Legislative Committee meeting is scheduled for February 1st at the Minuteman Library Network at 1:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jackie Rafferty