

**MLA Legislative Committee
Minutes
Friday September 28, 2012 1 p.m. to 3:20 p.m.
Massachusetts Library System Office, Whately, MA**

Present: Bev Shank, Co-Chair (Watertown)/call-in; Susan McAlister, Co-Chair (Minuteman); Jackie Rafferty (Pratt Library, Cohasset)/called-in; Dinah Smith O'Brien (Plymouth); Greg Pronevitz (MLS); Deb Hoadley (MLS); Julie Farrell (MSLA); Eric Poulin (WMLA)Katie Baxter (CLA); Cindy Roach (MBLC); Nancy Rea (MLA)call-in; Millie or Merrilee (?)/call-in

Susan called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

Welcome

Susan welcomed guest Eric Poulin of Greenfiled Community College and President of Western Massachusetts Library Advocates (WMLA). WMLA has a 12 member board and about 200 members. WMLA Annual Meeting is Wednesday, October 3 at 10 a.m.

Upcoming WMLA activities: Small Libraries Tour with goal of helping members see daily challenges of these libraries; legislatures will be invited to hop on the bus; this tour to happen March-ish. WMLA is about making advocacy connections on the statewide level; two MBLC Commissioners are current members.

MBLC Legislative AgendaCindy

Highlights from Cindy's report:

- About 30 people attended public hearing in Worcester in September. MBLC received 35 to 40 letters in support of line items with the Library for the Commonwealth and State Aid line items receiving most mention compared to other line items.
- AFC announced the maintenance budget can be submitted in October.
- Commissioners meet Thursday, October 4 to vote on the Legislative Agenda. They will prioritize State Aid line; line item amounts are similar to last year's. They will announce the provisional grants being awarded to 8 communities; the awards are a bit less than usual since payments will be made over five years instead of four.
- Book Festival is October 27; MBLC will distribute a one page handout.
- Mayor's Office supports full statutory funding for Library of Commonwealth.
- MBLC is promoting it's Why I Need My Library site created by Celeste Bruno with material from Snapshot Day. Visit masslibraries.tumblr.com.
- July and August tax revenues were up over last year's totals but did not reach the benchmark.

Candidate Survey Results:Bev

MLA received 31 responses; Krista sent the list of respondents; results will be published on the MLA web site.

Action Step: Cindy will send Friends list to Bev so that Bev can contact Friends Association to follow up with candidates who have not responded.

Discussion: MLA wants to breakdown results by individual respondent; this can be labor intensive; it's easier to sort info by district. Susan suggested asking Elizabeth Hacala to help us with this sorting.

Action Step: Bev will forward link to us so we can also nudge candidates who have not responded.

Action Step: Also included under this topic, Dinah will compose a letter to send to the home of the election winners the day of the January swearing in ceremony.

Request was made to take agenda topics out of order to accommodate attendee's schedule. Request granted.

MLS Grassroots Workshop Agenda and Toolkit.....Deb

- With input from Eric and Greg, Deb summarized the MLA advocacy program co-sponsored by MLTA, MFOL, WMLA, MSLA and CCIA called "Take Action: Build Community Support." The program will be offered October 27 at the Joint Annual Conference of MLTA/MFOL; November 1 at Osterville Village Library; and, November 15 at Bushnell-Sage Library in Sheffield. Nancy Rea, John Ramsay and Eric Poulin will present toolkit material, advocacy stories and strategies. Publicity and registration information has been released.
- Deb and Nancy are creating step-by-step advocacy materials and presentations for "Turn Listening Into Action" which will be implemented in a train-the-trainer format. Deb circulated a handout with "Step-By-Step" suggestions. Nancy asked people to send suggestions for the handout to her at nbrea01@gmail.com.
- Deb reminded folks that anyone can register for the October 27th session.
Discussion: We revisited the idea of including a State House Tour and tips re: participating in Legislative Day. Greg and others suggested ideas.
Action Step: Katie will work with Greg, Deb and Julie to draft an outline for the State House Tour program. We see this as a collaborative effort between MLA, MLS, MSLA, CLA and whomever else would like to join the effort. We'll aim to offer the program in Spring this year as a test run, Greg will check with MLA Conference Committee to see if we can tie the program into a conference event. Greg will check with State House Library to see if we can use that Library to launch the program during MLA Conference. We'll then work to offer this as a Fall event as part of regular "Take Action" offerings. MLA Conference dates are April 23-26, 2013 in Cambridge.

Legislative Office Hours in Libraries.....Bev

We want to promote this idea as a convenient way to reach out to legislatures in our communities; Bev will figure out how to gather data on which legislatures already hold office hours in libraries and then post this on the MLS LibGuide and MLA sites.

Update on Joint Intellectual Freedom and Legislative Committee Program....Jackie

The IF Committee is awaiting word from Rep. Ed Markey re: the invitation to participate in the planning and presentation of this stand alone program. We think it could be offered day before or first evening of MLA Conference in Cambridge and open event up to public. Suggestion was made to have Ruth U. of MLA ask Markey since she is in his district.

Website/Facebook Update.....Susan

After discussion with the Administrative Committee, Susan with permission of Carolyn Noah shut down the "Don't Close the Books on Libraries" facebook page. Susan discovered that in addition to the official MLA facebook page, there are facebook pages called Friends of Mass Libraries, MassLibraries Fans, We Love Western Mass Libraries, and We Love Mass Libraries. There is a YSS facebook page, too.

Discussion: Legislative Committee wants clear direction on how the Association wants facebook pages to be used and populated.

Action Step: Susan will move the topic of use/authority and purpose of facebook pages from Legislative Committee to Executive Board.

Breakfast Toolkit.....Bev

Susan circulated the Planning Timetable handout for discussion. One suggestion: under December add reminder about collecting contributions from Friends and other sponsors.

Action Steps: Bev will send Julie the handout for consideration at the October 17th MSLA meeting. Eric will send Bev the WMLA timetable for comparison.

Bev reminded us that Library Caucus list needs updating after elections. Cindy explained that Kate Hogan sends out an invitation to legislatures to join in January after the election.

Discussion: Susan is trying to create a list of MLA Advocacy Award Recipients for posting on the MLA web site. She will check with the MLA Archivist. Some information may be found through internet searching; other info may be on the agendas provided in the Legislative Day folders prepared by MBLC over the years.

MSLA Update:.....Julie

MSLA would like the bill sponsored by Representative Garballey of Arlington to be a part of the Legislative Agenda. The bill can be filed in January. Letters of support can be sent to Rep. Garballey. MSLA is including the bill and tips for supporting it on the Legislative Day handout. Susan clarified that this year, Legislative Day events are all happening in the Great Hall. Julie indicated that the Take Action link will be posted on the MSLA web site.

MLS Update:.....Greg

MLS is conducting the Comment Period on its strategic plan by hosting three meetings and an online web forum. MLS is presenting its legislative agenda as one that is requesting fiscal support for the following priorities: MLS leading role in providing online content to member libraries; developing connections with and among libraries; launching a brand and a communications plan; targeting services for underserved libraries; increasing number of MLS advisors. Currently MLS is focused on school membership recertification (lost 100 schools) and on deciding the long-term future of the Whately building. Annual Meeting will be November 5th at Holy Cross. Main topic will be the acceptance of the MLS Legislative Agenda; a draft document is available on the MBLC web site. In 2010 the MLS budget was cut 40%. MLS is asking for 30-35% to be restored for service provision. The Annual Meeting speaker will address the topic of social media.

Meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Next meeting: December 7th 10:00 a.m., Plymouth Public Library ; Dinah will invite the Cape Cod and Island Library Association

Respectfully submitted,
Katie Baxter
baxterreads@gmail.com