

WMRLS Executive Board Minutes
Thursday, May 17, 2007, 2:00 p.m.
WMRLS Headquarters, Whately

Present:

Beth Wade, MBLC
Judy Clini, Agawam
Joan Powers, Undermountain Elementary School, Sheffield
Betty Johnson, Colrain
Sue San Soucie, Montague
Jan Resnick, WMRLS
John Ramsay, WMRLS
Megan Lambert, Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art
Laurie Risler, Lay Rep., South Hadley
Martha Santoro, Franklin Law Library
Andrea Taupier, Springfield College

Not Attending:

Brooke Johnson, Hinsdale (Judy Clini, as WMRLS Vice President, chaired the meeting)
Lee Fogarty, Springfield City
Sharon Blanchard, Westfield Voc. Tech. HS
Cathy Doyle, Westfield State

1. **Call to order** (Judy Clini). 2:10

Read the WMRLS mission statement. Brooke is at a State Aid meeting.

2. **Approval of April 11, 2007 minutes** (emailed). **ACTION ITEM.** John recommended revised wording on FY07 budget actions recommended to the Executive Board to better reflect spending plans for equipment and technology. Joan made a motion to accept the minutes as amended by John. Laurie seconded. *Passed unanimously.*

3. **Vice President's Report** (Judy Clini).

John reported on a PALS meeting that Brooke and he attended. (Presidents Administrators and Liaisons get together twice per year to exchange information about happenings in the regions and on the statewide level.)

The web portal came up during the meeting. Beth said that a joint committee made up of PR committee members and statewide authentication committee members is working on a web portal, mostly for library users, to access information statewide. She explained that in the original creation of the MBLC website there was some debate as to whether to have two sites--one for the public, one for libraries. This move is a rethinking of the decision to have one for all. It is an opportune time for this reworking of the site, since some of the database addresses will be changing. This will make for a simpler, more user-oriented system for accessing databases.

The PALS meeting also included reports from various regions. Boston filled a vacancy from within BPL, and they are working on an RFP for a vendor to replace the statewide delivery link.

Central has hired a PR firm, and they have a new logo. They are trying to reinvigorate their board and committees through a library innovation group. They are focusing on strategic

communications, partnerships, and are doing a series of roundtables, one for “reluctant techies.”

Metrowest is hiring a new youth services/technology consultant because Beth Gallaway is leaving to do freelance consulting work.

The Southeast region has a new website. They are planning to keep up with the statewide performers directory for a while longer, and they need to make sure the information is current.

The Northeast Region is looking to revamp their legislative breakfast approach to attract more participation.

It was also reported that the president of MLA, Kathy Glick-Weil, is leaving Massachusetts and relocating to Pennsylvania.

Regarding databases: Infotrac will have Power Packs, subsets of regular databases on particular topics. Training for librarians will take place in the fall.

The State is considering deleting Net Library (electronic books) from network databases. The collection is dated. No one has plans to add to it. It is a joint collection purchased by BPL, and Metrowest. Access to the ebooks is also quite limited due to recent changes.

4. Regional Administrator’s Report (John Ramsay) (emailed and John handed out an additional report at the meeting).

- *Springfield Republican* subscription. John is negotiating with NewsBank to continue access to this heavily-used online newspaper. He has also inquired about what it would cost to add the *Greenfield Recorder*. He asked Franklin County board members for background information. Martha said that the Greenfield Public Library subscribes, but it is only available to people with Greenfield cards. The law library does not have even a subscription to the hard copy. Betty said that she has been offered a free month trial for the *Recorder*. Sue said that patrons in Montague who want this paper tend to want older editions. John wondered if Forbes or GCC might have subscriptions. Martha noted that a merger has taken place and that the *Daily Hampshire Gazette* and the *Greenfield Recorder* are now linked corporately, so this might facilitate the process if libraries already subscribe to the *Gazette*.
- Grants: John reviewed the “Together We Thrive” (Circuit Riders) and “Out from the Cold” (Small Library Automation study), both of which have been rewritten and scaled back based on recommendations from SACL. He also reported that a grant has been submitted to the Freeman Foundation (Longmeadow-based), seeking funds for bookmobile materials, small library automation and computers for small libraries.
- John said that the Western Region again accounted for a disproportionately large percentage of the Barnes and Noble fundraiser proceeds.

John also passed out additional material for the Board’s review, which included the following information:

A few libraries in the state are being threatened with closing: Whitinsville Social Library in

Northbridge. The town's override failed, so the library is closing as of July 1. Saugus Public Library also may close due to a failed override. This is a messy situation because the \$1.2 million State construction grant used to build the library 10 years ago stipulated that the building would be used as a public library for 20 years.

Some construction projects look like they are not going to move forward, including Dalton and Heath. The communities on the waiting list would then possibly move up, including several WMRLS communities.

The statewide delivery and sorting study is moving forward; one of the consultants from Trans-Solutions went along on a delivery route. They will try to set up some scenarios to improve delivery, using software to optimize routes and determine where sorting would best take place.

John just received a message from Rob Maier regarding 3 libraries in Western Mass that have been included as part of a project to provide wireless broadband. This is the State's effort to bring broadband to small communities. They include Florida in Berkshire County, New Salem in eastern Franklin County, and Worthington in Hampshire County. Worthington is on the list for the WMRLS connectivity project. It remains to be determined if the library should be connected through the State's long term project or the WMRLS effort, which can take place much sooner, and is assured that the library will be connected and its ongoing costs paid for. It is not clear if the State project would include the library at no ongoing cost to the town or the library.

5. **MBLC Liaison Report** (Beth Wade) (emailed).

The MBLC Long Range Plan is now up for comment on the MBLC website, however, the policies and procedures for LSTA that were bound into the last print copy are not there yet. They are working on revising them and will release them for public comment when this process is completed.

The goals are pretty similar to the goals in the former version. They tried to leave them fairly broad. The PR goal has been left out and replaced with language about lifelong learning. IMLS has changed the focus on PR and advertising. Please note that libraries can still promote LSTA projects with funds, but LSTA funds cannot be used simply to promote libraries in general.

Beth gave an overview of the budget process to date:

Yesterday the Senate Ways and Means budget was released.

In January the governor's budget was released.

The governor did not recommend many increases, but there were few cuts. There was a minor increase in the MBLC administrative budget. Talking books (Perkins and Worcester) budgets were cut.

Since then, we have also had the House budget, which recommended the highest increase for State Aid to Regional Libraries, which this would have provided about \$500,000 to be distributed to the Regions. At first this increase was only for the Library of Last Recourse, but then an amendment went through to include an increase for the regions too. However, the Senate

Ways and Means budget did not maintain that increase. It instead level funded the account, in line with the governor's budget.

The House Ways and Means budget called for slight increases in both talking book libraries, doing away with the cuts.

The Senate scaled back the increase for State Aid to Public Libraries.

The big disappointment was funding for the Library Technology and Resource Sharing account. The House budget recommended a \$20k increase and the Senate went along. An amendment will be filed in the Senate to increase this account, along with funding for the regions. These need to be filed by noon tomorrow. MLA will send out notice to advocate for this.

The Public Libraries Fund was eliminated in the governor's budget, there was a slight decrease by the House, and the Senate also called for restoration of funding. There will be a Conference Committee appointed after the Senate budget is passed to reconcile differences between the House and Senate versions.

6. Committee Reports:

- Continuing Education (Judy): Received an email from Janet Eckert to look at the WMRLS professional development survey. It's now posted on the website. It has very open-ended questions.
- Finance (Sue): No report.
- Personnel (Joan): Will meet in June, most likely on June 20.
- Resource Sharing (Andrea/Judy):

Met on April 25 at Williamsburg. The committee asked the Board to consider issues of compliance for delivery. For example, libraries with 2 or more large bins going out every day should bundle materials.

Sue mentioned that one-person libraries may have a harder time accomplishing this in some cases.

Judy moved that the Executive Board endorse the delivery resolution put forward by the resource sharing advisory committee, which reads: "Libraries that have two or more large delivery bins going out every delivery day are required to bundle materials going to a single library, in order to save the time of the delivery drivers sorting materials at each library, and to allow for greater efficiency in the service." Seconded by Betty. *Passed unanimously.*

The next meeting of the Committee is July 25 at 10 am in Sunderland.

At a WMRLS Delivery Roundtable on Wednesday, August 15 (10-12) in Agawam awards will be given to recognize positive delivery practices. The hope is that this recognition will signal positive reinforcement rather than a negative tone.

Jan also noted that some libraries are interested in gauging how they are doing and how they can employ better delivery practices.

John is hopeful that the redistribution of stops WMRLS and CLGS can move forward.

- Small Libraries (Betty/Brooke/Laurie): Have not met. Awaiting the outcome of LSTA grant applications.
- Reference (Cathy): John noted that at the PALS meeting one of the regions said that their strategic planning process is questioning regional reference service. So, it's not only WMRLS that is questioning this issue.
- PR (Laurie): No report.
- Bylaws (Martha): No report.
- Nominating (Megan): No report.

7. **Unfinished Business:** None.

8. New Business & Announcements:

Laurie gave an update from the Friends.

- Donated \$5,000 for bookmobile materials.
- Ran the legislative bus and breakfasts.
- Want to be present at Tanglewood this summer, perhaps with the bookmobile. This would hit the target audience and solicit members for the Friends—especially in the Berkshires.
- Lisa Downing, Friends' President, sent a general timeline of major events, especially to try to avoid conflict with other events.

Jan reported on the MLA auction and raffle, which earned \$4,000 for CE.

Virtual catalog meeting on Tuesday. C/W MARS will start federated searching in the summer. UMASS has 200 databases, but no federated searching. Can go online to UMass libraries to find.

Jan has learned of several problems with Virtcat and she has emailed our rep for the users group. An upgrade to a new release was supposed to be done this summer, but it has now been pushed back to the summer of '08.

Event Keeper (online calendars) salesman contacted Jan and said that area libraries are saying this would be a nice service. Central Region uses this software for its own operations. He wondered if WMRLS would host an Event Keeper informational session for member libraries, and maybe a cooperative purchasing arrangement. John thought this is not a good idea at this point, especially since the discount being offered is only 10%. Undertaking such a project might prove labor-intensive for WMRLS staff and could also be viewed as WMRLS endorsing this product.

John announced that there is going to be an online registration system for the summer reading program. E*vanced Solutions is the software. MBLC is going to put newspaper ads out, so patrons may come across this and ask about this at local libraries.

Mt. Wachusett Community College is having a program on June 7 from 8:30-2:30 information literacy to bridge the gap between schools, publics and academics.

The next Executive Board meeting is Monday, June 11, at 2:00.

9. **Adjournment** 3:37 adjourned

Respectfully submitted by *Megan Lambert*, Clerk