

WMRLS Executive Board Minutes
Wednesday, March 12, 2008, 2:00 p.m.
WMRLS Headquarters, Whately

1. **Call to order** (Judy Clini) at 2:08. Judy read the WMRLS Mission Statement. Attending: Judy Clini, Christine Bergquist, Priscilla Perkins, Susan Peterson, Martha Santoro, Betty Johnson, John Ramsay, Jan Resnick, Sue San Soucie, Lee Fogarty, and Faith White, Beth Wade and Eric Poulin. Not attending: Joan Powers and Lauren Cunniffe.

2. **Approval of February 12, 2008 minutes** (emailed) Moved by Susan, seconded Betty, unanimously approved. **(ACTION ITEM)**.

3. **President's Report** (Judy Clini). Judy announced the Legislative Breakfasts upcoming in Chicopee, Amherst, and Holyoke. Members reviewed the breakfasts held at Hampden and in the Berkshires. There was good representation at the Berkshire breakfast in North Adams. Judy reminded members to consider attending Library Legislative Day on April 2nd. There will be a bus to Boston leaving from Whately as well as West Springfield and Palmer.

4. **Regional Administrator's Report** (John Ramsay) (emailed):

Article on John appeared in the Daily Hampshire Gazette: article "ID A Personal Profile: John Ramsay" in Hampshire Life 2/29/08. An article about the Berkshire legislative breakfast in North Adams "Libraries Say State Aid is Overdue" http://iberkshires.com/story.php?story_id=26333 at Berkshires.com. Both articles were passed around.

Legislative breakfasts have been positive but it is a difficult budget year. There remain several issues and questions as to whether the funding will come about. Holyoke the representatives were in attendance at the breakfast held there.

Alison Ernst, Northfield Mt. Hermon School and former WMRLS President, is on the ballot for ALA Councilor.

MassCat:

- The MassCat Steering Committee is revising the Agreement Among the Regions to address issues raised by the WMRLS Board at its February 12 meeting. Hopefully it will be available for your March meeting so it can be approved and signed.
- MassCat demos were held in Lee and WMRLS to try to encourage current members to continue their membership and to attract new libraries to sign on as circulating members. Martha and others posed more questions, offered several suggestions for rewording the Agreement to make it more specific, and made a few corrections.

There was particular concern regard the 18 month lead time for getting out of the Agreement and the need for a contingency fund for participants who may have financial problems in order for them to continue their participation. Nora will be given the suggestions and corrections. Priscilla moved, Lee seconded, and members unanimously voted to approve the Agreement as amended pending Martha's final approval.

Delivery:

- Statewide Delivery Sorting Study will begin the week of March 17, with visits to sort centers and a few sample libraries in each region. WMRLS has asked that the consultants study the pros and cons and costs of sorting materials on trucks, as we currently do. Shutesbury and ? libraries will be visited by the consultant team from Colorado. They also will review the sorting system used on the van. The consultants' recommendations will go before regional committees for discussion.
- Semi-annual delivery sample is March 17- 21.

Legislative Breakfasts – By March 12th three will have taken place, with three more to go.

Friends' Bus to the State House on April 2 for Library Legislative Day. Will some Exec Board members commit to sign up for this roundtrip?

Greylock Federal Credit Union sent a check to WMRLS for \$2,500 for computers for small public libraries in the Berkshires that have recently been connected. Wes is ordering PCs for these libraries.

The **Broadband Forum**, sponsored by Sen. Rosenberg and Rep. Steve Kulik, that was scheduled for March 1 in Northampton, was canceled due to predictions of a big snowstorm. WMRLS had prepared an exhibit table about its connectivity project and the need to ensure that libraries are central to any technology infrastructure effort. Hopefully this event will be rescheduled. "Connecting Libraries" display panel at Chicopee breakfast.

The **Library Leadership Conference** for July 2009 will not take place at either UMass (too expensive) or Northfield Mt. Hermon (couldn't commit due to construction project). Maybe at Wheaton College in Norton.

MassAnswers – Recap of March 11 meeting about this statewide online reference chat service's future, now that the original grant is over and the costs are rising. Brochure from Wilbraham Public Library on databases was handed around for review. Eric has used MassAnswers, and the Springfield City Library participates. This service is funded by Boston Public through the end of June, but they are looking for other organizations to help fund. This was originally funded with a grant from the MBLC, but that has ended. Maybe regional reference centers (like SCL) could commit more people to the service, but the hope is that funds will be found elsewhere. John strongly urged BPL to continue funding this service, using its Library of Last Recourse money. The group is also investigating other ways to offer an interactive online reference service.

Eventkeeper online calendar management software is being explored by the MBLC PR committee as a way to provide a statewide continuing education calendar.

John forwarded a Springfield Republican article to Congressman Olver's office about the increased use and availability of biodiesel in Western MA. This was done in the hope that federal FY09 funding for a new bookmobile and some delivery vehicles can be obtained, from the "Books Go Green" proposal sent to the Congressman last year.

Bookmobile roundtables focused on ways to get more funding for materials from the libraries that receive this service. There was a ruling from the MBLC's State Aid Unit that contributions to WMRLS from libraries for materials can be counted toward meeting their materials expenditure requirement. Small libraries have little space to add new books on an permanent basis, so devoting some funds toward collections that will rotate among libraries makes sense.

This idea had been suggested by the WMRLS Small Library Study.

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

Compact Disc Antitrust Litigation

The Massachusetts Attorney General's Office has sent out letters to Massachusetts public libraries regarding the upcoming distribution of funds as part of the Compact Disc Antitrust Litigation case relating to the pricing of music CD's brought about by the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office and the Attorney Generals in other states against certain music companies and retailers. Not all of the funds set aside for compensation to consumers were claimed, and the decision was made to share the remaining funds with the public libraries of the United States, much in the same way that the CD's were distributed to libraries in 2004. For municipalities with more than one public library, the funds will be sent to the library that received the CD shipment in 2004 to be shared among the public libraries in that municipality. In order to receive the funds, the libraries must have a form signed by the appropriate municipal officials and returned to the Attorney General's Office by March 13th. Based on a 100% form return rate from all of the municipalities, each library would receive close to \$300.

Trustee Symposium 2008

The 8th Annual Trustee Symposium

SATURDAY, April 5, 2008 at HOLIDAY INN in BOXBOROUGH 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Trustee Symposium is free. All Trustees are invited. Coffee and lunch are provided.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Massachusetts Library Trustees Association will hold the 8th annual Trustee Symposium on Saturday, April 5th at the Holiday Inn in Boxborough from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Trustee Symposium is free, however registration is required. Workshops include:

Snapshot: Our Public Libraries Today!

Robert C. Maier, Director, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

We'll paint a portrait of public libraries today-who's up and who's down and why, how the Board's Legislative Agenda could help, and what the TV and radio ads and the mass.gov/libraries web site can do for your library and your users.

Public Relations 101

Celeste Bruno, Communication Specialist, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

The two areas of media relations that tend to be difficult for libraries are how to deal with unexpected calls from news reporters and how to promote libraries both to the local community and to local officials. A call from a reporter asking difficult questions can make one nervous. We'll talk about ways to work with reporters and make dealing with the news media less stressful. Promoting your library can be difficult for different reasons. Two of the most common issues are finding a cohesive way to promote the many services libraries offer and obtaining media coverage. We'll talk about the MBLC's statewide media campaign and how it can help promote your library and ways you can use it to highlight what you do locally.

Outreach to Spanish Speakers and Other Target Groups Nancy Rea, Deputy Director
Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

Do you have newcomers in your community whose primary language is not English and who may not know all that the library can offer them? Nearly eight percent of Bay Staters are of Hispanic or Latino origin (2006 U.S. Census). Through a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) has partnered with Webjunction.org to provide Spanish Language Outreach (SLO) workshops throughout the Commonwealth to help libraries work with this growing community. Staff conducted five successful workshops in the fall of 2007 and has scheduled four more during the spring of 2008. The workshop builds knowledge of Spanish-speaking residents' needs and will help libraries better serve the Hispanic community by increasing awareness of local library services and public access computing.

The techniques learned in this workshop can easily be applied to any special target group such as seniors, teens or other ethnic groups in your community. Come learn about this successful program and technique.

To Register: Contact Maureen Killoran, Head, Public Library Advisory Unit
FAX: 617-725-0140
MAIL: Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners
98 North Washington St., Suite 401
Boston, MA. 02114-1933
E-MAIL: Maureen.Killoran@state.ma.us
PHONE: 617-725-1860 X220 or 1-800-952-7403

Library Construction Bond Bill Hearing

On February 27, 2008, MBLC staff appeared before the Joint Committee on Bonding, Capital Expenditures and State Assets to provide testimony regarding the Public Library Construction portion of H.4455, Governor Patrick's general government bond bill. Governor Patrick included \$100,000,000 for the Public Library Construction Program in his FY2008-2012 Five Year Capital Investment Plan, but those funds cannot be made available until the Legislature authorizes the borrowing. Many spoke and there were good comments and responses from legislators. Hopeful out of committee on tourism soon.

Since it was first funded in FY1990, the Public Library Construction Program has awarded general construction grants to cities and towns for 209 addition/renovation or new library projects.

MBLC Testifies At Joint House and Senate Ways and Means Hearing

MBLC staff presented testimony on the FY2009 state budget of the Board of Library Commissioners at the joint House and Senate Ways and Means Committee Hearing on Wednesday, Feb 27, 2008 at Roxbury Community College.

Governor's budget was disappointing. Going to be a difficult year but it's not over yet. Lots of people use libraries during hard times. Need to remain the legislators of this fact.

MLA Legislative Alert

This is a reminder to contact your legislators today to ask them to make library funding a priority in the FY09 State Budget. The budget is being prepared NOW, please let your Legislator know that you care about a FAIR SHARE FOR LIBRARIES in Massachusetts.

Below is a text sent to you in January, with more information. If you have already contacted your legislator, THANK YOU! Please let us know what happened and how your communication went. If you haven't had time, please take the time today, to talk to your State Rep. and/or Senator.

Here is information sent previously:

The Governor's Budget (House 2) came out last week, with disappointing numbers for Library Line Items. Once more the funding for libraries has failed to reach the levels budgeted for libraries prior to the sharp reductions of FY2002--2004.

Are you aware that the "Cherry Sheet" Library Line Items (State Aid and Regions) and Account 9506 are the only ones that have not recovered or EXCEEDED FY2001 funding levels? Therefore, Regions, State Aid and Line 9506 (Telecommunications and Resource Sharing) are still millions of dollars below where they should be had those lines been treated the same as all other local aid and other state funds! This means fewer dollars in your State Aid check, more pressure on local budgets to fund networks, and Regional services drastically reduced to keep the delivery system running.

Now the economy is looking bleak, and we are once again going to be told that there is no money for libraries! Let's not allow this to happen!

MLA is asking EACH AND EVERY ONE of you to contact your state legislators and ask them to give Massachusetts Libraries their FAIR SHARE!

TAKE ACTION NOW!

In the next few weeks, State Representatives and Senators will be asked by the leadership to list their 2 or 3 highest priorities for funding in the state budget this year. Please call or write to your state legislators IMMEDIATELY, and ask them to include libraries in their priorities.

We suggest that you make an appointment, or go to their posted office hours in the next few weeks, and make the case to them that libraries have not been treated fairly with other state priorities over the last 8 years. It is time to give libraries a FAIR SHARE. Please try to obtain from them a commitment that Libraries will be one of their priorities this year.

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS!

Pull together a team of Library Staff, Trustees, Friends and supportive local officials. If you are in a district in which your Legislator represents more than one town and/or library, pick up the phone or write an email and work with your colleagues in other libraries to coordinate a message or a visit to your Senator or Representative. Library Staff, Trustees and Friends should all be involved in advocating for more state funding for libraries!

6. Committee Reports & Liaisons to Committees:

- Continuing Education (Judy) has not met but Judy mentioned several programs being offered, including "Making Presentations to Public Boards" by Rockie Blunt.

- Finance (Sue & Judy) Have not needed to meet. Will meet in maybe a month or two to adjust spending for the rest of the fiscal year. Reminder to contact legislators to support WMRLS budget for FY09.
- Personnel (Joan) Suggestions will be reviewed on changes to the employee handbook. Will need to meet to decide how to proceed.
- Resource Sharing (Susan): 1st meeting this morning (3/12). Discussed statewide delivery and legislative breakfasts. Joan Kranich from C/W MARS mentioned small libraries (Monterey, Heath, Stockbridge and New Marlboro) are upgrading to circulating status. Jan talked about bundling and sorting issues that remain in certain libraries. Good bundling saves drivers time sorting in the van. Need to train those libraries. Mary King had reported to the Committee that the results from the delivery satisfaction survey have been received, with a good completion rate. High points: 33 surveys commented on “what would you change?” Responses were: more frequent delivery, different time of day, more money for trucks and drivers, better consistency on schedule for time they arrive at libraries, keep AV cases from breaking under the weight of materials, bins should be covered with plastic to protect materials from rain. The #1 priority is to do bundling to make drivers job the easiest. Delivery awards ceremony probably next year after report cards for libraries are issued. Want to give libraries time to improve to receive awards next summer.
- Small Libraries (Betty & Faith) Update from Becky Marconi that 11 circuit riders will start by May. Four are starting now and four more in April. 36 of 59 participants want weeding help. Need to be sensitive to local libraries collection development methods, so training is critically important.
- Reference (Priscilla & Eric) Have not met yet. Will talk with Cathy Doyle before she leaves.
- Public Relations (Lauren): No report
- Bylaws (Martha): No meeting yet
- Nominating (Betty): Betty moved and Eric seconded to approve David Bosse from Historic Deerfield as a special libraries representative through 2008, replacing John O’Connor who was unable to serve. Arrpved unanimously.

7. **Unfinished Business.** Additional suggestions for revisions to the MassCat Joint Agreement among the Regions were offered beyond those that were enacted after the February 12 WMRLS Exec Board meeting. These changes will be shared with the MassCat Steering Committee for possible revisions. Hopefully it will be approved by the WMRLS Board at its April meeting. Judy suggested the members convene for supper at Whately Inn after the April 8th meeting. We will start our meeting to 3:00 p.m. Those interested in going to supper should contact Judy.

8. **New Business & Announcements.** John, along with Jan Resnick and Mary King, informed the Board about a staffing matter that is being addressed. Sue asked what is the timetable for Gates Grants. Beth indicated we should know in April.

9. **Adjournment:** Priscilla moved to adjourn at 3:35 p.m.

Submitted by Christine Bergquist, Clerk