Minnesota Library Association
Board Meeting
Friday, October 18, 2019
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Present:
Leslie Johnson (Executive Director for MLA), Kirsten Clark (President), Ryan McCormick (Past President), Jonathan Carlson (Treasurer), Ria Newhouse (Intellectual Freedom Chair), Jim Weygand (MLTA Chair), Lisa Motschke (Secretary), Hannah Buckland (ALA Chapter Councilor), Megan Kocher (ARLD Chair), Julia Carlis (PLD Chair Elect)

Guest: Sarah Ethier (Incoming Treasurer), Carla Lydon (CRPSLA Liaison to the Board), Jami Trenam (Legislative Chair Elect)

Absent: Patti Bross (President-Elect), Angie Petrie (PLD Chair), Ann Hokanson (Legislative Chair), Deborah Bifulk (Member at Large)

The meeting was called to order by Clark at 10:02 a.m.

Welcome and Introductions – Clark

Approval of Consent Agenda
Clark made a motion to approve the consent agenda and all attachments; Carlson seconded.
All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Approval of 2019 MLA Annual Meeting minutes (Clark, Motschke)
Sarah Hawkins, Jill Smith, and Kirsten Clark offered corrections to the minutes.

Carlson noted an error on the bottom of the second page; should read “of” rather than “or.”
McCormick asked about the definition of a quorum at the annual meeting; it is 50 or more. The bylaws committee may want to consider changing it to a percentage of total membership in the future.

Clark moved to accept the minutes with the changes, McCormick seconded.
All were in favor and the motion was approved.

MHQ/Executive Director Update – Johnson
Mackenzie Kelly is the new events manager, she was promoted within MHQ. The position she vacated will be posted soon. The website redesign has begun, but there are no updates.

McCormick asked about the spam score for MHQ emails. He will resend information from GRRL IT staff with recommendations for MHQ follow up.

Board packet emails sometimes get stopped by institutions spam filters. The group will pursue Google Drive as a place to store attachment for future meetings.

Approval of Financials – Carlson

Budget Check-In
October 2019 Financial Report
September 2019 financials included in the meeting packet.

1. Total Assets: $314,089.55
2. Total Revenue YTD: $281,443.17
3. Total Cost of Sales YTD: $49,619.65
4. Monthly Expenses for August: $15,757.03
5. Monthly Expenses for September: $17,371.39
6. Total Expenses YTD: $139,410.32
7. Showing YTD Net Income/(Loss): $92,413.20 net income

We are projecting a net loss in 2019, based on conference expenses not yet reflected in the budget and a projection of monthly expenses and membership dues for the rest of the year. Some of this was budgeted to be covered by strategic reserves; however, we didn’t spend as much on strategic projects as had been budgeted.

Membership dues for September were $7,771, and 2019 YTD is behind where we were last year.

Carlson made a motion to approve the financials; Kocher seconded.
All were in favor and the motion was approved.

**RFP for Audit**

Johnson confirmed that we are not in a contract with an auditor. Carlson reviewed the 2015 RFP and noted that we distributed the RFP in November, final selection was in January, and the contract start date was March 1.

Clark stated that the best course of action is to submit an RFP. Ethier, Johnson, and Budget Committee (which is the Executive Committee and the Member at Large) will meet to review the proposals in early January.

MHQ/Carlson will draft the RFP for the audit and tax prep.
Clark will send out the draft for an email vote on the proposal before it is submitted. Budget Committee plus Incoming Treasurer will take next steps to choose a firm.

**Engage and Educate Members**

**2019 Conference Recap – Clark, McCormick**

Everyone loved the food, which is rare! Clark has not seen the evaluations yet, but anecdotally the feedback was positive. The only negative feedback was from the vendors along the far wall who had low traffic; signage could have been improved.

The Conference Committee will have a wrap-up meeting and will review the evaluations at that time. The conference venue was affordable, but some of the add-ons were more expensive than expected particularly AV. We also didn’t meet a few expense minimums so MLA paid the difference; due in part to fewer conference registrations this year.

Our next conference is in Duluth on October 1-2, 2020.

**2021 Conference Venue Discussion – Clark**

The last discussion about venue was in January 2018. The Board looked at Minneapolis but that was too expensive, so decided on the St. Paul River Center. There was no further discussion about the venue for 2021.

The next step is to set the 2022 conference venue. McCormick suggested Mankato, however past experiences were negative including poor WiFi.

Clark suggested gathering several options to compare costs. Mankato, Rochester, St. Cloud (Verizon Center, Mayo Center, River’s Edge Convention).

There have been past conversations about a joint conference with ITEM. 2022 would be the first opportunity; Bross and Clark will contact ITEM to see if they interested in a joint venue/conference in 2022.
Strengthening our Organization
Strategic Plan 90-Day Plan – Clark
Johnson walked the Board through the Q3 document. Several items weren’t accomplished due to Conference planning, and have moved to Q4.

Johnson walked the Board through the Q4 document. MHQ is working on the 2020 orientation and a packet for new board members. The regional ambassador program moved over and ties into the membership research. MHQ is looking for an intern to research opportunities to recruit new members around the state.

Subunit chairs will be invited to a budget meeting to discuss their lines prior to the MLA budget being finalized.

Conference planning standard operating procedure (SOP) is being created for future conferences and variations in staff.

Webinars are not currently included in our contract with MHQ. It would be an addendum to the contract, and will need to be discussed. This impacts the Continuing Education committee.

The Board has discussed reaching out to individual library directors encouraging them to personally invite their board members and trustees to join MLA. Johnson will create a marketing and communications plan to give to those directors to use in those conversations. Weygand offered his assistance in creating the communications, having been a trustee.

Clark noted some language didn’t transfer from Q3 to Q4, Johnson will add that to Q4 to clarify. The 3 Year Strategic Plan will also be updated; this document captures all the strategic plan items over the three year cycle.

Preliminary Budget Discussion – Carlson
Carlson recommends calling a meeting of outgoing and incoming subunit chairs to discuss their budget lines prior to the MLA budget being finalized. The Board agreed that the meetings should be separate. The first budget should come to the board in November in order for it to be approved at December meeting.

The preliminary budget will be shared with the Board by November 8.

The Board further discussed the budget overages in 2019. The goal is to end the year with zero net income. The conference is usually a revenue producer, but there were 100 fewer conference attendees in 2019.

This situation points to our need to diversify revenue and look to other ways to defer costs. MLA could consider an auto-renew option for membership dues, and a way to pay for the credit card processing fee.

Clark will review the notes from previous Board meetings when we talked about ways to diversify revenue.

Emerging Leader Update – Buckland
Three people applied for the MLA Emerging Leader scholarship; two were MLA members. We have submitted our request to ALA for our MLA Emerging Leader, we will hear back in the next few weeks.

SCOE is the steering committee on organizational effectiveness. They are hoping to restructure the 180 member ALA Council, including changes to the Mid-Winter Conference.

Website Redesign Update – Clark, Johnson
The project is just beginning. The contract was signed and we have been assigned a project manager. Back end cleanup of duplicate membership accounts will happen first. There will be an update in November.
Activate Library Advocacy

Legislative Update and Lobbyist Evaluation/Process Update – Trenam
The draft platform is up, and available for public comment. Trenam will bring the draft to the Legislative Committee meeting in November. If approved, it will be brought to the MLA Board.

Legislative day March 31. The event will have an evening briefing combined with the picture taking activity. Last year they were separate events. Sarah Hawkins is the Legislative Chair Elect.

Lobbyist Evaluation
The lobbyist evaluation is complete. The contract is for the biennium and partners are tasked with discussing options, and making decisions about value/impact of the lobbyist. Sam Walseth is contracted through 2020.

The contract is mysterious to many, and was set up at a time when MLA was the only viable contract holder. It is likely time to review how this is done.

Compassion and Choices Project – McCormick
There is an assisted suicide movement and an opposing movement that wants to make it highly illegal. Part of the issue is that anyone who provides information to a person who ultimately commits suicide could be found personally responsible (a librarian who provided information could be personally liable for their death). This is a threat to intellectual freedom, and the Intellectual Freedom Chair may be called upon to make a statement on behalf of MLA.

Our first step is to discuss the situation with a lawyer because there is a lot to consider and many implications. MHQ will connect with a lawyer.

Carlson asked if ALA can provide any help. Buckland and Clark will reach out to ALA to see if this has come up and how state associations have responded.

Other
Policy Review: Nominating Committee – Clark
The current policy gives dates that are in conflict with the general MLA procedures manual. The policy needs to be updated for consistency.

Lydon was unaware of this policy, and suggests building more time into the process. It takes much longer than expected and nominees need time to consider offers or seek permissions to participate.

There is supposed to be a way for the members to put someone on the ballot by petition, but that process was lost in 2019.

Consolidate all the documents that reference this process.
Clark suggested that the first step is to compile all the documents that reference this process, consolidate them, and present a recommendation to the Board. Clark and Lydon will begin this work, create drafts and share with the Board.

EBook Pricing Statement – Motschke
The Macmillan eBook pricing decision creates an issue for libraries in Minnesota. The MELSA Directors put out a statement in the Star Tribune. The Legislative Committee has talked about it briefly and will put a link to the petition in the Legislative Update Newsletter.

The Board discussed this in terms of the personal advocacy vs. Board statements and advocacy. A procedure is likely needed to help guide future Boards when these issues arise.

Clark adjourned the meeting at 11:42 a.m.