Minnesota Library Association  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Friday, April 16, 2021  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Board Members Present: Stacey Hendren (President), Steve Harsin (President-Elect), Sarah Ethier (Treasurer), Sara Fillbrandt (Secretary), Sarah Hawkins (Legislative), Katherine Nelson for Jenny McBurney (ARLD), Jody Wurl (PLD), and Katie Sundstrom (Membership), Kate Eidem for Dave Collins (Intellectual Freedom)

Board Members Excused: Patti Bross (Past President), Dave Collins (Intellectual Freedom), Hannah Buckland (ALA), Jenny McBurney (ARLD)

Guest(s) Present: Carla Lydon, CRPLSA; Anna Zillinger, East Lake Library

Synergos Present: Joy DesMarais-Lanz

MLA Business:

- Review and Adopt/Amend Agenda (Welcome and Introductions)
  - The meeting was called to order by Hendren at 10:03 a.m.
  - Meeting agenda amended by Hendren.

- Welcome & Introductions

- Approval of the March board meeting minutes (Fillbrandt)
  - No changes proposed, minutes approved.

- CRPLSA Update (Lydon)
  - Group of regional library directors (12), they meet to discuss issues of importance for libraries across the state, including legislative issues (legacy funds, technology, etc.).
    - Meet 6 times a year.
    - Each director has their own system and goals that they are working toward.
  - Putting together a list of library projects across the state to add to bonding measures.
  - Partnered with Minnesota Author Project along with MELSA and MINITEX for the MN Writes MN Reads.
  - Going to have a couple virtual trainings on customer services in September with Pat Wagner.
  - Feel free to reach out to Carla Lydon if you have more questions!
Why do you think membership in MLA is important?
- Networking and having a chance to develop leadership skills and learn from colleagues is a huge benefit of membership.

What do you think MLA is doing well?
- Has done well pivoting to a virtual environment and including folks who work in areas removed from the Twin Cities. Also really like that MLA has been focused on social justice issues.

What do you challenge MLA to consider for the future?
- Challenge to include more people and libraries that reside outside of the Cities: continue to engage with and listen to librarians who are part of the out-state communities.

- Approval of the financials (Ethier)
  - March 2021 financials included in the meeting packet.
  - Motion to approve financials made by Sundstrom, seconded by Harsin, all in favor and motion approved.

- Synergos/Executive Director Update (DesMarais-Lanz)
  - Fielding lots of website updates, keep those coming (especially the clarifying questions).
    - Have been working on the conference pages.
  - ARLD Day registration is open on the website.
  - Working on preparing for MILE on May 4th and are looking forward to having a plan moving forward.
  - As always, if you have questions about anything, just ask!

- Strategic 90-day Plan (Hendren)
  - Q1 final report:
    - Completed quite a few initiatives in Q1. Have a few initiatives that are continuing into Q2.
  - Q2 goals:
    - New items: looking at procedure for making new subunits and how to streamline that, create a targeted survey in relation to DEI and re-envisioning DORT.

- News (Hendren)
  - Patti Bross has submitted her resignation effective 5/21/2021. Per bylaws (section 6.1.5), Ryan McCormick will be taking over the conference program committee, Maggie Snow will be heading up the awards committee, and Kirsten Clark has agreed to take on the role of past-president.
  - Motion made to appoint Kirsten Clark to the role of Past President due to the permanent loss of Patti Bross, effective May 21st.
    - Motion made by Steve Harsin, seconded by Wurl, all were in favor and the motion carried.
Engage and Educate Members:

- ARLD Update (Nelson)
  - ARLD Day is scheduled for April 30th.
    - Currently have 64 registrants for the conference.
  - Extended the Academic Innovator Award nominations to April 21st.
  - Wrapped up the “Unpacking White Supremacy” series - capped registration at 100 participants. Will be running this again in October, and the folks on the waiting list will have the first chance to register.
    - For materials used: https://sites.google.com/macalester.edu/unpackingwhitesupremacyarl/home?authuser=0

- PLD Update (Wurl)
  - Working on following through on plan to talk to members through listening sessions.
  - PLD is brainstorming session ideas and connecting them with possible presenters. Ex. Julia Carlis has approached Renee Grassi from Dakota County to do a presentation on accessibility
  - Meeting with PLD group next Monday: what are certain things you’re looking for in terms of programming at MLA Annual? The following are brainstorming ideas from the Board:
    - Perhaps a conversation about public librarianship in urban vs. suburban vs. rural communities and the similarities and differences and how we can help and relate to each other as each library is trying to serve their communities.
    - Engaging local governments with library events and understanding how they affect their communities.
    - Feel free to reach out to Wurl if you have any additional ideas (jwurl@hclib.org).

- 2021 Conference update (Hendren)
  - On the cusp of having a ton accomplished - logo, program, info about silent auction, etc. and are plugging away. Things are going great and they are excited about some potential changes.
  - October 6-8, 2021 - virtual conference - local arrangements committee might look into doing some smaller gatherings throughout the state due to vaccines and such.

- Intellectual Freedom Committee Report (Eidem)
  - Annual Celebration of Right to Read (which takes place in September or October), named Jason Reynolds as inaugural Honorary Chair for Banned Books Week 2021.
  - Conversation about intellectual freedom has come around to Sandy Berman. He is an activist cataloguer and there may be a session by him at MLA.

Activate Library Advocacy:
Legislative Update (Hawkins)
- The session is chugging along - cautiously optimistic because we are further along than we ever have been before in both chambers - including our complete asks on both bills.
- In Higher Education the full ask is included in the House and Senate. Education finance will be heard in the Finance committee in the Senate next week. It has passed the House floor.
- Legacy omnibus bill is headed to the floor in both the House and Senate after passing out of committee.
- Bonding/Capital Investments is moving forward in the House.
- Once they all clear their floors, they will go to conference committees and leadership and we don’t have as much of an inside look at that step.
- Reminder, the Legislative Committee meets the first Weds. of Month at 10am and all MLA members are considered members of this committee and can attend meetings.
- Reach out to Sarah Hawkins with any questions!

Strengthening our Organization:

ITEM Merger Financial options (Hendren)
- Hendren, Ethier, Bross, and (new) Harsin have been working on this.
- Want to bring ITEM on as another division. Have drafted 3 transition options:
  - Option 1: In 2022, ITEM members join MLA with standard rates.
  - Option 2: Prorated 3-year transition, starting in 2022.
  - Option 3: Prorated 2-year transition, starting in 2022.
- Based on discussions, we are planning on option 3.
- Motion to approve a prorated 2-year transition period for ITEM members, with year one (2022) remaining at the ITEM rate of $99, and ITEM members transitioning to the MLA standard rates for year two (2023), with the understanding that transition fees, prorating details and final merger details will be determined at time of contract, and that this offer is available only to current ITEM members. Those that join MLA after 2022 would pay the general fee and select ITEM as their Division.
  - Motion made by Hawkins, seconded by Fillbrandt, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Working Document Access Update - MLA Document Storage (Fillbrandt)
- Fillbrandt met with Richmond Kinney twice in the past two weeks and they have constructed a working document: File Naming Conventions and Directory Structure.
- Will reconvene the document storage group to discuss this draft and any other questions/things we want included.
- Please send suggestions, comments, etc. to Sara Fillbrandt (sara.fillbrandt@rasmussen.edu)

Membership Committee Report (Sundstrom)
Not a lot of change from the start of last month to the start of this month - added a few more students and one more institutional membership.

People have been using “Anniversary date” for their wedding anniversary, not their membership anniversary.

Working on streamlining reports and making them work for us.

**Policy Review: Membership Committee (Sundstrom)**

- A couple recommended changes: include that the chair is the MLA Board Member-At-Large, additionally who should get appointed to this committee from each division, as well as a few grammatical changes.
- Hendren made a motion to adopt the changes as presented, Wurl seconded, all were in favor and motion carried.

**Policy Review: President-Elect Job Description (Harsin)**

- Hendren requests that this be moved to May meeting since prepared change is not prepared for this month.

**This past Sunday, Daunte Wright was killed at the hands of police officers in Brooklyn Center. Almost a year ago we wrote a statement about the death of George Floyd and Hendren wants to create an updated statement that includes what MLA has been working on for the past year. The question is, should we do it now or closer to the anniversary of our first statement?**

- This statement would be published on the MLA website, and go out to MLA members.
- Discussion: 1-year anniversary makes more sense in terms of how often/when we make statements like this and we don’t want members/public to feel like we are missing events that are not as media-highlighted.
  - Perhaps one of MLA’s actions can be information about how to center our communities in conversations about addressing and making statements about local events.
  - Most in agreement for sticking to a 1-year anniversary statement instead of moving the timeline up.

**Anti-Racism Discussion (Hendren)**

- Project READY: [https://ready.web.unc.edu/section-1-foundations/sample-page-2/](https://ready.web.unc.edu/section-1-foundations/sample-page-2/)
- YouTube video: [https://youtu.be/-w0LFYhedo0](https://youtu.be/-w0LFYhedo0)
- Preamble to watching the video: “When we adopt the definition of racism that we have described in this model, “racism” ceases to be about individual acts of discrimination and instead refers to the ways that systems and institutions privilege whiteness. With that understanding of racism in mind, the idea of “reverse racism” does not make sense. Many people of color have written extensively on this subject, tackling myths such as the idea that Black History Month is racist toward white people, or that affirmative action takes jobs and opportunities away from white people.”
- Thoughts from the group:
  - Liked how blunt the woman in the video was. Very clear cut message about the systems of power and the discrepancies.
Definitely prompts thought about systems, policies, and power structures within and external to MLA.

Other:

- Items from the Floor
  - No other items from the floor.
- Reminders: let Hendren know if you have things you want to add to the agenda in May.

Meeting adjourned at 11:24 a.m.

April Board Packet materials:
16 April 2021 Board Meeting - Google Drive