Remote:
Jen Newberg (Executive Director for MLA), Patti Bross (President), Amy Mars (ARLD Chair), Lisa Motschke (Secretary), Jim Weygand (MLTA Chair), Katie Sundstrom (Member at Large), Dave Collins (Intellectual Freedom Chair), Stacey Hendren (President-Elect), Sarah Ethier (Treasurer), Kirsten Clark (Past President), Julia Carlis (PLD Chair), Hannah Buckland (ALA Chapter Councilor), Jami Trenam (Legislative Chair)

Guests:
Pam O'Hara (Nominating Committee Chair), Jen Nelson (State Library Services), Sarah Hawkins (Legislative Chair-Elect), Christie Kess (TSS Chair)

Welcome and Introductions – Bross
The meeting was called to order by Bross at 10:02 a.m.

Review and Adopt/Amend Agenda – Bross
Clark made a motion to adopt the agenda, Collins seconded.
All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Approval of the July 2020 Board Meeting Minutes
Clark clarified that MLA being the fiscal agent for the Capital Hill Associates contract creates cash flow challenges rather than benefits.

Hendren made a motion to accept the minutes as edited, Mars seconded.
All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Approval of the Financials – Ethier
August 2020 Financial Report
July 2020 financials included in the meeting packet.
  Total Assets: $150,137.22
  Total Revenue YTD: $74,301.89
  Total Cost of Sales YTD: $1600.00
  Monthly Expenses for July: $12,610.38
  Total Expenses YTD: $91,944.12
  Showing YTD Net Income/(Loss): ($19,242.23)
Membership dues for July are $2,120, bringing us to YTD $21,607 in dues revenue. We budgeted $32,083.31 YTD August and $55,000 for the whole year.

Sundstrom asked how low the operating reserves can go before MLA experiences issues.
Ethier stated that we need nine months of current operating costs in reserves. It is possible we will drop below that level before the end of the year, so we'll need to look at the financials to see if anything can be dropped.

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

The audit meeting will be scheduled. Preliminary audit documents were sent back last week.
MHQ Update – Newberg
Newberg shared that she is shifting her work load to support virtual learning for her children. She will have more time with MLA, specifically related to membership.

Bylaws Update – Motschke
Pat Reymann is finalizing some edits to the formatting, content arrangement, and word choice. A mostly complete version is included in the Board packet.

The Board is supportive in concept, but a final vote will be held via email. The revised Bylaws will be sent to membership 30 days in advance of the membership meeting per Bylaws.

Engage and Education Members
Conference Update – Bross
Three sponsors have signed on, and folks are starting to register for the conference. There will be a big push to get people to register.

Sundstrom asked when the session information will be posted.
Bross stated that full session information is posted in Sched, and short descriptions will be placed on the website soon.

The change from in-person to virtual created some communication challenges. Some presenters missed resubmitting their edited session proposal descriptions. The process could be improved in general.

Mars asked if the conference committee members are listed on the website. Posting their names is an opportunity to acknowledge their work and provides a way for other members to reach out if they have questions. There should also be a link from the conference page to the conference committee page.

Trenam asked how room moderation will be addressed in the virtual environment, and if there will be a call for volunteers.

Bross stated that a call will go out for volunteer moderators and will include a clear description of the role and expectations. MHQ staff will provide technical assistance during sessions. The volunteer chairs are writing up a recruitment statement. Volunteers will receive training.

Strengthening our Organization
Nominating Committee – O’Hara
O’Hara noted that the Nominating Committee is challenged by a lack of process documentation or standard operating procedure. She noted an opportunity to document the timeline of events, email drafts, and recipients. She plans to compile information that can be passed off to the next committee and chair.

O’Hara stated that it has been difficult to find people for the various Board roles. Three categories have one candidate.

Mars noted that the ARLD Board is having similar problems. It has been especially difficult during a pandemic with some folks experiencing layoffs.

Strategic 90-Day Plan – Bross, Hendren
The Board reviewed the Q3 plan; most items are green.

Sundstrom asked for an update on the website redesign.
Newberg reported that we are in our final design submission. We made some changes to photos and design. Part of the design is committee and subunit page consistency.
Mars asked if the divisions and subunits could weigh in on design. Bross asked her to send in their suggestions, and they can be incorporated.

Older documents will be archived with the MN Historical Society.

**Membership Committee – Sundstrom**
Sundstrom reported that the Membership Committee held their first meeting, and participants had some good ideas. It’s too late this year to get anything into place, so the ideas will be pursued next year.

**Anti-Racism Discussion – Collins**
One action item from MLA’s Statement on Systemic Racism is to create a list of resources for the MLA website. ALA has put out information for a K-8 audience. Collins is working on a list of resources; he will share it out for feedback from the Board. The page will be a place where others can suggest resources. It isn’t meant as an all-inclusive, static list.

Hendren shared that the resources from the Community Conversations are also posted to the website and can be incorporated/linked on the resource page.

Collins and Mars met to discuss a survey to members and non-members to assess what they would like to see MLA do to support anti-racism. The survey will go out after the annual meeting, and will be an opportunity for people to voice interest in the ad-hoc committee.

Hendren asked what questions will be used in the survey. The survey will have 5-8 questions. Collins stated that the survey will include opportunities to voice interest in or opinions about some potential trainings sessions including, “Let’s Get Uncomfortable,” which has a cost.

Mars stated that the goal is to model a community driven process versus a top down process. Another goal is to encourage non-members to join the ad-hoc committee so their voice can be heard. The survey itself will make it clear how the responses will be used to inform action.

Hendren has had conversations with the Diversity and Outreach Roundtable (DORT) about dismantling the group. There could be an opportunity to combine the work of DORT and the ad-hoc committee.

Collins reminded the Board that we will take time at each meeting to discuss topics of anti-racism. The exercise for this meeting was to review the article, “White Privilege Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,” and reflect on a time in the last day or week that you experienced privilege.

The Board took time to review the article and reflect.

Another exercise will be presented at the next Board meeting. Collins asked the Board to send feedback and ideas for future meetings.

**Activate Library Advocacy**

**Legislative Update – Trenam, Hawkins**

**MLA/CHA Contract**
We have a letter of agreement between MLA and CHA which outlines the expectations between both parties; it is the same agreement we have been using for the last several years. The agreement includes a flat rate from previous years. The only changes are the dates and the inclusion of MLA letterhead.

Hendren expressed that the flat rate is quite generous. Trenam noted that we went out for quotes within the last few years, and CHA was the most affordable. Relationship building is incredibly valuable.
Bross had no issue with the agreement, but asked where the money will be coming from. This agreement is MLA’s second largest expense. There is real concern that our finances are in a difficult position.

Trenam stated that we could go back to the partners to revise the financial distribution, but we had hoped to have a signed agreement before the current one expires.

Trenam walked the Board through the MLA + CRPSLA contract. It’s hard to know how quickly a revision could move forward. The payment schedule is being revised; CRPSLA will pay a portion of their requirement earlier so that may help prevent MLA from dipping into operating reserves.

Clark expressed that the lobbyist contract is important despite the financial stress. There is real value in having someone at the Capital voicing our needs and concerns. Any changes to the agreement may only shift MLA’s contribution a few thousand dollars, and won’t benefit our bottom line enough to justify the risk. We should look at other items in our budget instead of this one.

Newberg asked who would be responsible for paying CHA if one of the partners executes their 90-day cancellation clause.

Trenam stated that one partner’s cancellation would likely mean that we cancel the contract entirely. We’re invoiced monthly so that provides some flexibility.

Hendren stated that during the conversation with the partners they wondered if the agreement should be updated in some way, but there wasn’t enough time to do that before the agreement was set to expire. They have agreed to meet quarterly over the next two years to review the agreement and make changes for the next cycle.

Trenam pointed out that if ITEM joins MLA the agreement will change immediately, and time will be needed to revise the whole agreement.

Minnesota libraries have been asking for increases for years, and given the current situation the goal may shift to keeping funding steady. No one of the partners can advocate on their own.

Collins made a motion to accept MLA and CHA agreement. The motion was amended to accept the MLA and CHA agreement provided that the other partners sign their agreements with MLA; Hendren seconded the amended motion. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

The Board approved the percentages outlined in the MLA and CRPSLA agreement in concept. Trenam will double check the numbers.

**Legislative Forum**

Hawkins reported out on the virtual Legislative Forum. A survey has been sent out to participants.

Trenam and Hawkins are working with CHA to frame up the platform. It will be presented to the Legislative Committee at the September 2 meeting, brought back to the Board in September, and presented to membership at the Annual Conference.

Goals include supporting lifelong learners through school and public libraries, RLBSS, arts and cultural heritage, state bonding, supporting rural broadband, maintaining ELM, supporting intellectual freedom, and net neutrality.

Mars expressed gratitude for those who planned and coordinated the day. She thought the virtual format was more accessible. We should consider doing it in a virtual format in the future, as more people could participate this way.
Bross asked if Sam’s presentation about the Legislative process was recorded and if it could be placed on the MLA website.

Hawkins has shared out the recording with those in attendance at the forum, and will be placed in a members-only section of the website.

**Other**

**State Library Services Update – Jen Nelson**

Hendren asked Nelson to provide an update to the Board. The MLA President Elect job description states that they are the liaison to the State Library Service Committee, which no longer exists. Regardless, Hendren has been connecting with Nelson and Buckland to stay informed.

Nelson provided an update for the Board. State Library Services staff have been working from home since March. There have been no in-person trainings, but they are still organizing and offering online trainings and listening sessions. They are open to suggestions for future sessions based on the needs in the library community at large.

They are focused on how school and public libraries can work together to be supportive of in-person, online, and hybrid learning. They will host a webinar on differences between remote, online, and home school learning.

Summer grant applications awardees will be announced. There were fewer applications for less money, and not all projects could be funded.

State Library Services received CARES funds and they were distributed to the four tribal colleges, and the rest with a formula to support digital inclusion.

RLTA fund uses were expanded and made permanent in statute. This is for purchases that are not eligible for E-Rate reimbursement.

Nelson encouraged the Board to share with her how State Library Services can support the work of libraries without overlapping with other efforts.

Nelson also shared that the Commissioner of Education is very supportive of libraries, and often references, “districts, charter schools, and libraries.”

Hendren asked if there are any conversations happening at the State level that would benefit from MLA involvement. Nelson shared that there is a scheduled conversation with Library Leaders which includes Directors. Bross is currently on that list and she is welcome to forward the invitation to others to participate. Our goal is to push forward initiatives together or at least in concert.

Mars voiced interest in strengthening the partnerships between academic libraries and school libraries (especially high school media specialists). There is an information literacy gap between high school and colleges; better alignment between efforts would be advantageous.

Bross shared that we have been talking to ITEM about potentially becoming a division of MLA. That will be a great opportunity to strengthen connections between MLA and State Library Services.

Nelson is a part of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies, and that group is working with a facilitator on a Diversity and Equity statement. She will share that statement with MLA when it’s completed.
MLA/MNHS Update – Bross
Nancy Sims has offered to review the MLA/MNHS agreement pro-bono.

Bross asked for a motion to accept the pro-bono agreement with Nancy Sims.
Trenam made a motion, Hendren seconded.
All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Mars asked if Division documents would be included in the archiving agreement with MNHS. Bross confirmed that those documents would be included.

Policy Review: Leadership Positions – Bross
The Board reviewed the document.

Motschke made a motion to accept the revisions to the leadership positions in the policy manual; Mars seconded
All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Policy Review: Fiscal Policies/Procedures Overview – Bross
Suggested edits were provided by Kent the MHQ accountant. These included terminology improvements and removal of outdated wording.

There was a discrepancy in the how frequently an audit should happen. Ethier will bring this back to the Budget and Finance Committee; the policy is perhaps more aggressive than is necessary or required for an association like MLA.

Approval of this policy was tabled until the September Board meeting.

Other topics:
Newberg asked the Board how they want to approach the budget conversation. Bross stated that we could meet soon, or wait until after the Annual Conference.

Clark a suggested we meet soon to discuss the budget situation. We will need to meet multiple times and the turnover of the Board poses additional challenges.

Ethier will schedule monthly meetings for the remainder of the year.

Meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.; be well.

Chat transcript
10:01:27 From Julia Carlis (she/her/hers) : #goals
10:02:29 From Christie Kess (TSS Chair) she/her : Good morning, everyone! I'm the TSS Chair. Just sitting in.
Thanks
10:21:15 From Jami Trenam : Thanks Lisa for your work on this - looks pretty solid and it will be good to have a fresh start to move forward
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10:33:40 From Pam O'Hara : https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-Ol5ZctWmSUXXHGPih-U5u-4LDJhN7oi7QgugErtgl8/edit?usp=sharing
10:34:01 From Amy Mars (ARLD) : We are experiencing the same thing on the ARLD Board
10:51:56 From Dave Collins (IFC) : https://nationalseedproject.org/images/documents/Knapsack_plus_Notes-Peggy_McIntosh.pdf
10:56:31 From Amy Mars (ARLD) : Thank you for leading us through that important reflection, Dave!
10:56:49  From  Jami Trenam  : Thank you Dave
11:43:10  From  Julia Carlis (she/her/hers) : I agree with Amy! It was my first time attending too.
11:47:27  From  Dave Collins (IFC) : Thanks much Sarah and Jami for all your work on this. I have to run out to another commitment. Take care all!

August Board Packet materials:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FFVjtwQR6Nq07snq3dwVST8FmUFCVQ5o