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

Board Members Present: Stacey Hendren (President), Steve Harsin (President-Elect), Kirsten Clark (Incoming Past President), Sara Fillbrandt (Secretary), Katie Eidem for Dave Collins (Intellectual Freedom), Sarah Hawkins (Legislative), Kat Nelsen for Jenny McBurney (ARLD), Jody Wurl (PLD), and Katie Sundstrom (Member-at-Large)

Board Members Excused: Hannah Buckland (ALA Chapter Councilor), Sarah Ethier (Treasurer)

Guest(s) Present: Ann Hokannson (Multitypes), Amy Boese (Conference Committee Co-chair)

Synergos Present: Joy DesMarais-Lanz

MLA Business:

- Review and Adopt/Amend Agenda
  - The meeting was called to order by Hendren at 10:02 a.m.
  - Three changes made to the agenda, Fillbrandt made a motion to adopt the amended agenda Sundstrom seconded; all were in favor and the motion was approved.

- Welcome & Introductions

- Multitype Update (Hokannson)
  - Multitype Systems divided into 7 regions. Geographic region centered around a major university. Each system has developed over time depending on who has the job and what the needs of their counties/communities are. Recently a group of leaders put together a strategic plan of what they want to do together.
  - There is no formal designation for the whole group of systems which means that collaboration depends on everyone choosing to make the commitment. Came together to make this strategic plan to help explain what the multitypes do, how they do things, and what they all have in common.
    - They all support libraries. They collaborate the most with continuing education for library organization staff.
    - There are some real opportunities to leverage the work of each region and between the multitypes and MLA.
    - The opportunity that the pandemic gave the multitypes was to give them a chance to think about where they were, and what they can do together.
CMLE has a podcast that talks about library issues and focuses on Minnesota people and school library staff in particular. Helps to connect with people outside our geographic region.

Prairie Lands has been working on a website called “The Solo Librarian” which is a repository of resources, especially for people who find themselves in charge of a small community or school library: https://mnmultitypes.wixsite.com/mysite/school

23 Things: Media Landscapes has over 250 people registered to take part.

- We’re great about identifying problems and finding ways to solve them. We have an opportunity to support each other’s work, build on it, improve on it, and share.
- Want to see us continue to work strategically together across organizations to collaborate on bigger issues. There’s the possibility to carve out some areas that MLA, MINITEX, and Multitypes have in common and formalize relationships and work plans (who is doing what).
- Having a written strategic plan has brought a certain amount of accountability, as well as a place/group to report on accomplishments.
- Beginning to talk about where they want to go next as the current plan ends at the end of 2021.
- Excited that ITEM is going to be joining MLA. There will be tremendous opportunity for us to share experiences and work a little less in silos and more collaboratively.
- Looking next to legislation and asking for an increase in budget. Defining a focus will help them advocate for additional funding.
  - In rural areas, there are a lot of small schools where most of the time the media center is run part-time by an existing teacher. We want this to change and to provide more support for students.
  - Don’t currently have a state library services strategic plan. Having one would be extremely beneficial moving forward.

Questions for Ann:

- Why do you think professional membership is important?
  - Important to provide a sense of community and meet people you might not otherwise meet. Have found that in south central Minnesota, maybe the library directors will take a different job, and one or two staff people will come or go somewhere else in their careers. It’s normal for most folks to have and stay in the job for a really long time. So there’s a lot of “it’s always worked, keep it this way” mentality. Professional membership helps open up opportunities and a chance to look at different ways of doing things - and how others are doing similar things in different communities.

- What do you challenge MLA to consider in the future?
• Helping people see themselves in MLA. Multitypes are about helping organizations advance and MLA has the opportunity to help build the skillsets of individuals as well as organizations.

■ What is something you think MLA is doing well?
• MLA is doing a great job of leaning into continuing to develop. There have been huge challenges (organizational, financial) over the years, and MLA has found great people to help overcome these obstacles.
• Northern Lights Regional Director started to think of herself as a leader of a volunteer organization - she didn't have to do it all herself, but tapped into people's skills to accomplish tasks and goals that supported the whole region. MLA purposefully does some of this by tasking members to help achieve goals - everyone who is an MLA member has the joint task to ensure a positive outcome. MLA's power is that it's an organization of members led by members, but turn-over can get in the way of the idea of all of us for the organization (shared responsibility).

• Approval of the June board meeting minutes (Fillbrandt)
  ○ Changes to minutes were suggested.
  ○ Sundstrom made a motion to approve, Wurl seconded, all were in favor and the minutes were approved with changes.

• Approval of the financials (Hendren)
  ○ June 2021 financials included in the meeting packet.
  ○ Budget check-in - want to look at line items and how they affect the overall budget. This will happen during the August Board meeting.
  ○ Motion to approve financials made by Fillbrandt, seconded by Harsin, all in favor and motion approved.

• Synergos/Executive Director Update (DesMarais-Lanz)
  ○ Signed an agreement with the Minnesota Library Foundation, and Synergos is going to take over the website and is moving it to a different server and hope to have an update for it before the conference.
  ○ Look for an email from Synergos for an invitation to a conference summit - it's a Board of Directors summit for clients August 25-26, 2021 - it's free and will contain training for boards. This will take place on Pheedloop, and if you want to include subunit chairs you can forward the invite to them.
  ○ If you're emailing individual staff, please copy the office office@mnlibraryassociation.org on all communications - several staff have vacations and we don't want anything to get missed.
  ○ As always, if you have questions about anything, just ask!

• Strategic 90-day Plan (Hendren)
Q2 - Accomplishments
- Many of these goals have transitioned to new areas for Q3.
- Excited about all the goals we have completed:
  - MILE reunion, Website redesign, ITEM is becoming part of MLA, document storage and Google Drive has been constructed, created a test budget sheet, and more!

Q3 - Goals
- Collate data from MILE reunion and create strategies for the future.
- Finalize and approve procedure for new subunits.
- Reaching out to the nomination committee and exploring networking opportunities.
- Review membership rates - this will be ready for the August board meeting.
- Sustainability plan.
- ITEM merger.
- Google Drive access.
- Work with subunit leaders and train on the budget sheet.
- Finalize project plan related to action steps of statement on systemic racism.
- Review and reestablish the continuing education committee.

Engage and Educate Members:

- ARLD Update (Nelsen)
  - Didn’t meet last month, but are meeting later today.
  - There is a chapter report due to ACRL that Jenny McBurney is working on.
  - The Unpacking White Supremacy community of practice, can we combine that with or include the Diversity and Outreach Round Table?
    - DORT doesn’t have leadership right now. Part of the project plan is to re-envision this group and create a purpose statement for them.
    - Is there someone on the ARLD team that would be interested in being on the project plan task force and helping move it forward?
    - Nelsen will bring it up at ARLD board meeting this afternoon and will get back to the MLA board next month.

- PLD Update (Wurl)
  - Meeting on Monday, July 19th.
  - Clarified elections calendar process.

- 2021 Conference update (Hendren & Boese)
  - Registration is open; 20 people registered so far, 4 exhibitors confirmed. MINITEX is planning to sponsor.
  - Confirmed 46 presentations and they are working on finalizing the schedule now.
    - List of titles and when (day/time) will be coming out soon.
  - Working way through compiling details to share with membership to get folks excited about the conference. The next update will include keynote info.
- Trivia will be happening again this year! Will also have a happy hour and space for people to virtually network.
- Is there a mechanism in place to publicize conference reviews? Access to evaluations and create publicity using that feedback.
  - Fillbrandt to send that feedback to Boese, also can create images for marketing purposes.
- Conference recordings will be available for 6 months post-conference - need to provide info about where to get to those recordings.
- Harsin and Drew are developing a plan for a pre-conference: How to get the most from meeting with a vendor.
- Awards Committee Update
  - Nomination email has gone out. Nominate people and encourage folks to look at awards.
  - Nominations Committee has met and the nomination form has been finalized and they are going to be sending out an email soon. Thinking about how to socialize with board members to encourage folks to nominate themselves for board positions.
  - Some sessions may be pre-recorded this year: where the session is a recording but presenters will be interacting with people in chat. Figuring out how to do this without losing the interactivity and personalization that are integral to the conference.
- Intellectual Freedom Committee Report (Eidem)
  - Submitted a letter to the editor in support of the Anoka County library staff, but it hasn't been published yet (in regards to the challenge to a display).
  - Working to make sure that intellectual freedom values and library professional ethics are being maintained and supported. Working to create/update a display policy and guidelines, as well as reconsideration process for Anoka County staff to follow. Ultimately want to honor what staff are doing while also understanding the organization that they work within and the leadership that they have. Hoping for a positive resolution for all parties involved
  - Have two panels that have been accepted for the annual conference and are looking forward to those.

**Activate Library Advocacy:**

- Legislative Update (Hawkins)
  - Session ended and the state has a budget. Yay!
  - Regional Libraries Basic System Support: there was not a funding increase or formula change which is disappointing.
  - Legacy side: regional libraries got their full ask: $2.5 million for each year of the biennium.
  - School library side: creation of a definition for a “school media center” was not included in any legislation.
  - Multitypes and MINITEX did receive their full funding.
Other things that we were keeping an eye on:

- Clarification for the maintenance of effort legislation that is currently in the library statute and superseded by tax statute, there was language introduced to clarify statute 134.
- An advisory board related to library legislation wasn’t created.
- The online database monitoring bill did not pass (yay!).

- MLA/ITEM/Multitypes will be meeting in early August to debrief the session. They will also evaluate the lobbyist (Capitol Hill Associates)- which is one of our goals.
- Start thinking ahead to 2022, the extended session makes things seem like there is no break. Legislative Forum will start September 1st, virtually online, and will take place of normal legislative committee meeting for that day.
- All the bills that we introduced are dead for now, but will be active again once the legislature is back in session. Some of the funding items may be reintroduced in a special budget bill in 2022.
- 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:

- Membership Committee Report (Sundstrom)
  - Numbers are a little higher than we thought.
  - Currently 558 individual members and 34 institutional memberships.
- Procedure for members to make new subunits (Hendren)
  - Bylaws and the policy manual had valuable information, but there wasn’t a written procedure. We want to make it easier for people to engage, so when we created the new Student Round Table, Hendren tracked the procedures and steps that need to happen before creation can take place.
  - This procedure document will reside on the MLA website on the forms and logos page behind the member wall.
  - Question: should we create a procedure manual to house all procedures?
  - For now house this on forms and logos page, and update the Q3 goal to review policy manual and create a procedure manual.
    - Hendren and Fillbrandt on the strategic plan as part of the policy review committee.
  - Motion needs to be made to establish an ad hoc policy and procedural manual review/creation committee - and this should include someone who is not currently on the board but has history with MLA.
  - Motion to create an ad hoc committee to review the policy manual for consistency and accuracy vis a vis the bylaws and develop a procedures manual to align with those two foundational documents, including a third member from general membership (as yet to be determined), made by Harsin and seconded by Sundstrom, all were in favor and the motion was approved.
- Website Navigation Update (Wurl)
An MLA Web Page checklist has been created and includes some basic things that need to be done on at least a yearly list.

- Subunits: will for sure be updating the leadership roster after elections.
- This checklist can/should be built into the procedure manual.

All pages need to be checked regularly - but some need to be done less frequently because they are more static. Wurl created a detailed spreadsheet of all the pages and who will be responsible for reviewing and updating.

- Events tab: need to breakdown between conference chair, past/future events.
- News tab: things get blurry between what is news and what is an event. The communications committee chair should be in charge of this.

Next steps: Wurl is going to go through the venn diagram places where there is overlap.

- Does the proposal to make subunits responsible for their own pages make sense? Yes.
- Will put this checklist under forms/logos page and the subunits/committees documents area.

- Policy Review: Scholarships (Hendren)
  - No changes recommended at this time.
  - Motion to approve review of policy as written made by Clark, seconded by Sundstrom, all in favor and motion passed.

- Policy Review: Relations with Other Organizations (Hendren)
  - Language changed:
    - Under American Library Association number 2. “Term of four years” to “term of three years”
    - Changes made to job descriptions earlier this year, and those changes are now reflected in the policy under the following numbers:
      - 2. a. Changed from “The member at large” to “The Minnesota Library Foundation.”
      - 3. A.-d. included St. Catherine University, MILE, MN Library foundation, and the State Library Services Advisory Council; however the Council is no longer in existence, so updated to just “a. Minnesota Library Association Institute for Leadership Excellence (MILE), and b. MLIS and related educational institutions in MN and surrounding states.”
    - Under number 4, spelled out CRPLSA title, and only had a title and no acronym for MYRA, so made spelling and acronyms consistent.
    - Note to update the Member at large policy because currently the Foundation is listed there.
  - Motion to accept these changes made by Wurl, seconded by Clark, all were in favor and motion approved.

Other:

- Items from the Floor
Did send letter to state library services about the State Librarian role, response received fairly quickly, basically said:

- ‘Thank you this is a very important role and we'll look at how we can get you involved.”
- Announcement letter emailed out and there was lots of response from folks who are thrilled about the merger with ITEM. Still 6 months before it actually happens, but excitement!

- Reminders: let Hendren know if you have things you want to add to the agenda in August.

Meeting adjourned at 11:59 a.m.

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