Board Meeting Minutes
Friday, November 19, 2021 via Zoom
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Board Members: Stacey Hendren (President), Steve Harsin (President-Elect), Sarah Ethier (Treasurer), Sara Fillbrandt (Secretary), Dave Collins (Intellectual Freedom Chair), Sarah Hawkins (Legislative Chair), Jenny McBurney (ARLD Chair), Jody Wurl (PLD chair)

Excused: Hannah Buckland (ALA Chapter Councilor), Kirsten Clark (Past President), Katie Sundstrom (Member-At-Large)

Executive Director (Synergos): Joy DesMarais-Lanz

MLA Business:
  ● Welcome and Introductions

  ● Review and Adopt/Amend Agenda
    ○ The meeting was called to order by Hendren at 10:03 a.m.
    ○ One change to the agenda, policy review will be postponed until a later meeting. Agenda approved as amended.

  ● Approval of the August & September Board meeting minutes (Fillbrandt)
    ○ Minutes have been distributed.
    ○ Approved August minutes.
    ○ Approved September minutes with changes.
    ○ Vote was taken on approval of October Annual meeting minutes, all were in favor, and the motion was passed: October Annual meeting minutes accepted.

  ● Approval of the financials (Ethier)
    ○ September & October 2021 financials included in the board packet.
      ■ Motion made by Harsin to approve financial report, seconded by Hendren, all were in favor and the motion was approved.
    ○ Policy Review: MLA Reserve Policy and Review of Reserves against policy
      ■ Motion made to add approved date on this policy to today’s date.
    ○ Review proposed 2022 Budget
      ■ Met with incoming Treasurer: Karen Pundsack
      ■ Plan to vote on final budget during December meeting
        ● Have a couple of specific expenses in regards to ITEM merger, so our intent right now is to have the ITEM expenses and the merger of their financials to go into the 2022 budget.

  ● Synergos/Executive Director Update (DesMarais-Lanz)
    ○ Will be having some staff changes. Brett the finance manager is resigning, and have hired two additional accountants who will start in January.
Tammy will be leaving staff at the end of the calendar year. Going to restructure how Synergos manages MLA, will have either Jennifer or Greg to support committees and day-to-day point person.

As everyone is going out on PTO and holidays, if you have things that you have queued up for January through March, submit those things now - these will be good training opportunities for Greg.

Joy will be working on 2022 appointments/meetings with Steve for next year.

If you’re emailing individual staff, please copy the office office@mnlibraryassociation.org on all communications - Synergos doesn’t want anything to get missed.

If you have questions about anything, just ask!

**Strategic 90-day Plan (Hendren)**
- Review Q3 accomplishments and Q4 goals
  - Many things are still in progress. Selected a few things that we want to keep doing but that we don’t have the capacity to finish before the end of the year or that we want to keep doing into 2022 are shaded in purple.

**Engage and Educate Members:**

- **ARLD Update (McBurney)**
  - “Unpacking White Supremacy” series is underway for the second time. Doing each session 1 month apart this time around.
  - Will be welcoming new board members at the December meeting so they can observe how things work. These new board members will begin on January 1st in alignment with the new bylaw amendment that passed at the Division meeting in October. ARLD’s year is now aligned with MLA’s overall calendar.
  - Date for ARLD Day 2022 is pending, usually the last Friday in April, however ITEM will also be having their conference April 29-30th in-person.
    - McBurney to talk to the ARLD board about possibly changing the date, and will email Joy, Hendren, Harsin, and Wurl when a date is confirmed.

- **PLD Update (Wurl)**
  - Got no nominees for new board members when they sent out the first call. Board meets on Tuesday and will be strategizing about what happens if no one steps up.
  - PLD events: want to bring back PLD Day in May - will make it virtual to be in alignment with ARLD, but don’t have much more to share on that.
  - PLD Day will not take place during MILE, May 10th-13th.

- **2021 Conference update (Hendren)**
  - Conference committee met and discussed what went well and opportunities for the future of virtual annual conferences.
  - We don’t have as many folks who have done an in-person conference, and Steve is working to fill out the next committee with folks who have institutional knowledge of in-person conferences.
Silent Auction made $1300-ish dollars for the Foundation. Yay! We did have people who just donated to the Foundation and a few others added donations when they checked out/purchased their auction wins.

Post-conference registration access to recordings for 6 months (5 months from today). Because we have access to recordings and Pheedloop, we can add post-registration access to these recordings (pay us for access).

- Do we want to do this? Allow just members? Non-members? How much do we charge?
- Allow members to register for $100 and have access to all the recordings - suggested by conference committee.

Discussion:
- It would be a lot of work to pick and choose webinars. So we’re not going down that route.
- Can promote some of the awesome sessions and highlight things that happened to incentivize access purchase.
- Want to keep it to members only. As Hendren learns and reads more, we look at the value for members-only, so we want to keep that value for MLA members.
- Can we incentivize membership? Maybe first-time members get a discount on recordings if they join now?
- In a couple months, give the last 3 months for $50?

Motion made to allow members to register for $100 and have access to all the recordings (made by Hendren).
- Motion passed with 1 abstaining.
- Do we allow 1st time members a 25% discount to access these recordings? Hendren to talk to the membership committee about possibly doing this in the future.

Intellectual Freedom Committee Report (Eidem for Collins)
- School surveillance has been increasing which is worrisome. The committee has been monitoring what’s going on nationally and the impacts it’s been having in Minnesota.
- A book by a MN author is on a list of 850 books in Texas that are being considered for banning. This has spurred a discussion that what’s going on elsewhere in the nation has impacts on people and authors in our state.
- What’s going on in Tennessee regarding “Vile Content”:
  https://www.chattanoogan.com/2021/10/13/436546/Vile-Content-In-The-Libraries-At-The.aspx

Develop Leaders
- MILE Update (Hendren)
  - May 10th - 13th, 2022 & Applications for attendees are going up soon.
  - MILE submitted a budget request to the Board, talking about the postponement of MILE, their goals, and creating a sustainable future. Have asked MLA to contribute $5,000 to MILE instead of $2,000. This would reduce the out-of-pocket expense for attendees from $570 to $330.
So in review of our 2022 draft budget, the Executive Board did tentatively plan for the $5k for MILE contribution.

Visioning event planned for January 2022.

Feedback and discussion:
- Would the $330 be for a double or single-occupancy room? Hendren to pose this question to MILE leaders.
- This is a great example of an incentive for MLA membership (looping back to previous conversation).

Motion to approve the request for $5,000 from MILE planning committee to support MILE from Hendren, seconded by Harsin, all were in favor and the motion carried.

Activate Library Advocacy:
- Legislative Committee Update (Hawkins)
  - Every Library sent out a link to a "petition" about not burning books, but it wasn’t in response to any actual event in Minnesota. So we need to focus on educating librarians and leaders and being prepared for what might come in the future.
  - 2022 legislative priorities discussion (Lynch):
    - Looking for the Board to adopt these priorities for the 2022 year in concept with the understanding that things change. The budget forecast will affect things.
    - Hendren made a motion to adopt these priorities in concept, Harsin seconded, all were in favor with one abstention (Hannah Buckland), and the motion passed.
    - Board thanks Liz Lynch, Sarah Hawkins, and Hannah Buckland for all their work with getting these priorities ready. It’s wonderful to know we have a seat in the legislative arena and the work this group has done is highly appreciated.
  - 2022 MN Leg. Steering Committee Proposal (Hawkins):
    - MN library partners are currently MLA, CRSPLA, MCMT, and ITEM, and these four organizations come together and hire Capitol Hill Associates as our lobbyist.
    - Also have the legislative committee that is an MLA committee that includes any active member of MLA or ITEM that shows up at a meeting which has been difficult in terms of making decisions. So the MN Library partners have come up with an initial proposal to create a standing legislative committee structure.

Discussion
- How would ARLD liaison position work? It is currently a 2-year term. Would make sense to have that 2-year term align with the biennium.
- What would the expectation be for the liaisons? How many meetings are there, and what role would they play? Would be similar to time-commitment currently. Time would be more impactful: a 1-hour monthly legislative meeting - this proposal would be firming up the existing expectations.
Helps align the importance of the work that MLA does. This helps right-size the effort that we’re putting into this work.

It clarifies who should be the point of contact for different partners.

- Will work towards this in the next year. Will vote on it at a later date; still need to figure out when this would go into effect based on future conversations.

**Strengthening our Organization:**

- **Membership Committee Report (Hendren)**
  
  - Sundstrom resigned her position because she no longer lives in MN.
  
  - Going to leave the position vacant for the next month and a half until the newly elected chair, Emily, starts in January.
  
  - Will look at the bylaws and clarify how to handle this particular situation next year using the guidelines that currently stand.

- **ITEM Update (Hendren)**
  
  - Reviewed updated contract with Synergos.
  
  - Synergos staff has reviewed an RFP from ITEM (19 - Synergos MLA Exhibit D 2021 in board packet on the Drive) regarding management needs. Some aspects are currently covered in our current contract but others need to be looked at more closely before we sign a new contract with Synergos.

- **Anti-Racism Discussion (Eidem for Collins)**
  
  - Discussion about “Not Reaching Pouches” that are being distributed by the Minnesota Department of Safety - what happens if Libraries are asked to distribute these? What will our response be? Things to think about.
  
  
  - Think about positive police presence and negative police presence. What else can we do for our communities to support them and keep them safe?

**Other:**

- **Items from the Floor:**
  
  - Our lawyer, Mary-Ellen changed firms, but she is still working on the ITEM merger documents.
  
  - Concern brought up at last meeting about going above 5 hours, she has assured Hendren if it’s going above 5 hours she will have a frank discussion about this

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

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

November Board Packet materials:

2021-11-19 Board Meeting - Google Drive