Board Meeting Minutes
Friday, March 18, 2022 via Zoom
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Board Members: Steve Harsin (President), Stacey Hendren (Past President), Julia Carlis (President-Elect), Karen Pundsack (Treasurer), Sara Fillbrandt (Secretary), Kate Eidem (Intellectual Freedom), Sarah Hawkins for Liz Lynch (Legislative), Kat Nelsen (ARLD), Kristin Schneider (PLD)

Excused: Hannah Buckland (ALA), Ashley Krohn (ITEM), Marie Hydukovich (ITEM), Emilie Hanson (Member at Large)

Executive Director (Synergos): Joy DesMarais-Lanz

MLA Business:
- Welcome and Introductions (Harsin)
  - Review and Adopt/Amend Agenda
    - The meeting was called to order by Harsin at 10:03 a.m.
    - Agenda approved with the removal of one item.
  - Approval of the February Board meeting minutes (Fillbrandt)
    - Minutes have not been distributed. Fillbrandt moves to postpone approving these until the April meeting, Hendren seconded, all were in favor and the motion was approved.
  - Approval of the financials (Pundsack)
    - February 2022 financials included in the board packet.
      - Insights about membership, sponsorship and conferences were shared. Pundsack reminded the board that we can ask for sponsorships from CRPSLA and other vendors, but if we don’t ask, we won’t know if folks are willing to contribute/sponsor.
      - Motion made by Pundsack to approve financial report, seconded by Schneider, all were in favor and the motion was approved.
- Membership Committee Report (Pundack/Hanson)
  - Membership renewals have been higher than normal for January and February.
  - Discussion about who should be taking the lead on membership committee reports between Carlis and Harsin.
- Synergos/Executive Director Update (DesMarais-Lanz)
  - Staff will be out the 20th through the 22nd on a retreat.
  - Been working with ITEM, PLD, and ARLD on their events. Things are moving along swimmingly. Please make sure you reach out to the office account with questions. Consider what staffing help you’ll need regardless of the conference being virtual or in-person.
○ Have some mechanics need to do behind the scenes in May/June to merge databases.
○ Have hired meeting planner, ITEM needs more support for their event than original thought. Joy will keep the board apprised as to financial things regarding this conference.
○ Friendly reminder that when you’re sharing links out of the Google Drive they need to be shared only with people who SHOULD have access, we discovered that our main drive was open to the public for an undetermined amount of time which is not okay given some of the information that we store there.
  ■ Joy to work with Sarah and Liz re: the legislative folder and the open accessibility to all MLA members.
○ For communication purposes, use the office@mnlibraryassociation.org email address, and cc any individuals who need to take particular attention.

Engage and Educate Members:
● 2022 Conference update (Boese)
  ○ Excited to have an in-person conference this year: October 27-28th.
  ○ One of the things that is still up in the air is relying on platforms for providing the schedule: Sched vs. Pheedloop. The big difference is the cost, and want to keep options open because COVID and ITEM merger.
  ○ Have a great committee, everything is filled with people that are either experienced or excited! Have semi-secured Justice Alan Page for the Keynote speaker which will be an interesting direction for us.
  ○ Getting things out for proposal submissions, sponsorships, save-the-dates, etc.
  ○ Interesting place to be in terms of coming out of 2 years of virtual conferences, lots of good discussion about local arrangements, accessibility, gamification, etc.
  ○ Silent Auction is going to happen, might be partially online depending on costs.
  ○ Considering making a virtual conference part of the regular rotation, hybrid conferences are harder to put on (twice the work and twice the cost) but conversations about making conferences more accessible in future years ARE happening.
    ■ Can add this to the strategic discussion this afternoon. If we do add virtual to the rotation, there will need some major work done to document procedure so that knowledge doesn’t get lost.
    ■ In the past, we have recorded keynotes and featured speakers, could possibly do that this year, but again, it’s an added expense, we will discuss in the planning committee - would need to put in the A/V and speaker contracts.
  ○ Have a new sponsor this year, Overdrive, and also have a couple new sponsors in the works.

● Intellectual Freedom Committee Report (Eidem)
  ○ There was a letter in the Star Tribune about banning books, created a statement piece to respond to this. This statement will be put on the MLA website for membership to read in the next couple weeks.
  ○ There’s a panel about collection development, ban/challenge requests, etc. that will be held March 29th.
There was a conversation about book challenges at the last State Library Services meeting. There are some coordinated efforts going on around the state and libraries should be aware of.

- It’s good to remember that not all requests are hateful, some are just invested patrons that have thoughts about how certain books should be shelved.
- Libraries Serving Youth Meet-up on Saturday, May 7th, virtual get-together is being put on by State Library Services.
- ALA had a great townhall in March that was recorded: “Facing the Challenge: Intellectual Freedom in Libraries.”

**PLD Update (Schnieder)**
- Going to have Sara Zettervall do a Keynote update on Whole Person Librarianship.
- Going to have lightning rounds and have discussions.
- Will have several other featured speakers who will talk about self-care and stressful times.
- Thanks to Pundsack for the reminder that CRPSLA will sponsor - this event will be free for MLA members because of the generosity of sponsors.
- There will be a fee for non-members, fee of $50 for non-members

**ARLD Update (Nelsen)**
- ARLD Day planning is underway. Waiting to get registration form up and running.
- ARLD Day will take place May 6th, from 8:30am-3pm, Keynote will be Derrick Jefferson,
- $30 for non-members, $15 for members, and free for Indigenous/Native attendees.
- Going to need to find some interim people to fill some roles on the board, need a secretary, member-at-large, and communications person.

**Activate Library Advocacy:**

**Legislative Committee Update (Hawkins)**
- Legislative Week was February 28-March 4.
- In regional library basic system support arena, Senator Johnson, who is the chief author of Senate file 1131, mentioned to Liz Lynch that he could tell it was library legislative week because he received calls from senators around the state saying that they supported our bill.
- Senate file 1131 has all 5 author seats filled. Yay!
- Have 19 authors on Senate file 11710; House allows for 35 authors, you can ask your rep to co-sign, if your rep already has, thank them!
- At the Association of Minnesota Counties legislative conference earlier this month, Commissioner Kahly from Clay County gave a presentation explaining the bill, and we still have the support of the counties.
- On the Bonding front: jacketing bills has been very slow. Have been waiting for a bill to be jacketed since February. Senate bill 4034/House bill 4421 has finally been introduced and are now asking folks to sign on to this on both sides.
- On the School Library and Media definition topic, House 3401 creates this definition and has been testified on by Kunesh and Feist.
  - Spent time working with school board and administrators, and they didn’t like the standalone language introduced in 2021, but came together in support of the department language. So we have asked Reps Feist and Kunesh to request that their individual bills be heard and that all
amendments be deleted, so that their language can be modified to match the department language.

- Credit to Erin Straszewski for working on figuring out how to talk to representatives about what they care about and how libraries relate/help with that.
- Thank you to everyone who helped make Library Legislative day/week a success.

**Develop Leaders**
- **MILE Update (Hendren)**
  - Conversations with Olivia, Trish, and Tom are excited to be inviting a cohort of 27 to Sugar Lake Lodge, May 10-13th, 2022.
  - They are finalizing contracts with speakers, and are excited about the team, cohort, and the activities that are planned.
  - Strategic Planning for MILE will be moving forward in the next few months.

**Strengthening our Organization:**
- **Anti-Racism Minute (Harsin for Hanson)**
  - Article: “White Supremacy Culture - Still Here” by Okun, T. (2021). A companion website for this article: [https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/](https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/)
  - Three questions for consideration:
    - Which of these characteristics are evident in your library/MLA, Consider procedures and policies.
    - How do they negatively impact BIPOC?
    - What can you, your colleagues (we - the MLA board!) do to shift the belief(s) and behavior(s) to ones that support racial justice?
  - Will discuss this again in April because there is a lot to unpack and dive into here.

- **ITEM Merger Status (Hendren)**
  - Goal was to have everything signed by December 31st. Finally got all the legal paperwork signed, the transfer and takeover documents are signed, and Joy is now working on getting them filed with the state so we are legally one entity.
  - Finalized contract with Synergos and met with ITEM folks to discuss needs for their conference. Financial pieces have now been all squared away.
  - Harsin and Carlis will attend the ITEM conference to talk about what it means to be an MLA member, and then listen to what they need and want.
  - Synergos is now working on all three conferences, and transition work will take place in May/June. Harsin is working on an e-blast to let membership know that this is all official.
  - Also working on making sure that e-blasts go to ITEM members.
  - A HUGE thank you to Joy and Synergos for all their work on this transition, ITEM leaders are feeling so much more confident about all this.
  - ITEM conferences have a bank of authors that school libraries can talk to about visiting classes, doing readings, adding books to collections, and this will also enhance MLA’s conference and be welcomed by many other MLA groups.
- We will also promote to MLA members the ITEM conference and encourage folks to attend that.

**Board Meeting times (Carlis)**
- Julia created a survey to assess possible new days/times that work for everyone (including Synergos and ITEM).
- Carlis moved that we move our monthly meetings to the third Monday of the month at 4pm, starting in April. Pundsack seconded the motion.
- Discussion:
  - Eidem won’t be able to make that time, but her co-chair may be able to make it.
  - Fillbrandt will need some help with notes for the first 15 minutes of the meeting.
  - Joy will update the Zoom meetings and so everyone will get a slew of new invites next week.
- All were in favor, motion passed. New meeting time will be 4pm CT on the third Monday of the month, beginning in April 2022.

**Strategic Plan (Harsin)**
- Meeting this afternoon with the executive committee. Will be a continuation of discussions we started in February.
- Information gathering is going to be critical moving forward. We want to really listen and make sure we’re moving forward as a member-centric organization.
- Will continue to work on things from the 2021 strategic plan that are still hanging out there.

**Other:**
- Items from the Floor:
  - MLA Google Drive access concerns: discussion of private information, possible leak of vital information, need to notify folks affected. Loop in McBurney for additional data privacy discussions.
- Reminders: let Harsin know if you have things you want to add to the agenda in April.

**Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.**

**March Board Packet materials:**
2022-03-18 Board Meeting - Google Drive