Minnesota Library Association
Board Meeting
Friday, November 20, 2020
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

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

MLA Business
Welcome and Introductions – Bross
The meeting was called to order by Bross at 10:06 a.m.

Review and Adopt/Amend Agenda – Bross
Hendren made a motion to adopt the agenda; Sundstrom seconded.
All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Approval of the September 2020 Board Meeting Minutes and October Annual Meeting Minutes – Motschke
Hendren noted an error on page 5 of the MLA Annual Meeting Minutes. – Bross thanked the Board

Carlis made motion to accept the September Board Meeting Minutes, and the October Annual Meeting Minutes with the correction; Collins seconded.
All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Approval of the Financials – Ethier
October 2020 Financial Report for month ending September 30, 2020
1. Total Assets: $172,179.72
2. Monthly Revenue: $38,258.14
3. Total Revenue YTD: $127,871.13
4. Total Cost of Sales YTD: $1600.00
5. Monthly Expenses for September: $13,057.04
6. Total Expenses YTD: $123,240.86
7. Showing YTD Net Income/(Loss): $3,030.27

November 2020 Financial Report
October 2020 financials included in the meeting packet.
1. Total Assets: $160,370.53
2. Total Revenue YTD: $130,089.30
3. Total Cost of Sales YTD: $4325.00
4. Monthly Expenses for October: $14,920.36
5. Total Expenses YTD: $145,661.22

There were many membership renewals in September, bringing actual membership dues to $44,763 compared to $45,833.30 projected for October. Ethier asked the Board to encourage others to renew their memberships yet in 2020.

Hendren made a motion to approve the financial reports; Clark seconded.
All were in favor and the motion was approved.
2021 Draft Budget – Ethier

Executive committee met and pulled together a draft budget. Ethier then met with each division individually to review their budgets.

The Board reviewed the 2021 draft budget. Overall the budget was revised to be more realistic rather than overly ambitious. Membership dues revenue was lowered to align with past years’ actuals. Annual conference revenues were lowered to anticipate a virtual or hybrid format; plans are still being determined.

A new line was created for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to show our priority for pursuing work in 2021. Specific planning will be done to develop a plan for those funds.

A new line was also created for website and database management costs, which were previously bundled in with the professional services line.

Expected expenses were updated throughout. Costs associated with travel and conferences were left in as placeholders for future years when these are possible again. We don’t want to forget to add them back in, and there is no harm in coming in under budget in these areas.

Additional updates will be necessary depending on our plans for the 2021 Annual Conference, including the final decision on virtual/in-person, any fees we are required to pay to change venue, and participant registration fees.

Will approve the actual budget at the December Board Meeting.

Ethier informed the Board that Synergos recommended we consolidate our banks from two to one, and they use Chase Bank.

Sundstrom made a motion to approve moving our banks from Wells Fargo and Bremer to Chase Bank, Ethier seconded.

Collins asked if there was we could consider using a local bank. Bross explained that Chase Bank is opening local branches so there are some promotional offerings, and will make it easier to us to pay our bills. Synergos has a relationship with Chase Bank, and they make it easy to add/remove Board members from accounts when the Board members change each year.

All were in favor and the motion was approved.

Motschke will work with Synergos to set up the new account. Only the Secretary or current President can open a bank account. The Treasurer and President will be set up as authorized agents on the account so things are set up for 2021.

Reserve Policy Check In – Ethier

MLA has tapped into reserves this year, more realistic budgeting should help in future years.

The policy states that we should have 9 months of operating reserves. Hendren asked how many months we have at this point? Ethier stated that our average monthly expenses are $15,000, which puts our current amount in line with the policy.

Ethier reviewed some proposed changes to the policy and asked the Board for their comments or recommended changes. In the section Checking, Savings, and Investment Accounts the President Elect and Past President were removed from the list of signatories and replaced by the MLA Executive Director; mention of needing two signatures for checks over $5000 was also removed. A statement about preference for online bill payment was added.

Sundstrom noted a grammatical error in the Operating Funds/Reserves Section.
In the section Access of the Strategic Reserve Ethier suggested updating item three to a monthly status update to reflect current practice.

Hendren made a motion to approve changes to the MLA Reserve Policy based on recommendations from Ethier and Sundstrom; Clark seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

**MHQ/Executive Director Update – Bjerkness**
Michelle Bjerkness is our new executive director with MHQ.

MLA 990 Tax forms are complete, submitted, and received by IRS. Hard copy files are on file at MHQ.

Transition planning meetings are scheduled after Thanksgiving. MHQ has completed a physical inventory of materials, packaged them, and they’re ready to be received by Synergos.

Erica Lee is now working on the MLA Membership component of our work. Renewal campaign was sent out to lapsed members. This renewal campaign was approved by electronic vote of the Board on November 2, 2020.

**MLA BOARD MOTION:**
To implement a new membership promotion for lapsed members with the following criteria.

The Minnesota Library Board requests Management HQ contact former MLA members who have not renewed their membership in the past 3 years or longer to offer them a renewing member special.

Renewing Member Special:
Any person who has not been a member of the MLA in the past 3 years or more that renews their membership to MLA before December 31, 2020, will get access to the 2020 MLA virtual conference recordings through December 31, 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timestamp</th>
<th>For the record, please indicate your vote for this MLA Board Motion:</th>
<th>Comments to be considered regarding your vote:</th>
<th>Required - Include your first and last name to verify your vote:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020/10/28 4:30:59 PM CST</td>
<td>Yes, I approve of the Motion as stated</td>
<td></td>
<td>Patti Bross</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020/10/28 9:52:22 PM CST</td>
<td>Yes, I approve of the Motion as stated</td>
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<td>David Collins</td>
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<td>2020/10/29 6:07:51 AM CST</td>
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<td>Hannah Buckland</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020/10/29 7:48:17 AM CST</td>
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<td>Sarah Ethier</td>
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<td>2020/10/29 9:08:07 AM CST</td>
<td>Yes, I approve of the Motion as stated</td>
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<td>Stacey Hendren</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020/10/29 9:43:22 AM CST</td>
<td>Yes, I approve of the Motion as stated</td>
<td></td>
<td>Julia Carlis</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020/10/29 12:40:00 PM CST</td>
<td>Yes, I approve of the Motion as stated</td>
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<td>Katie Sundstrom</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020/10/29 1:09:28 PM CST</td>
<td>Yes, I approve of the Motion as stated</td>
<td>I agree with Stacey’s recommendation via email</td>
<td>Jami Trenam</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to extend access through 1/31/21 due to the delay</td>
<td>in posting if possible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020/10/29 3:13:27 PM CST</td>
<td>Yes, I approve of the Motion as stated</td>
<td>As discussed via email, perhaps the specific</td>
<td>Lisa Motschke</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>dates could be removed. I approve in concept</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>regardless.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020/10/30 8:26:23 AM CST</td>
<td>Yes, I approve of the Motion as stated</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kirsten Clark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020/11/03 1:26:20 PM CST</td>
<td>Yes, I approve of the Motion as stated</td>
<td></td>
<td>Amy Mars</td>
</tr>
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</table>

MHQ will also deactivated some old news articles on the new website. They surfaced in the upgrade and were showing prominently.
PLD election was delayed because of issues with YM (Your Membership). Bot attacks were a component, and it took the vendor 2.5 weeks to fully recover. Election closes at Noon on Monday, November 23.

Mars asked about the process for submitting and posting subunit meeting agendas and notes. Bross encouraged Mars to continue sending to MHQ for now, and we’ll reassess with the new management company in 2021.

**Engage and Educate Members**

**2020 Conference Evaluations – Bross**

General feedback was good, but we can always improve. 66 attendees, and 6 exhibitors responded to the evaluation. There is good information for us to use going forward.

Hendren reported that the Conference Committee feedback was generally positive, and they have lots of ideas for next year. MHQ hosted an event about offering virtual events; there is good information to consider.

**2021 Conference Venue and Dates – Hendren**

We are reviewing option for 2021 with MHQ. There are three options: in-person, hybrid, or full virtual. Hendren asked for input on the three options.

There are considerations with any of these options. We have made some payments to venue and hotel already. If we cancel, we owe a significant amount to the hotel and the venue. MHQ is working with the venue and hotel to see what options are possible.

Bross noted that the hybrid model is the most expensive option, and almost cost prohibitive. Bjerkness noted that is correct if there are no contracts in place, but in this situation, we may have to pay cancellation fees and it could be more cost effective this year.

There are concerns about the state of the pandemic in October, libraries not having budgets to use for professional development, and reluctance to travel.

Carls noted that hybrid is hard for the people not in the room, and asked if hybrid would be as valuable as an experience. Mars echoed the challenges of a hybrid mode from her experiences teaching hybrid classes. AV can be really challenging for people with sensory needs.

Sundstrom asked if we could push the contracts out two years. Hendren said MHQ is exploring that option. Bjerkness expressed that venues and hotels are less receptive to negotiating contracts in the second half of 2021. Bross noted that another tactic is to negotiate the cancellation fees.

There are other ways for us to think creatively. PLA and ALA produce several virtual sessions that are available at an alternate rate for those who cannot attend the conference in person. That’s something that can be done in the future to make the conference more accessible and affordable.

If we commit to a virtual event in 2021 and the pandemic is under control in October, we could sponsor some local in-person events around the state to create the in-person connection.

Another idea is to intentionally do in-person conferences every other year or every third year. This would help with MLA costs in general.

Preference from the Board is to pursue a virtual option in 2021 and cancel any current contracts so as not to restrict options in 2023.

Hendren will confer with the Conference Planning Committee. No vote is needed now, but will email and ask for a vote via email if needed.
**Strengthening our Organization**

**Strategic 90-Day Plan – Bross**

We are still working on many of the topics from the plan including the final improvements to the new website.

More conversations have occurred with ITEM and interest is high. Planning a virtual meet and greet between our two organizations to build the relationships. Deciding on how to combine the dues structures will be a key decision. There are several options including a multi-year transition. The earliest merger would be 2023. Once there is a firm confirmation from ITEM, we will work with Synergos on the logistics and legal implications.

There has been a change in Intellectual Freedom Chair position for 2021, Richmond Kinney has stepped down. This impacts the Board’s goal to support Anti-Racism. Since we are between elections, the Board has the authority to appoint a chair until the next election by membership. Hendren made a motion to appoint Collins as the 2021 Intellectual Freedom Chair, Bross seconded.

Hendren also noted that the Continuing Education Committee is lacking leadership. When the group is ready, the Board can appoint a chair.

We are going into our last year of our current strategic plan. We will work with Synergos on ideas about extending our current plan.

**Anti-Racism Discussion – Collins**

“Me and White Supremacy” by Layala Saad, 2020

The idea for this book started off as an Instagram post. People signed up to receive posts, and it evolved into a workbook of reflections.

Collins picked out one prompt from page 66 of the book. Read the prompt, and spend five minutes of personal writing or reflection: “Think back across your life, from childhood to where you are in your life now. In what ways have you consciously or subconsciously believed that you are better than BIPOC?”

Collins asked the Board to send ideas for future prompts, and welcomed volunteers to facilitate the activity in the meeting.

**Activate Library Advocacy**

**Legislative Update – Hawkins**

MN Legislature makeup will be similar or the same. Republican gains in the House. Republicans will control the Senate with a one vote majority.

MDE Government Relations Team meeting later today and they will present the 2021 Legislative Priorities.

**Other**

**Working Document Access – MLA Document Storage – Bross**

Looking at a Google platform. We’ll report back in December on the progress. We have money set aside to investigate.

Synergos uses SharePoint, but attempting to use that may pose challenges for Board members unfamiliar with the platform. Mars stated that Google has a lower barrier to entry, and many folks are familiar with it. Google email may also facilitate communication for the subunits.

**Minnesota Library Foundation – Bross, Hendren**

The Minnesota Library Foundation is requesting assistance with their website. They are writing up their needs for website hosting, and that will be shared with Synergos so we can understand the costs.

They will be looking at options for an online auction for next year especially if we have a virtual conference.
Sundstrom asked how MN Lib Foundation works with us in general. Hendren explained that they are a 501.3c, so donations to them are tax deductible. They support the MILE program and have funded MN Writes MN Reads.

**Project Ready – Carlis**

Carlis shared that several folks from MLA, State Library Services, and ITEM have coordinated a program through Project Ready. They will co-facilitate some sessions and will work through their curriculum. It is designed for people who work with youth, but others may find value. More information will be posted in the Round Up.

**Meeting adjourned at 11:47 a.m.; be well.**

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**Chat transcript**

**10:04 AM**  From Amy Mars: Good morning!
No worries!

**11:27 AM**  From Stacey Hendren:  Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor, Layla Saad

**11:28 AM**  From Dave Collins (he/him):  From “Me and White Supremacy” by Layla Saad, 2020
Day 5, p.66 journaling prompt:
“Think back across your life, from childhood to where you are in your life now. In what ways have you consciously or subconsciously believed that you are better than BIPOC?”

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**November Board Packet materials:**

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NLsyPRxYlzJ4vZMBFVDZcMdc7fb4yCcs