

Minnesota Library Association

Board Meeting Minutes

Friday, November 21

10:00AM – 12:00 PM

MELSA

1619 Dayton Avenue, Suite 320

St. Paul, MN 55104-6276

Present: In person: Jayne Blodgett, Robin Ewing, Jennifer Hootman, Carla Lydon, Kristen Mastel, Michele McGraw, Carla Powers, Maggie Snow, Amy Springer, Amy Wilde, Claire Wilson

By phone: Jim Weikum

Absent: None

CALL TO ORDER: McGraw called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

- **Welcome and Introductions**

Robin Ewing was introduced as the new Interim ALA Chapter Councilor, replacing Michael Scott.

- **Approval of consent agenda**

- Agenda
- Minutes of October 17 meeting
- Reports

Motion by Snow, seconded by Hootman, to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Approval of financials**

Hootman presented the September financial report. Total assets in September were \$238,996. Year-to-date revenue was \$194,863, and costs of sales were \$22,181.

August's expenses totaled \$13,794, resulting in a year-to-date net loss of \$44,194. The 2014 annual budget projects net loss of \$44,692 at year end.

Wilson reported that the net gain from conference was \$56,305. The goal was \$23,000. Part of the reason the gain was higher than anticipated was due to a significant reduction from the venue after the event, due to problems and complaints. McGraw offered kudos to MHQ staff who pursued the reduction.

Blodgett mentioned that ARLD had to pre-pay its facility rental fees for the 2015 ARLD Day in 2014. This is a change from previous years and makes the budget look off.

Motion by Hootman, seconded by Mastel, to approve the financials as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Educating & activating a library support network**

- Legislative platform: Weikum reported that additional language from ITEM and the multitypes has now been received, and the conversation on getting language correct will continue. Any language changes will not affect the substance of the platform; it centers on added content and statistics. Now that the election is over, the legislative committee wants to get the platform finalized as soon as possible. McGraw welcomes input from board.

- Lobbyist contract/Meeting with ITEM, CRPSLA and Multitypes: On October 30 the steering committee met in Roseville. Weikum reported lots of good conversation. The current contract went into effect September 1, 2014 and lasts until August 30, 2016. Cost sharing has been agreed upon, and some language was cleaned up and updated to reflect current practice. Also at the meeting there was discussion about planning for the upcoming Legislative Day and difficulties due to construction at the State Capitol. This discussion will continue at the next Legislative Committee meeting. There was board discussion about the concept and process of putting the lobbyist contract out for bid at the end of the current agreement. McGraw noted that as the fiscal agent for the contract, the MLA board could put it out for bid on behalf of the group. The cost of the lobbyist contract has increased each year and is expensive to maintain. While the lobbyist does a good job, there is a need to perform due diligence. Weikum is gathering metrics for evaluating lobbyist, and ALA may have information that would help as well. This year ITEM doubled its contribution to the contract. Weikum expects this level of support to continue but not to increase in the foreseeable future.
- Project updates
 - Engage software on website. There was an explanation for Ewing's benefit about the history of this agenda item. Wilson noted that ALA asked for information including names of site administrators, but has not communicated back about next steps.
- **Strengthening our organization**
 - 2015 budget planning: Wilson reviewed the summary budget, which was discussed last week by the executive committee. Wilson reported that efforts are underway to achieve a balanced budget, but at this point there is still a \$14,000 deficit. She noted that the budget anticipates a \$4,000 increase in membership dues. This is aggressive but seems doable based on recent upward trends. More is budgeted for conference registrations in 2015 due to an expected increase in attendance for PLD Day and for the annual conference, which will take place in St. Paul. Other budget numbers remain basically the same, reflecting a conservative approach. Revenue for advocacy support is higher due to the increase in ITEM's contribution toward the lobbyist contract. On the expense side, the conference venue, food and beverage have increased, reflecting higher costs in St. Paul. The contract with Capitol Hill Associates increased somewhat; the contract with MHQ remained flat. Meeting expenses were increased due to MILE taking place next year. Bank fees were increased to \$8000 to cover more credit card processing online. Wilson reported discussion among executive committee members about breaking out \$200 subunit budgets, and keeping only larger subunit expenses tracked separately to save staff and board time in reviewing them. The Intellectual Freedom Committee will continue to operate with \$300 of annual funding for awards and will ask for project money as needed for programs. Wilson will check into getting a separate account for restricted funds to ensure they are set aside for this purpose. She will clean up the notes and present a final budget for approval at the next meeting. There was discussion of how long to continue running the association budget in deficit. Ewing noted that a few years ago the account balances were high and the association continued to bring in money, so a decision was made to invest some of the excess funds back into the membership. The 2015 budget reflects less of a deficit in recognition that spending needs to move back into line with revenue. Currently there is \$141,000 in savings and \$94,000 in the checking account.

Mastel noted that the executive committee discussed conference program printing, which is a large expense each year. Alternatives to printed programs are increased use of the conference app and offering attendees the choice of not having a printed program. The board discussed the pros and cons of decreasing the size and/or number of printed programs during conference.

The final 2015 budget will be presented for approval at the December meeting.

- Changes at MHQ: Wilson is taking a new position at MHQ, and MLA will have a new executive director after the first of the year. Wilson said that MHQ has a full staff now, with another program person added to help provide support for membership and events. Wilson will be selecting and training the new MLA executive director herself and will be available to help during the transition. She hopes to have someone hired before the next meeting.
- 2015 planning with MHQ: A meeting will take place on Monday to discuss 2015, including the executive director transition and other matters. The meeting will include McGraw, Snow, Mastel, and incoming president elect Margaret Stone. The association's contract with MHQ expires in December 2015.

- **Engaging our members**

- Conference recap: McGraw reported that there was a wrap-up meeting last week. She reiterated that the facility was a big challenge, but feedback regarding sessions and content was overwhelmingly positive. Overall response rate to the conference survey was low; another survey may be sent out in the context of planning the 2015 conference. There was discussion about reducing the number of keynotes, which would reduce expenses and make it possible to schedule more breakout sessions. If keynotes are over lunch, organizers need a way of welcoming attendees at the beginning and wrapping at the end. Mastel is looking at encore sessions for some of the more popular workshops from conference. These would be webinars open to members at low/no cost. Mastel, Springer, Blodgett will work together to put together a pilot statement surrounding this.
- Conference venue selection for 2016: Options are Rochester on Oct. 11 and 12 or Duluth on September 28 through 30. Another group is tentatively looking at September 30 in Duluth. Decision to hold conference in Duluth and tentatively reserve three days, possibly dropping back to Wednesday-Thursday only.
- Project updates:
 - Volunteer job descriptions: Lydon sent drafts out last night for review and expects to have final descriptions put together for the December meeting.
 - Mid-career conference: Ewing shared plans for a small conference. Topics will be identified and not sought from attendees. There has been preliminary discussion of a pre-conference, but could potentially wait until 2016 to be opposite of MILE.

- **Developing and equipping our leaders**

- ALA Emerging Leader selection: Kimberly Trinh-Sy was chosen. There was discussion of how to bring the emerging leader in for reports to the board.
- ALA Chapter Councilor: Ewing registered for ALA Midwinter and has received Chapter Councilor materials.
- ALA resolution for Chris Olson: Ewing is gathering information on how to submit a memorial resolution for Chris Olson and will send it to the board for further review. ALA will send copies of the resolution to people if we provide names and addresses.

- December board meeting: Snow will do a new board member orientation next month. All new board members have received job descriptions. 2016 will be the 125th anniversary of MLA, and discussion of how to commemorate this is underway. Snow shared information about possible partnerships with other organizations that she is pursuing.
 - Project updates
 - Board job descriptions: These are finished and have been sent to Wilson for inclusion on website.
 - Mastel reported that she is working on a spreadsheet with important dates for board members to track. She will send a Google Doc link for board members to review it and make any edits in the next month so it can be posted.
- **Next steps for strategic plan:** Working session following adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Next meeting: Friday, December 19, 10 a.m. to noon at MELSA.