

Metropolitan Library Service Agency
Joint Trustee Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 18, 2021
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
12:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Trustee Members Present:

Anoka:	Robyn West	Ramsey:	Mary Jo McGuire
Carver:	Matt Udermann	Saint Paul:	Beth Burns
Dakota:	Laurie Halverson	Scott:	Barb Weckman Brekke
Hennepin:	Debbie Goettel	Washington:	Wayne Johnson

Advisory Board Members/representatives Present:

Anoka:	Colleen Haubner	Ramsey:	Karen Saltis
Carver:	Heidi Hoks	Saint Paul:	Catherine Penkert
Dakota:	Jennifer Reichert Simpson	Scott:	Jake Grussing
Hennepin:	Janet Mills	Washington:	Amy Stenftenagel

Staff Present: Sarah Hawkins, Kathleen James, Sally Lederer, Mona Scott, and Scott Vrieze

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair McGuire called the meeting to order at 12:01 pm.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda by Weckman Brekke. Second by Udermann.

Vote was taken using verbal/gestured indicators:

ACL – aye	HCL – aye	SCL – aye
CCL – aye	RCL – aye	WCL – aye
DCL – aye	SPL – aye	

Motion carried.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Meeting Minutes from the January 21, 2021 meeting
- B. Approval of Bills and Financial Statements

Motion to approve the consent agenda by Johnson. Second by West.
Discussion:

Udermann officially agreed to serve on the Personnel Committee. He then asked whether a column could be added to the check register to show what each item is for. Scott said she would look into adding that. He then asked about the Alliance Courier cost. Vrieze explained that MELSA did seek bids for its delivery service on a schedule, and that the delivery service handles materials going between all of the MELSA library systems. Udermann also noted that it might be less burdensome on staff to consolidate payments in cases where several checks were going to the same people; Vrieze explained that those involve performer contracts in which the same performer(s) are contracting separately with a number of library systems.

Vote was taken using verbal/gestured indicators:

ACL – aye	HCL – aye	SCL – aye
CCL – aye	RCL – aye	WCL – aye
DCL – aye	SPL – aye	

Motion carried.

V. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Request for Phase Funds Distribution (WCL)

The MELSA Advisory Board recommended at their March 12th meeting that the Washington County Library's request for \$42,884 in Phase fund be approved. On a motion by Udermann seconded by West, the MELSA Board of Trustees accepted the request for Phase funds. McGuire asked how long Phase funds could be held over; Scott said there was no time limit. Udermann suggested making disbursements on a schedule; Vrieze explained that in the past disbursements were made twice yearly, but this year MELSA had switched to quarterly to allow for more flexibility.

Vote was taken using verbal/gestured indicators:

ACL – aye	HCL – aye	SCL – aye
CCL – aye	RCL – aye	WCL – aye
DCL – aye	SPL – aye	

Motion carried.

B. Fund Balance Assignments

The Finance Committee met virtually On March 10 with Commissioners West (Chair), McGuire, and Johnson president. The fund balance assignments were reviewed and a motion was made by McGuire and seconded by Johnson to recommend the assignments to the Board of Trustees.

Note: assignments to the fund balance are not a legal commitment and may be reevaluated and modified any time during the year with Board approval. The fund balance has been assigned for intended purposes; the unassigned portion meets the minimum recommended by the Office of the State Auditor.

(Please note that the Motion and Second below were amended on 3/31/21 after a board vote to approve the amendment since the vote was originally approved unanimously but had not been officially motioned and seconded.)

Motion by West seconded by Weckman Brekke to authorize the recommended assignments of the 12/31/20 fund balance.

Discussion:

Vrieze highlighted particular fund balance assignment items, including the OverDrive fee, which he explained involves a significantly lower platform fee so that MELSA is able to purchase a lot more content. He also mentioned the smARTpass program item and suggested that Lederer, who coordinates that program, give a brief presentation at a future board meeting for the benefit of new board members who may not be familiar with smARTpass. Burns asked how smARTpass has been operating during the pandemic while many arts organizations have been closed. Lederer explained that several smARTpass partners have made virtual performances/programs available on the smARTpass site. None of the arts partners is paid for their participation in the program or reimbursed for tickets provided on the site, and there are no fees to arts partners to be included on the site. The funds for smARTpass go to hosting and maintenance of the site, and to site enhancements/updates.

Udermann asked about the size of the fund balance; Johnson explained that the Finance Committee did review how well-situated MELSA is for potentially volatile funding from the legislature. Vrieze added that equalization, a component of MELSA's RLBSS funding from the state, is determined by shifting property values. West agreed that, based on past experience and experience with other organizations (for example, Mosquito Control), it's good to have that cushion.

Vote was taken using verbal/gestured indicators:

ACL – aye	HCL – aye	SCL – aye
CCL – aye	RCL – aye	WCL – aye
DCL – aye	SPL – aye	

Motion carried.

C. Consideration of FY2021 Arts & Cultural Heritage (ACHF)/Legacy budget change

Due to the cancellation of Teen Lit Con for the second year, the MELSA Youth Services team recommended re-appropriating \$35,000 in regional Legacy dollars to funding a virtual summer program series similar to summer 2020. The MELSA Advisor Board accepted that recommendation at their February 12th meeting and requests that the Board of Trustees approve the reallocation.

On a motion by Udermann seconded by West, the MELSA Board of Trustees supports the reallocation of \$35,000 of regional Legacy funds to support summer 2021 regional virtual summer programming for MELSA libraries.

Discussion:

McGuire asks about State Fair participation, given that the State Fair plans to go ahead in 2021 after being cancelled in 2020. James, who coordinates Read and Ride Day, explained that advance planning is required and, after discussion, she conveyed to the State Fair organizers that we would not be able to participate in 2021. The Fair will hold MELSA harmless and grant rights of first refusal for 2022.

Goettel asked if it would be possible to do a virtual version of Teen Lit Con; James described the key advantages to that event including teens being able to get together and to meet their favorite authors in person, get books signed, etc.

Vote was taken using verbal/gestured indicators:

ACL – aye	HCL – aye	SCL – aye
CCL – aye	RCL – aye	WCL – aye
DCL – aye	SPL – aye	

Motion carried.

D. FY2019 ACJF Completion Report

MELSA libraries completed expenditure of FY2019 Arts and Cultural Heritage (Legacy) funds in December 2020. The FY2019 Completion Report is due to State Library Services on April 6. Sarah Hawkins has completed the report and gathered supporting materials from library staff.

Motion by Goettel, second by Halverson, to approve the submission of the FY2019 ACHF Completion Report to State Library Services.

Discussion:

Hawkins briefly described the reporting process. McGuire asked how many program requests have to be turned down. Hawkins answered that we don't track that, but many program providers reach out to libraries directly to offer programs. Burns and others point out how much work is involved in putting together this report, thanking Hawkins for her work on it.

Vote was taken using verbal/gestured indicators:

ACL – aye	HCL – aye	SCL – aye
CCL – aye	RCL – aye	WCL – aye
DCL – aye	SPL – aye	

Motion carried.

E. Annual Report to State Library Services

Each year all libraries in Minnesota, including regional library systems, are required to submit a state annual report to State Library Services by April 1. This report collects statistics and financial data related to facilities, services, programs, collections, staffing, hours, etc. Because MELSA does not provide direct public services, many sections of the report do not apply. Most programs and services provided by MELSA to member library systems are included in the systems' state reports, not MELSA's.

Motion by Johnson, second by West, that the Board of Trustees authorize the submission of the 2020 MELSA Report to State Library Services at the Minnesota Department of Education.

Vrieze will provide a digital copy for McGuire to sign.

Vote was taken using verbal/gestured indicators:

ACL – aye	HCL – aye	SCL – aye
CCL – aye	RCL – aye	WCL – aye
DCL – aye	SPL – aye	

Motion carried.

McGuire suggests that the Board move to item VI. Reports before item V.F. Personnel Committee Report, which will be a closed session. That way those leaving the meeting won't have to return.

VI. REPORTS

A. Executive Director's Report

Vrieze reviewed his report, highlighting Category 3 funds going to systems for individual needs this year rather than using for a joint purchase, such as the Wi Fi Hot Spots that were purchased for all systems last year. Udermann requests information on Hot Spot usage when it's available.

Vrieze also discusses ongoing legislative activities, since what is usually a single Library Legislative Day expanded to a week + this year, offering several advantages in scheduling meetings with legislators. Hawkins, who is Legislative Chair for the Minnesota Library Association this year, continues to schedule and attend meetings, and developed a spreadsheet for legislative week. She encouraged everyone to continue to contact legislators to support library funding bills.

McGuire stressed how important it was for all legislators to be contacted and for Chairs of committees to know that we need the full funding requested. Burns liked the idea of a letter from MELSA's Board to keep

libraries front of mind. Others agreed that a joint letter would be stronger, though it would need to be brief and include concise bullet points, and it would be most effective e-mailed from individual board members with personal notes attached to maximize relationships that board members have built. Vrieze will draft a letter with bullet points for the Board to consider and personalize.

At this point McGuire asked attendees who were not on the Board of Trustees to leave the meeting so the Board could begin the closed Personnel Committee Report session (agenda item V.F.).

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:04.