

Metropolitan Library Service Agency Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Friday, May 13th, 2022
Virtual Meeting via Teams
9:00 – 11:00am

Advisory Board Members/Representatives Present:

Anoka:	Colleen Hauber	Ramsey:	Jacob Grussing
Carver:	Heidi Hoks	Saint Paul:	not present
Dakota:	Margaret Stone	Scott:	not present
Hennepin:	Johannah Genett	Washington:	Amy Stenftenagel

Staff Present:

Abigail Dillon, Mona Scott, and Scott Vrieze

I. Call to order

Chair Stenftenagel called the meeting to order at 9:03.

II. Introductions and Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

III. Consent Agenda

- a) Approval of agenda
- b) Approval of meeting minutes (April 8th, 2022)

Motion to approve the agenda and meeting minutes by Hoks. Second by Grussing.

All in favor signified by saying aye.

ACL - aye HCL - aye SCL – not present

CCL - aye RCL - aye WCL – aye

DCL - aye SPL - not present

Motion carried.

IV. Discussion/Action Items

- a) Consideration of requests for Phase Funds (Carver)

A request for distribution of Phase funds has been received from the Carver County Library. The request was distributed to the board in the meeting packet.

Motion to accept the request for Phase Funds distribution: Carver County Library in the amount of \$32,370.00 by Stone. Second by Haubner.

All in favor signified by saying aye.

ACL - aye HCL - aye SCL – not present

CCL - aye RCL - aye WCL – aye

DCL - aye SPL - not present

Motion carried.

b) Discussion of requests for reconsideration of book titles

The Collection Development Team, and member libraries, have been having a spirited discussion of the title: *The Truth about COVID-19* by Mercola and Cummins. Because these requests, and others, touch on sometimes competing library values of fighting disinformation, intellectual freedom, commitments to equity, and showing many sides of controversial issues, we would like to have a discussion among the library directors on this question. Many of the member libraries decided to retain this book. The library directors expressed concern over purchasing books that they know contain misinformation. Some of the libraries have revised their policies to require multiple requests of the same item before purchasing instead of purchasing after a single request. Many of the libraries have responded to issues with *The Truth about COVID-19* by placing it in the Conspiracy Theories section of non-fiction. The member libraries have established or are considering establishing new policies and advisory boards for these types of situations.

c) Legislative advocacy status report

Vrieze shared that the bonding/capital investment bill is still alive in the legislature. The session will be completed in a week, so we should know the fate of any of these bills soon and Vrieze will keep the group updated.

d) MELSA space planning and remote work

MELSA is taking a look at needs for storage space and office space, as the lease expires in October. MELSA has more square footage than we currently need, so we are in the information-gathering process to decide which steps to take. Metronet has indicated that they don't really need their current space and could just share MELSA's space when Metronet staff would like to come into the office. A status report will be given to the trustees at their meeting next week.

e) June meeting: format/location

For the June meeting, most of the library directors indicated an interest in meeting in person.

f) Round table sharing

Grussing brought up hiring practices, where many librarian positions require an MLIS degree. Some counties have migrated to the practice of making the MLIS a preferred attribute but not a requirement. Many of the directors expressed a preference for not making the MLIS a requirement if the job is not downgraded to a lower pay scale.

Genett reported that HCL has been focusing lately on recent storm damage. They experienced some trees and signs down around some of their libraries. There has also been a recent policy change based on the racial equity impact tool. HCL will no longer accept art donations. They will only accept new art through the 1% for Art Projects. Haubner shared that ACL will be presenting to their board the possibility of going fine free in their library system. A few of the directors talked about technology upgrades (such as self-checkout) and how this can be funded.

Stone shared that DCL will be launching a new community engagement van to appear throughout the community and provide more visibility for the library.

Vrieze brought up one of the commissioner's ideas about having MELSA fund some extended (employee-less) hours in each of the member libraries. Systems would need to be installed where patrons can enter by scanning their library card. Stone shared that they have checked into this for DCL and it is quite expensive. She is also concerned about devaluing the employees in this situation.

V. Reports

Executive Director/Staff Reports

Vrieze had no additional updates at this time.

Stenftenagel adjourned the meeting at 11:03am.