

# ***Metropolitan Library Service Agency Advisory Board Meeting Minutes***

Friday, July 11, 2025

Chanhassen Library

10:00am-12:00pm

## **Advisory Board Members/Representatives Present:**

Anoka:	Colleen Haubner	Ramsey:	Pang Yang
Carver:	Patrick Jones	Saint Paul:	Maureen Hartman
Dakota:	Margaret Stone	Scott:	Jen Schultz
Hennepin:	Scott Duimstra	Washington:	Jacque Kramer

**Staff Present:** Abigail Dillon, Gina Goettl, Kathleen James, Mona Scott, and Sherry Wichitchu

## **I. Call to order**

Chair Stone called the meeting to order at 10:05am.

## **II. Introductions and Welcome**

## **III. Consent Agenda**

- a) Approval of agenda
- b) Approval of June 6, 2025 meeting minutes

Motion to approve the agenda and meeting minutes by Haubner. Second by Schultz.

All in favor signified by saying aye.

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

Motion carried.

## **IV. Discussion/Action Items**

- a) Statewide Read-In event

The Statewide Read-In will happen on Saturday, September 20<sup>th</sup> from 11-1. The focus is on all kinds of libraries, what they do in the community, and the importance of reading. There will be several different locations throughout the

state, and either one or two sites in the metro area. The working title is Libraries Loud: Libraries Bring Minnesota Together.

b) Community Equity Fund discussion

This is a quarterly discussion about the Fund and what has been done with the funds. WCL just applied for funds, and they plan on expanding their books by mail program. They would like to double the participation in their program and evaluate at the end of the pilot if they would like to continue to expand this program. Kramer would like to talk about reaching this population at a future Advisory Board meeting. CCL hired a speaker, Ellie Krug, to talk about Gray Area Thinking. SCL may apply for funds for their Belle Plaine location. DCL is considering applying for funds to work with St. Paul Youth Services at Galaxie and Kaposia to focus on the large number of teens who come to these locations.

c) Discussion: Communication Manager Role

Sally Lederer is retiring at the end of July. The 2011 job description was distributed in the meeting packet, and Wichitchu would like some feedback from the group about any duties or qualifications that would be beneficial for an updated Communication Manager role.

Hartman would like to make storytelling a part of the job description. She wants to look for someone with a creative storytelling, problem-solving mindset to communicate the work we're doing. She would like this person to convene and facilitate other library communicators, have a strong team approach, and focus on working together. Haubner would like this person to be a voice in the community for the collective library systems. Kramer mentioned someone who takes a regional approach and creates more of a unified message. Schultz expressed an interest in someone with grant-writing experience who could offer support to the systems in that area. Stone mentioned that most of these comments seemed to be communications versus outreach, so both concepts should be kept in mind when creating the new position. If there is any additional feedback, Wichitchu would like it at the end of the month.

d) FY2026 ACHF (Legacy) Application

The state legislature has awarded \$2.7 million annually in Arts & Cultural Heritage (ACHF or Legacy) funds to the regional public libraries for the FY2026/FY2027 biennium. MELSA would appreciate a review by the Advisory Board of the FY2026 preliminary budget for Legacy funds. The full application must ultimately be approved by electronic vote by the MELSA Board of Trustees prior to submission.

MELSA will receive approximately \$1,042,000 in Legacy funds for FY2026.

Motion to recommend the approval of the FY2026 ACHF application by the MELSA Board of Trustees for submission to State Library Services. Motion by Duimstra. Second by Haubner.

All in favor signified by saying aye.

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

Motion carried.

e) Electronic Resources Team request

When reviewing the collection in 2023 the Electronic Resources Team noted that the collection was heavy on more traditional reference resources and lacking experiential resources such as a handicraft resource that includes live events. Over the course of 2024 several subject areas were researched with handicrafts rising to the top. Craft & Hobby and Creativebug were the best aligned for the end user needs identified and offered hands-on experience. Creativebug is \$88,000, which is above the \$57,419 available in the Team's budget for new resources. In addition, the parent company Joann's filed for bankruptcy for a second time in 12 months. The Team did not express interest in revisiting this resource. The Team would like to add Craft & Hobby as a resource. This resource is \$24,000 for the first year with 4% increases in the following two years. The Team found many positives about this resource, including that it has a Spanish language option and appeals to everyone.

Motion to add Craft & Hobby to the MELSA eResources regional collection by Kramer. Second by Haubner.

All in favor signified by saying aye.

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

Motion carried.

f) E-Materials Task Force update

There has been some discussion with the Collection Development Team and the Task Force about whether the CD Team should focus on holds management or collection development. It was determined that trying to keep up with holds is not feasible from a financial standpoint. The CD Team would like direction from the Advisory Board about what their focus should be.

Duimstra talked about controlled costs (physical materials) versus uncontrolled costs (e-materials), and HCL is focusing on physical materials during the next few

years when the budget will be reduced. RCL expressed a similar focus. Some directors expressed an interest in restricting access to Libby for patrons who do not live in that county/city, although this would have repercussions throughout the state due to our current reciprocal agreement. There was also interest in reducing the number of holds from 15 to 10 and they are interested in getting data from the CD Team about the impact of this type of adjustment. The CD team will come up with a list of the top three areas where they can make changes (related to how they do things now) to assist with holds management. The Task Force is also working with the CD Team to develop a charter and will bring this to the Advisory Board.

g) Collaborative Initiative Project

In June of 2025, the MELSA Advisory Board agreed that the collaborative initiative should focus on literacy & lifelong learning, with components of community connections and marketing to bring awareness to the libraries' initiatives. Before we explore specific projects and their associated budgets, it's essential that we establish a shared vision for what success in this area truly looks like for MELSA and our member libraries. The directors were asked to prepare for this meeting by thinking about the collaborative Literacy & Lifelong Learning initiative 3 years into the future with the idea that the initiative has been wildly successful. What does it look like? What has changed for our patrons, our staff, and our communities? What are the key words or phrases that capture the essence of this success? What emotional impact does this success have on our communities? If a major news outlet were reporting on the incredible success of the initiative, what would the headline say? What would be the opening sentence of the article?

Kramer would like MELSA to take the lead in this project and develop some kind of branding that would tie all the systems together (related to literacy & lifelong learning). She would like staff to have the tools and resources to talk about this initiative.

Success can be measured by an increase in physical circulation, more people in the library, kindergarten readiness, or a partnership with schools. Success can look different for each system. Haubner suggested a reading kit (HCL said they have a reading kit), which could be quantified by number of kits distributed, and develop a reading kit survey, and there could be events related to the reading kits. Branding, promotion, and bulk purchasing could be effective as a collaborative initiative. Haubner also suggested expanding materials in different languages. ACL received a grant recently to purchase materials in world languages, and these items have had high circulation numbers.

For next month's meeting, Stone would like to narrow down the idea from literacy & lifelong learning to something more specific. This can include proposed programs and events. Kindergarten readiness could be a good age group to start focusing on. Another group could be 3<sup>rd</sup> grade (or read by grade 3). The directors would like the option to

expand current initiatives, as it may be difficult to add new programs given the current climate. This project could also focus on promoting the existing programs and resources the libraries provide. The focus could be on promoting literacy or access to materials/resources that increase literacy.

## **V. Reports**

### **a) Executive Director update**

In the future, any votes taken at the Collection Development Team will be presented in the Collection Development Team report. Dillon will no longer be synthesizing the items from these meetings in the report. Directors can coordinate with their CD Team reps to talk about the minutes.

There are a couple of plans for regional training – The Science of Reading and de-escalation training.

MELSA has selected a firm to facilitate the strategic planning process.

A survey for potential state library standards was sent out recently.

### **b) Collection Development Team report**

There have been a couple of trial runs from the Collection Development Team on where MELSA focuses their purchasing power: Notify Me and CPC. The team voted that MELSA should forgo purchasing new titles through Notify Me and refocus that portion of the budget on purchasing expired MA that had high demand. The team also voted that MELSA should stop purchasing CPC and instead use the content credit for holds and simultaneous use packages.

As a part of the discussion on world language collections, it was brought up that it can be difficult to create robust, accessible records of titles that are not in English.

Outsourcing cataloging to experts in the language and library science can be expensive, so it was suggested that this could be something that would benefit from collaborative funding. Once the metadata is made, it will be accessible not only to all of MELSA but every library who has access to OCLC. This is a major equity issue, as the information will otherwise be to some degree inaccessible for the end user or the librarian who is trying to help them.

Stone adjourned the meeting at 12:01pm.