

# ***Metropolitan Library Service Agency Joint Trustee Board Meeting Minutes***

Monday, August 18, 2025  
Mississippi Library, Fridley  
10:00am-12:00pm

## **Trustee Members Present:**

Anoka:	Julie Jeppson	Ramsey:	not present
Carver:	Matt Udermann	Saint Paul:	Beth Burns
Dakota:	Laurie Halverson	Scott:	Jody Brennan (virtual)
Hennepin:	not present	Washington:	Michelle Clasen

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

Anoka:	Colleen Haubner	Ramsey:	not present
Carver:	Jodi Edstrom	Saint Paul:	Maureen Hartman
Dakota:	Margaret Stone	Scott:	Jen Schultz
Hennepin:	Scott Duimstra	Washington:	Jacquie Kramer (virtual)

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

## **I. Call to order**

Chair Halverson called the meeting to order at 10:03am.

## **II. Public Comment**

Commissioner Brennan is joining virtually due to a scheduling conflict.

## **III. Approval of Agenda**

Motion to approve the agenda by Clasen. Second by Udermann.

Roll call vote:

ACL - aye	HCL - not present	SCL – aye
CCL - aye	RCL - not present	WCL – aye
DCL - aye	SPL - aye	

Motion carried.

## **IV. Consent Agenda**

- a) Approval of meeting minutes from June 18, 2025
- b) Approval of checks and financials

Motion to approve the minutes and checks/financials by Jepson. Second by Clasen.

Roll call vote:

ACL - aye	HCL - not present	SCL – aye
CCL - aye	RCL - not present	WCL – aye
DCL - aye	SPL - aye	

Motion carried.

## **V. Discussion/Action Items**

### **a) Presentation by Envision Greatness, Final HR Consultation Report**

In December of 2024, the MELSA Board of Trustees Finance Committee approved the Personnel Committee to submit an RFP to work with a Human Resources consultant for the purpose of reviewing current employee policies and procedures, review position descriptions and pay scale, determine outsourcing of various job functions, merit/COLA philosophy and decision process, developing a transition plan for retirements, etc.

The Personnel Committee issued an RFP in March and accepted the proposal from Envision Greatness in April of this year. The final deliverables of the project outlined in the RFP are HR Assessment Report, Gap Analysis Summary, Policy & Procedure Recommendations, HR Resource Strategy Memo, Compensation & Benefits Summary, Compliance Checklist, Implementation Roadmap, and the Final Presentation, which is happening at this meeting.

Overall findings included: market misalignment in compensation, lack of formal compensation philosophy, merged COLA and merit pay practices, partial benefits transparency, competitive gaps with peer employers, and working towards self-administered HR management. A rubric was presented to evaluate employee performance, as well as guidelines for COLA and merit pay increases.

The personnel manual was also reviewed and updated. Enhancements were made to the anti-harassment policy to include digital harassment and a reporting/investigation framework, changes to hiring practices, and quarterly informal reviews with clear performance standards. A new remote work policy was suggested, as well as professional development opportunities. A high-level implementation roadmap with a timeline was also provided. Wichitchu will send the presentation slides to the board. The Personnel Committee would like to see the dollar amount for proposed personnel software.

Motion to refer the findings, financial costs, and recommendations from Envision Greatness to the Executive Committee for further consideration and possible implementation, and next steps. Motion by Jeppson. Second by Clasen.

Roll call vote:

ACL - aye	HCL - not present	SCL – aye
CCL - aye	RCL - not present	WCL – aye
DCL - aye	SPL - aye	

Motion carried.

b) Approval of FY2026 Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund (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. The full application must ultimately be approved by the MELSA Board of Trustees prior to submission.

Pending the Official Grant Award Notification (OGAN), State Library Services has estimated that MELSA will receive \$1,042,094.07 in Legacy funds for FY2026. This number may be revised modestly by the time of the OGAN, if there are any adjustments to the Minnesota Department of Education based on populations and library branches. The FY2026 application and budget spreadsheet were distributed in the meeting packet. \$262,650 of the Legacy funds will be designated for region-wide projects, and \$35,000 is designated for administration. The remainder of the funds is currently estimated at \$744,444.07. These remaining funds (approximately 71%) will be distributed to MELSA member libraries using a population-based formula. After MELSA's Legacy application has been approved, MELSA will present each system with its final FY2026 Legacy allocation.

Motion to approve the FY2026 ACHF application for submission to State Library Services.  
Motion by Udermann. Second by Clasen.

Roll call vote:

ACL - aye	HCL - not present	SCL – aye
CCL - aye	RCL - not present	WCL – aye
DCL - aye	SPL - abstain	

Motion carried.

c) Approval of acquisition of Craft & Hobby Electronic Resource

MELSA's Electronic Resources Team is seeking Trustee Board approval to add Craft and Hobby to the MELSA regional e-resources collection. The MELSA Advisory Board approved this acquisition at its July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The vendor is offering MELSA libraries their suite of resources along with Craftsby at a 75% discount. Year one would be \$24,000 with 4% increases for the following two years, putting renewals at \$24,960 and \$25,958. This pricing would leave \$33,418 in the

budget. At the June 12 Electronic Resources Team meeting the seven systems present voted in favor of recommending Craft and Hobby to the regional collection.

Motion to add Craft and Hobby to the MELSA regional e-resources collection. Motion by Jeppson. Second by Burns.

Roll call vote:

ACL - aye	HCL - not present	SCL – aye
CCL - aye	RCL - not present	WCL – aye
DCL - aye	SPL - abstain	

Motion carried.

## **VI. Reports**

### **a) Advisory Board Update**

The Great North Star Read-Together is happening on Sept 20<sup>th</sup>, and sites are being established across the state. More information can be found on their [website](#).

Further discussion took place regarding the Collaborative Initiative. The Advisory Board wants to focus on literacy as the theme for this initiative, and there may be an opportunity to collaborate or coordinate with ALA as they launch a “libraries as literacy centers” initiative.

Margaret Stone will be retiring at the end of September.

### **b) Executive Director Update**

The Executive Director report was distributed in the meeting packet. It covers some of the same updates from the Advisory Board.

Strategic planning has started, and a survey has just been distributed. Focus groups of library staff are planned, and a member summit will occur on October 20<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 1pm at MCIT.

Sally Lederer, MELSA’s Communications Manager, retired on July 31<sup>st</sup>. The job will be posted soon.

The MLA conference is in October, and both Wichitchu and Dillon will be presenting. Wichitchu will share the conference schedule with the board.

A workgroup has been formed to investigate the possibility of introducing e-material legislation, and Maggie from Minitex and Wichitchu are part of this workgroup.

### **c) Round robin discussion from Advisory Board members about current issues/events at member libraries**

ACL will be hiring a new branch manager at Northtown. The Johnsville Library was recently remodeled and just reopened.

SCL is renovating the Belle Plaine Library, adding study rooms, multi-use space, and an expanded children's area. The county recently hired a community engagement manager, and they will be working with the library.

CCL is adding expanding access hours at Victoria Library.

DCL hired St Paul Youth Services to work with teen library staff. Remodels are happening and Wentworth and Burnhaven currently.

HCL will be doing a patron survey in late September. There will be some promotion about the changes that have been made because of previous patron surveys.

SPPL: The Minnesota Book Awards season is underway, and they are looking for judges. Hamline Midway Library is under construction and will be opening in the fall of 2026.

WCL was featured on Fox9 this morning, talking about their partnership with the American Heart Association. The Park Grove Library building project has started, and construction will begin in early 2026 and should take about a year.

Halverson adjourned the meeting at 12:03pm.