

Metropolitan Library Service Agency Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 5, 2025

White Bear Lake Library

10:00am-12:00pm

Advisory Board Members/Representatives Present:

Anoka:	Colleen Haubner	Ramsey:	Pang Yang
Carver:	Jodi Edstrom	Saint Paul:	Maureen Hartman
Dakota:	Margaret Stone	Scott:	Jen Schultz
Hennepin:	Scott Duimstra (virtual)	Washington:	Jacquie Kramer

Staff Present: Abigail Dillon, Gina Goettl (virtual), Kathleen James, Mona Scott, and Sherry Wichitchu

I. Call to order

Chair Edstrom called the meeting to order at 10:09am.

II. Introductions and Welcome

III. Consent Agenda

- a) Approval of agenda
- b) Approval of August 8, 2025 meeting minutes

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

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) St. Paul digital breach

St. Paul experienced a digital security incident (ransomware attack) in July. Initially, all of the servers were shut down to prevent more data from being

accessed. The city still has no public internet or WiFi (this includes printing), and automatic materials handlers are down. The circulation system has been back up in the last few weeks and staff have been catching up on the backlog.

b) Statewide read-in event

The statewide read-in event is coming up on September 20th from 11am until 1pm. There are 45 libraries in the state taking part in this event.

c) Collaborative Initiative project

Wichitchu reached out to ALA, who reached out to World Education. She has a meeting set up with World Education on September 29th.

d) Finance Committee update

The Finance Committee met on Wednesday afternoon (Sept 3rd). The committee approved three main things, and two of them will be presented next in the agenda. There were some interest funds left in LSAF, and MELSA proposed adding these funds (\$241,836) as a one-time addition to LSAF operations. This was approved by the committee.

e) STEM & Wellness adult programming

Thanks to the statewide Arts and Cultural Heritage Grant, MELSA has been able to support our member libraries in art, history, and cultural programming for adults. Thanks to our own Jobs & Small Business (JSB) funds, MELSA has been able to support our member libraries in jobs, business, and career programming for adults. However, libraries don't have the same support for topics outside of those funding, especially STEM and wellness, specifically for adults. MELSA's Adult Programming coordinator is proposing a pilot fund of \$30,000 to be used by libraries in the latter half of 2025 and into 2026 to test interest in adult programming around STEM and wellness subjects (yoga, cooking, mental health, etc). Utilizing the same branch (20%), population (20%), and equal (60%) allocation formula of our JSB funding, each system would receive funding as outlined in the meeting packet.

Similar to a portion of the JSB funding, these funds would be distributed on a reimbursement basis. Further details about the use of these funds would be established with input from MELSA's Advisory Board and Adult Programming Interest Group.

Hartman proposed having less restrictions on this money and using the money for adult programming in general. Kathleen James mentioned that the youth services budget is very general also.

Motion to approve a \$30,000 pilot to be allocated for adult programming following state guidelines. Further discussion will take place later within the Advisory Board regarding more specific parameters. Motion by Kramer. Second by Stone.

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.

f) Shared OverDrive/Libby Collection MACU titles

To meet our user's needs in OverDrive, MELSA has focused our purchasing on owning at least one of every title over our holds ratio (10:1). This allows equity of access, as any copy owned by a member library will give priority to patrons of that library. However, focusing on expanding the collection in this way has meant we spend less money on meeting the holds ratio of titles we already own. While meeting holds can be a Sisyphean task, certain lending models are incredibly helpful to reduce wait times. These are called "metered access, concurrent use" or MACU. As of August 25th, 2025, the cost to purchase every MACU-available title over our holds ratio is \$47,097. This number is likely to grow by the next time the calculations are run, as more titles are released and purchased by the libraries. As such, the Collection Development coordinator of MELSA is requesting that at least \$50,000 be allocated to the eLibrary budget for the second half of 2025. MELSA would use these funds to ease the pressure on our member libraries by purchasing MACU titles.

Motion to approve \$50,000 to be allocated to purchase MACU copies of titles in the shared MELSA eLibrary. Motion 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.

g) Round table sharing

This is Margaret Stone's last meeting before her retirement. DCL is not sure if they will be appointing an interim. Jen Reichert-Simpson will be attending Advisory Board meetings until a new director is hired.

SCL: The Belle Plaine renovation should be done in November. The Readmobile

has been out and assisting with early childhood screening for underserved populations. They have also been able to hire an additional staff member. ACL: has received approval to move forward with some building projects. They have created a new position, program manager. CCL just launched extended access at the Victoria branch. SPPL is in the middle of the budget process. They did get approval to renovate the Hayden Heights branch in 2027. The Rondo library will have some improvements, and while these are happening, they will be at the Hallie Q Brown Community Center. RCL is losing 5 FTEs, and they may be cutting back some open hours at the Shoreview library. The Maplewood library will have their old café space renovated. WCL is in the middle of the Park Grove library renovation project. The library will be closing in February 2026 and opening in early 2027. They are searching for locations for temporary space during that time. HCL is in the process of finalizing their budget. Our governing board would like a couple of volunteers for the Bylaws Committee. The bylaws will be reviewed and revised. Kramer and Haubner volunteered.

V. Reports

Executive Director update

OverDrive has donated several titles on grief to MELSA in the wake of the tragedy at Annunciation.

MELSA strategic planning is underway, with the survey just being completed and focus groups starting soon. There will be a member summit on October 20th, more information will be forthcoming.

There is \$12,000 that MELSA wanted to allocate to Legacy (something that isn't a giveaway). The Advisory Board was requested to think about this, and if there are no ideas, this amount could be added to the adult programming budget.

State Library Services will be traveling to libraries in January, and Schultz volunteered Scott County as a visiting site.

Edstrom adjourned the meeting at 12:03pm.