

DRAFT Notes from the May 18, 2012 meeting of the MLA Legislative Committee

The meeting at Watertown Public Library was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by committee co-chair Beverly Shank – Watertown. Also attending were co-chair Susan McAlister - Minuteman; Kathy Lowe - MSLA; Cindy Roach and Rob Maier - MBLC; Greg Pronevitz - MLS; Ruth Urell - MLA Pres. and Reading Public; Anna Kung - Worcester Public; Krista McLeod – Nevins M.L., Methuen; Katie Baxter - Noble and Greenough School; and Harry R. Williams III – Thomas Crane P.L., Quincy (note-taker). ALA Councilor Nancy Rea dropped off Snapshot Day notes but did not stay for the meeting.

MBLC Legislative Agenda. Cindy reported the Senate Ways & Means Budget increases funding for Perkins and for construction; level funds MLS, BPL, and Library Technology & Resource Sharing; and level funds State Aid with unlimited waivers.

National Library Legislative Day. Cindy thanked MLA and MSLA for supporting attendance at National Library Day in Washington D.C., in April. Six Massachusetts people attended and met Senator Brown in person, and aides to the Congressmen. They discussed level funding LSTA, Innovative Literacy, Cyber Security, and showed the “Who Needs Libraries? We All Do!” video. This event will May 6-7 in 2013. Ruth said MLA sponsored Dinah O’Brien and John Ramsay, and MSLA sponsored Julie Farrell. It was suggested we consider including this in our committee budget for next year.

MLA Annual Conference 2013. Someone wondered if next year’s Nat’l Legislative Day would conflict with MLA, but the latter will be Wed April 24 (pre-conf?) to Fri May 26, 2013.

School Library Legislation. Kathy asked Cindy if Rep. Smizik’s amendment (filed annually for at least 10 years) to include School Library funding in Chapter 70 passed. It has been filed, but it’s too soon to know its fate.

Massachusetts Library System (MLS) – Greg reported that the **MLS Strategic Planning Process** included 17 focus groups and 20 interviews. They will be seeking reactions and feedback to their initial findings by the end of the summer. He and Dinah are working on an event to respond to “Libraries In Need.” Deb Hoadley is coordinating a **grass roots organizing** presentation in conjunction with MFOL/MLTA in Worcester on October 27th, and may repeat in the West and on the Cape. We can help by sending items for an organizing toolkit to Deb. The May 15th “Future of Resource Sharing” event showed great enthusiasm for future possibilities and featured great speakers. There were many questions when the **Online Content Procurement** was announced. Some periodicals and many newspapers were not renewed – Boston Globe & NY Times, yes; Worcester Telegram, no, as it is hard to “pick and choose” among more local titles. When the MLS Board meets Greg will advise them to seek a way to somehow help local libraries have access to local newspapers with some help from MLS. A new **Collaborative Purchasing Program** is being developed with MHEC (Massachusetts Higher Education Collaborative.) Towns and “any nonprofit with any inkling of

education” can join at no cost and participate now. It is run by a woman formerly in charge of procurement for the Commonwealth. In the future Greg will seek to have them add purchasing of electronic materials.

Legislative Day. Kathy Lowe discussed the MSLA activities. Harry regretted not seeing the smiling bookmark contest winners until after the event, online. Everyone agreed that although the day went well and was positive, we should return to having the public and school library groups in one place. Even if noise is a bit of a problem it will be worth it to be all together. Beverly commented on the issue of timing, and wondered if we might do this in the fall, but Krista thought this would not work in an election year. Kathy pointed out that the bookmark contest needs time for judging and inviting winners, so that late March or early April would be best. Dates that might not conflict with MCAS or Easter include March 25-6-7 or April 2-3-4. We can’t attempt to reserve the space in the State House until 6 months prior to an event; October 1st at the earliest. Beverly noted that the Legislative Breakfasts seem committed to January and February.

Legislative Breakfasts. Susan asked if we should plan another Breakfast on Breakfasts. Do local breakfast organizers need help? Or could we post scanned samples of programs and other materials? Cindy said MFOL might be able to help, and Krista suggested a toolkit on the MLA website. Beverly suggested putting together a Toolkit Committee. Anna asked if it is necessary to begin before 8:00 A.M., which makes for early travel, and several responded that this is the only time legislators seem to make themselves available. Ruth recommended gathering more and better pictures at the breakfasts.

“Get To Know The State House” Susan shared Deb Hoadley’s idea from New Hampshire librarians who arrange an annual trip to Washington D.C. for a tour of the Library of Congress and meetings with their Representatives. Could we do this for Massachusetts librarians – separate from and in preparation for Legislative Day – for a low-stress tour and chance to meet their State Reps and find out how easy it is to share our message with them?

Candidate Surveys & New Legislators. Anna asked if we could arrange to question candidates about their positions regarding libraries. Krista described how she had accomplished this in the past and promised to facilitate a knowledge transfer. Ruth suggested sending a congratulatory post card to new legislators. Katie suggested arranging for member librarians to make personal calls – as constituents – on their legislators to review our Legislative Agenda. Ruth reminded everyone to invite them to hold their office hours at our libraries.

Snapshot Day. T Harry used Nancy Rea’s document to report on the success of our second annual Library Snapshot Day. There were fewer photos – 2,000 this year compared to 3,000 last year – but they were higher quality. Great outputs from 2012 included photos used on the cover of the Legislative Agenda and in the video. Harry questioned the value of the statistics gathered by 80 of the 188 participating libraries as too small a sample when we have ARIS stats available. Everyone seemed to agree with Nancy’s recommendation that this be done every other year so it doesn’t become stale.

“Love Your Library” Katie described the presentation at OCLN’s Legislative Breakfast in Milton by Ed Perry of Plymouth radio station WATD. He is gathering audio clips from local library users and national celebrities praising libraries. He plans to help Scituate Library’s capital campaign and also to play the clips frequently on his station.

Anna Sayers Kung is retiring (and invites everyone to a 3-5 P.M. celebration at Worcester Public Library Friday, May 25) so the question of future availability of WPL as a meeting site was raised. Anna says Mark Contois is committed to our committee and that should be no problem. Greg said MLS will sometimes be available and Susan said the same for Minuteman. Everyone agreed that we should continue to alternate between morning and afternoon meetings. **The next meeting will be Friday, July 27, 2012 at the MLS headquarters.** The meeting was **adjourned** at 3:10.

Notes submitted by,

Harry R. Williams, III