

MLA Executive Board Meeting
November 17, 2023 | 12-2pm

Attendance: Joshua Stone (MLA), Kelsey Hughes (PDP), Lloyd Jansen (IFP), Tori George (TIG), Joseph Thompson (ALA Councilor), Lou Sica (SSD), Sharon Morris (BCMLA), Katelyn McLimans (CSD), Tif Sutherland (President), Melissa Lauber (PSD), Amy Meyers (Marketing), Andrea Boothby Rice (IFP), Nay Keppler (Past-President), Chelsea Shockley (Conference), Andrea Berstler (Legislative Panel), Laura Bandoch (MIG), Brianna Hughes (ACRL), Michaela Boyle (Sustainability), Rachel Miller (LDD), Sabine Simonson (OSIG), Meg Faller (RAIG), Kelly Clark (LGBTQ+IG)

Excused Absences: Cheryl Nardiello (Treasurer), Teonja Jung (VP)

Call to Order and Welcome (Tif)

Changes to the Agenda (Tif):

- Moving the ALA Councilors Report after Treasurer's Report – Andrea Berstler moves, Joe Thompson seconds, motion passes

Past Minutes (Tif)

- Sept Meeting minutes were approved via email

Treasurer's Report (Josh Stone)

- Josh presented in Cheryl's absence
- End of Oct balance \$256,345.09
- Presented Budget vs. Actuals:
 - Some areas we are still a little low – gross income in Oct 7128.82, expenditures \$48,807.14.
 - Affiliate membership renewals are coming up and the conference registration will open in January so that will rebalance things.
- Question from Kelsey – did we make what we wanted to make from Centennial events? Josh - We broke even pretty early on but haven't broken down the final numbers to know how much profit.
- We had our annual audit.
 - Last year's board approved not doing a full, in-depth audit every single year, maybe every other year – need to vote and decide.
 - This year they just made sure what we said is matched in our Quickbooks account and helped us file our tax documents.
- Motion to approve financial statement subject to audit by Joe Thompson, second by Andrea Berstler. Motion passes.

ALA Councilor's report (Joe Thompson)

- Reminder that ALA LibLearnX is coming up in Baltimore this year in January – so convenient! Recommend attending.
- ALA Executive Director resigned in October, which was concerning given the challenges ALA is facing.
- ALA Board has approved Leslie Berger as Interim Executive Director – former director of Princeton Public Library

- As we approach LLX and council meetings, Joe will keep us informed of any relevant decisions to be made at council meetings as he can.
- We did not get a discount code for MLA members for LLX, they are only giving discounts to ALA members within 50 miles of Baltimore. Not sure why the change has happened.

Carnival Recap (Josh)

- Carnival went really well – thanks to all who helped with planning and day of set up.
- Catering in particular received rave reviews – shout out to Lou.
- Made \$110 on enamel pins sales.
- Great showing of elected officials coming out.
 - Had done particularly targeted outreach to the Governor’s office, but hadn’t heard back. Afterward, received a citation in the mail from the Governor’s office commemorating 100 years of MLA.
 - Also received during the ceremony citations from Anne Arundel County, the City of Annapolis, the General Assembly.
- Carnival games were far and above what we anticipated. Fun, laid back, a great evening.
- Tif gave extra shout out to MLA Office, particularly Kate & Leah for their hard work.
- Exciting to see Corky the Penguin from Carroll, Orioles Bird, and Poe the Ravens Bird as well.

MLA Elections (Josh)

- Elections are coming up – Mary Anne is our chair this year as the past-past-president.
- She has already put out a call for nominations but not a lot of bites.
- Have been having some difficulty getting nominees for different roles. Hoping affiliate membership will help increase interest.
 - Share the call out with others, Nov. 30 is the deadline Mary Anne set but there is flexibility to extend it.
 - election will take place some time in March.
- Question from Sharon – are division elections held at the same time too?
 - Yes – divisions should start looking for folks.
- BCMLA special election just wrapped up – Christine Iko was named.

Professional Development Panel Program Manual:

- Question from Lloyd – should MLA Connect be in the manual? Josh – not yet, still working on their event platform. Should prioritize Connect for smaller, lower stakes meetings for now.
 - RAIG did have success using it for their social event discussing indigenous authors.
- Question from Katelyn – can there be more information added about getting reimbursement for programs? Ex: know that you may need to front costs.
- Question from Melissa – are we still requiring folks to come into the office to get their packets – Josh talked to Kate & Leah and they will be making it up to the program planners based on what’s easier for them.
- Nay moved to accept both policy revisions and Melissa seconded, motion passes.

MLA Unit Audit (Tif & Teonja)

- Have had a lot of conversations about the need to rethink the way our divisions and interest groups work – formed a small group to conduct assessments & make recommendations.

- Group has spoken with or gotten feedback from every division and interest group leader in MLA. Held live discussions and those who couldn't make it were allowed to submit responses via email.
 - Questions mostly focused on how they work, engage membership, how they feel about the IG & division arrangement/process, future sustainability.
 - Hoping rearrangement will help us better engage new members through these groups, make sure the groups are sustainable, and possibly create a leadership pipeline.
 - Group will be meeting soon to revise that data and develop suggestions & next steps.

Lib Learn X (Josh)

- We will have a booth at LLX this year. Josh just got info about how to staff it & get passes for those folks.
- Hoping by mid-December Josh will have something out for folks to sign up to staff the booth.
 - Folks must be MLA members to do this.
 - Jan 19-21 – try to put on your calendar to hold and help if you can.
- Start thinking about what we want to have at the booth and stuff we might want to bring and make available.
 - We can bring merch from our libraries if we want.

MLLI update (Josh/Joe)

- Joe sent out a stakeholder survey for folks to give feedback on future of MLLI – can answer through Nov. 21.

President's Report (Tif)

- Did some meetups with different folks to talk about the benefits of joining and participating, including BCMLA meetups.
- Especially trying to increase engagement with new affiliates. Went to Charles County staff day recently and will be going to St. Mary's
 - Will be reaching out to other libraries to find out when Tif or Teonja could come and chat with them over the next few months.
- Tif was on the keynote panel at SLRC's DEI conference with Tracy Miller & Sonia Alcantara-Antoine talking about intellectual freedom.
- Did opening remarks for the Maryland Libraries From Ideas to Action Administrators EDI Summit to share about what MLA is doing to advance equity in the profession.

Vice President's Report (Tif on behalf of Teonja)

- Report was just about audit restructuring

Past President's Report (Nay)

- Was at the Carnival & it went well!
- Working with Dr. Clark on the LGBTQ+ Interest Group to get it up and running.

Executive Director's Report (Josh)

- Managers Academy presented in partnership with MSLA just wrapped up its 5 week course.
 - Group was really engaged, went well but perhaps not as well as anticipated.
 - 32 registrants engaged, was aiming for 30 but increased as a result of interest.

- Probably could use a different facilitator next time.
- Looking at putting together an MLA Connect area for middle managers
- Andrea Berstler shared that Carroll County is working on a supervisors academy at Carroll, and could perhaps use
- Spoke at the MAILL annual meeting about affiliate memberships
- MAPLA went well in October.
- Josh will be on vacation for 3 weeks starting in Monday. MLA Office will still be open – Kate & Leah can answer anything that comes up if needed.

Legislative Update (Andrea)

- Leg Panel has been working in conjunction with MAPLA's Intergovernmental Taskforce
- Two priorities this year that will need lots of support:
 - Funding for the State Library Resource Center (carryover from last year) – needed to put back in the incremental increases they need to maintain their buying power.
 - Freedom to Read Legislation – working in coalition with MLA, MAPLA, CML, MASL, EveryLibrary, PENAmerica, Penguin Random House to create a bill with a wish list of everything we'd like to see. Thomas Vose & Sonia Alcantore-Alvarez are heading the group.
 - Looking for the potential sponsors in the legislation right now.
 - This is being done at the bequest of the Governor & has the Gov's support. We believe there is support in Annapolis in both chambers for this as well.
 - Encompasses all libraries, but particularly public and school.
 - Several other states are working on this as well with similar partners so that is leading to shared language and co-learning from each other.
 - Trying to keep this in the library community until the bill hits the floor in Annapolis in January, then we will arrange talking points, testimony, etc.
- Continuing conversation about the capital fund but decided it's not the priority to take action on that quite yet. Might look at bringing into 2025.
- Working on a legislative advocacy 101 workshop with Natalie Edington. Will start a small cohort of folks who are plugged in who could teach the workshop when needed at particular libraries, groups, etc. rather than leading it centrally through MLA.
- Library Legislative Day is Feb 13, mark it on your calendar. Morning reception in the Governor Calvert House. Doors open at 7:30 am, breakfast at 8.

Conference Committee Report (Chelsea)

- Skipped Nov. meeting but will meet again in Dec.
- Finishing up approvals and will be reaching out to accepted presenters soon, next form is the Event & Presenter form
- Virtual option will be available at the beginning of April for those who can't attend in person.
 - This will be a test this year based on what we've seen in other libraries, topics will be geared toward more front line library staff.
- Confirmed keynote speakers – Hilton Carter (plant stylist, author and artist from Baltimore) and Jenny Pew (Director of Hoboken Public Library, focused on intellectual freedom – Hoboken the first city to be named a book sanctuary city).

- Created a conference at a glance to summarize what's planned:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/196LM2BuETS_jZq7ZVH31vSWaNf_jzPNho1_frokS1EM/edit
- Will be updating the website in the new year.

Unit Leader reports:

IFP (Lloyd)

- IFP has had a few programs this month.
 - Nov. 1: Virtual program part of defending our collections series (Free Speech – is it for everyone?)
 - Nov. 6: Virtual program A Clear and Present Tension – Intellectual Freedom and Safe Spaces. Went well!
 - Upcoming: Jan 3 on Review Bombing, Mar 6 Data & Privacy, May 1 Discussion on soft censorship.
- Looking at the conference: 3 programs planned.
- Next meeting Dec 6 on Zoom.
- Not specifically IFP related but adjacted: New group (prev Maryland Intellectual Freedom Network, now Maryland Freedom Fighters)
 - Group of folks led by Andrea Boothby Rice and Ashley Teagle to discuss and address censorship and intellectual freedom issues.
 - Working on training for staff and community, tip sheets.
 - Meets every other Wednesday.

ACRL (Brianna)

- Attended the AI For Libraries virtual conference a few weeks ago and hosted 3 viewing parties at UMD College Park, Loyola ND, and Salisbury University.
- Attendance at monthly meetings is slightly up – hovering around 15 this year.
- Moving ahead with revamp of poster session for conference – excited about how that will lead to a better session.
 - ACRL will host a presentation in the spring about how to design a poster.

CSD (Katelyn)

- Hosted Storytime Boot Camp in October – first time they've hosted based on feedback from members across the state.
 - 50 registrants, went well, positive feedback.
- BEST 2024 Spring Edition coming up March 7. Virtual. Registration is open.
- Working on the PAF for Kids are Customers, Too Conference. Tentatively April 4 at Miller branch HCLS.
 - Looking at Jessica Anne Bratt, author of Let's Talk About Race in Storytime as keynote.
- Dec. 11 next meeting.

PSD (Melissa)

- Next hybrid meeting December 7 at 9:30 @ Sollers Point, BCPL

- Working on spring networking standalone program, Date of April 25 tentative. At Carroll County Public Library Commons.
- Approved and submitted work plan and officer nominations
- Serving on IG Audit Committee & at Centennial Carnival.

SSD (Lou)

- Will meet Dec 7 (meets 6x per year) totally in person. Will be the holiday/end of the year lunch meeting at Oscar's Ale House East.
- Working on a standalone program.
- Had a booth at Centennial Carnival staffed by 5 active members – was a lot of fun.

LDD & RAIG posted updates on MLA Connect

BCMLA (Sharon & Melanie)

- Meet virtually every first Weds of the month, next meeting is Dec. 6.
- Confirmed Christine Iko will be VP/President Elect.
- Submitted 5 programs for conference this year.
- Every other month the meetings include a book discussion – last month was Out There Screaming by Jordan Peele.
- BCMLA Meetups have been small but successful
- Working on an end of year in person meeting to get folks together. Surveyed to see what folks wanted to do.

TIG (Tori George)

- Held first official meeting – went well on MLA Connect! Discussed possible programs and ways to support members.

LGBTQ+ Interest Group (Dr. Clark)

- Trying to get back on track – caught up, introduced members, started to put together documents/plan for the year.
- Working on developing a survey.
- Thinking about in person meetups.
- Moved to monthly meetings to get more traction and engagement. Nov. 27 next meeting.

MIG (Laura)

- Has seen an increase of proposals related to their group this year than last year for the conference, which is exciting.
- Had first column in the Crab, will be a recurring column.

OSIG (Sabine)

- Presenting an outreach and marketing training in partnership with MSLA.
- Looking for a co-chair, will not be able to attend conference or sponsor a program at this time.