

Midwest Collaborative for Library Services
May 24, 2021
Board Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order – meeting called to order at 9:04am by Gallagher

A. Roll Call and Accountability of Meeting Preparation

Present: Belanger, Brock, E. Davis, Frank-Wilson, Gallagher, Garrison, Pohjola Andrade, Riley, Scheuher, Shorey, R. Smith, T. Smith, Speer, Waterman, Weismantel

Guests: S. Davis, Ladiski, Seabolt

Absent: Boston, Lunsford

B. Approval of the Agenda – Motion to approve Agenda made by Weismantel. Seconded by Riley. Motion approved.

C. Operational Consent Agenda – Motion to approve Operational Consent Agenda made by Bélanger. Seconded by Shorey. Motion approved.

1. Policy 2.0 Global Executive Limitations Monitoring Report (*Internal*)
2. Policy 2.3 Compensation and Benefits Monitoring Report (*Internal*)
3. Policy 2.5 Financial Condition and Activities Monitoring Report – February (*Internal*)
4. Policy 2.7 Ends Focus of Contracts and Grants (*Internal*)

D. Board Consent Agenda – Motion to approve Board Consent Agenda made by Pohjola Andrade. Seconded by E. Davis. Motion approved.

1. Policy 3.12 Cost of Governance Compliance Report (*Direct Inspection*)
2. Policy 4.1 Unity of Control Compliance Report (*Direct Inspection*)
3. Policy 4.4 Monitoring Executive Director Performance Report (*Direct Inspection*)
4. Approval of Minutes of February 3, 2021 meeting

II. Executive Director

A. Executive Director Report

Garrison presented additional information regarding his written report. He welcomed Pam Seabolt to the meeting as the new Manager of Engagement, Consulting and Training (ECT) at MCLS. He also reported on the Indiana wellbeing certificate cohort, whose members will earn Library Education Units (LEUs) from the Indiana State Library for completing the program. Cohort members appreciate the large amount of content available in the Wellbeing Lab's content portal.

In other news, Garrison met recently with Shorey, R. Smith, and others to discuss a school/academic library collaboration project to support teaching information literacy skills as students progress from high school to college, using INSPIRE databases. There may be ways to connect this work with

MCLS's current work on open educational resources (OER). MCLS will join the Open Education Network (OEN) as a consortial member in July, and MCLS members can now join OEN at the Allied member rate. MCLS will run a small grant program to help libraries join OEN, for up to two years.

Garrison also highlighted current software migrations to new platforms for Group Purchasing (GP), and training and workshop registration. Goals for both migrations include greater efficiency for MCLS staff, and a better user experience for library staff. He mentioned that GP staff are working with new libraries, and are in talks regarding new products including for data analytics.

MCLS's Shared Library Systems (SLS) staff are working with a member library and Innovative Interfaces to implement the Direct to INN-Reach (D2IR) API for MeLCat. SLS staff have also successfully negotiated a new contract with RIDES delivery courier ProMed. In the coming months, MCLS will consider how to address concerns regarding RIDES pricing for participating libraries in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (UP).

In closing, Garrison mentioned Project ReShare's ReShare Returnables recent 1.2 release, and anticipated 1.3 release in July. He also shared that MCLS's Subaru Impreza will be sold during May. He committed to explaining acronym terms more clearly in future reports to the Board.

B. FY2021 Budget Update

Garrison reported that FY2021 revenue over expense has remained positive to date, and that MCLS's reserve funds and investments continue to track higher than expected. He expects MCLS to end the fiscal year in vastly better shape than predicted, resulting in a significant surplus condition.

C. Policy 2.4 Financial Planning/Budgeting Monitoring Report and FY2022 Budget Review

Garrison presented his projected FY2022 budget. FY2021 was challenging to predict due to not knowing when or how the pandemic would impact MCLS's budget. However, as of today, MCLS expects to see a surplus for the current year. FY2022 remains unclear, and Garrison is again projecting a deficit for the year (smaller than for FY2021, at around 4.4%). He intends to use FY2021 surplus funds to help offset any FY2022 deficit, and plans to take a different approach in planning the FY2023 budget than in previous years.

In past years, the Board has provided the Executive Director guidance on a tolerable deficit condition in Board Policy Manual sections 2.4 and 2.5, and Garrison asked the Board for updated guidance for FY2022. He noted that he plans to embark on a strategic planning process, and that the management team is actively considering many facets of what work will look like at MCLS post-pandemic (including regarding strategy and business plans, systems,

MCLS's Lansing building, and more). Other questions center around membership, marketing, new service offerings, and staffing.

The Board discussed several budget-related questions regarding membership benefits, which initiatives that MCLS could pursue would need Board approval versus which would be operational, and policy manual wording regarding a tolerable deficit condition for FY2022 (including a question about operating deficit versus deficit spending in order to invest in innovative projects that could generate revenue). The Board also discussed working toward a balanced operating budget, and continuing to give the Executive Director some degree of flexibility due to ongoing unknowns, as well as how and when to discuss the budget in the future, and how Garrison could create a new model that could allow for appropriate accountability and flexibility.

Motion by Waterman to add the following language to Policy 2.4.2.a., 2.5.1.a, and 2.5.3.a.: *"With the exception of fiscal year 2021-2022, in which case, expenses shall not exceed revenues by more than 7% of net assets less real estate."* Seconded by Scheuher. Motion approved.

Motion by Pohjola Andrade to accept Policy 2.4 monitoring report. Seconded by Frank Wilson. Motion approved.

III. Board Education

A. Board discussion:

1. How do we move forward in this unusual time?
2. What information do individual Board members and MCLS have about what is currently going on in libraries/what libraries are currently facing (e.g. from LM, ISL, ALI, PALNI, ILF, MLA, MCDA, MiALA, et al.)?

Board discussion began around conference attendance, with a consensus that Board members would resume attending in person, perhaps by fall. There will be a transition, to include some hybrid conferences (an online element makes conferences more possible for some to attend).

Next, the Board considered how to re-engage in Ownership Linkage, which depends on many moving parts, including their own capacity levels, how a return to in-person work takes shape, vaccinations, and any remaining travel restrictions (which some institutions have lifted). Some felt it will take a long time before members can take anything else on. Members are "Zoomed out" for conferences, and we may not get good member feedback this year because of their varying capacity, and continuing uncertainty. Others believe we should put feelers back out. It may be at least until fall before we and members can start to think about it. This may be the time to rethink how to approach

Ownership Linkage and how to connect with members (as one example, school libraries need online meetings). The Board discussed developing an “umbrella” of engagement tools to reach out to members in different ways (e.g., quick 10-minute informational meetings, with many time options, one-question surveys, “water cooler”/drop-in meetings, and reaching not only member representatives, but also other staff). Given that many libraries are strapped for time, “small bites” may be good.

IV. Board Operation, part 1 12:30 – 1:45

A. 2021 Board Election Process Review

Positions up for election in 2021 (for the term of 1/1/2022-12/31/2024) include: At-Large Representative (Indiana), Research Library Representative (Indiana), School Library Representative (Indiana), At-Large Representative (Michigan), Public Library Representative (Michigan). E. Davis and Gallagher will not seek another term. R. Smith, T. Smith, and Frank-Wilson are each interested in serving another term in their respective positions. There is a Google form available to submit nomination information (required for both current Board members wishing to continue, and new candidates). The call for nominations will appear in the June MCLS newsletter and be sent to all member representatives. Nominees must be member representatives from MCLS member libraries, or an alternate member representative that the primary representative may appoint. The call for nominations closes in July. The Nominating Committee receives nominations, determines an election slate, and presents the slate to the full Board at its August meeting for approval. Once approved, the membership votes on the slate. The Board briefly discussed options for seeking more diverse Board members.

B. 2021 Board Retreat Agenda and Orientation Planning

The Board will aim for an in-person Board orientation on November 7, and an in-person retreat November 8-9, in New Buffalo, MI. Staff will explore a hybrid option if needed (Ladiski will inquire about technology). Garrison will approach 2020 retreat facilitator Louis Alloro about returning for 2021.

C. Board Onboarding

E. Davis presented a report from the Board ad-hoc committee on Board member onboarding. The committee’s recommended document has three parts: *Understanding Carver Policy Governance*, *Understanding Board Meetings*, and *Understanding MCLS*. Board members expressed that staff should do Teams/SharePoint training for new members first, and as early as possible, as that is where to find all of the information needed. Staff should work to ease new members in, as there is a lot of information to cover; is there a specific order in which information should be presented? The Board also discussed using an onboarding checklist, having veteran Board members mentor newer members, and a possible “retreat buddy” approach.

V. Board Operation, part 2

The Board went into breakout groups for committees and task forces:

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility (DEIJA) Task Force and Nominating Committee
- Ownership Linkage Committee

Ideas that emerged from the breakouts follow in VI.

VI. Ends Policy Development (part 1)

A. DEIJA Task Force and Nominating Committee

Ideas from this breakout session included:

- Consider how to articulate and commit to DEIJA values
- Consider adding DEIJA statement to Ends statement (e.g., a sentence in the introduction)
- Consider adding DEIJA statement to MCLS website
- Consider other ways to operationalize DEIJA commitment

The breakout also discussed recruiting more diverse Board members.

B. Ownership Linkage Committee

Ideas from this breakout session included:

- Mine existing data from 2019-2021 surveys and 2020-2021 virtual dialogues, and do qualitative data analysis
- Identify themes, and check in with members to see what still resonates via a survey in October so the Board may discuss qualitative data at its retreat
- Consider a “choose your own adventure” engagement plan with a toolkit of options members and Board members could choose from
- After 2021, reintroduce a multiyear Ownership Linkage plan

Garrison will find someone to identify themes. The Board will continue discussing Ownership Linkage at the August Board meeting.

Board members appreciated the time scheduled within the Board meeting to concentrate on this work.

VII. Ends Policy Development (part 2)

A. Ends Policy Review

The Board did not change Ends language at this meeting. The DEIJA Task Force and Ownership Linkage Committee’s work may affect the Ends.

VIII. Board Self-Assessment

Board members’ comments regarding the meeting included: the Board worked well today and got a lot of work done, through some difficult conversations (there is benefit to not always agreeing); feeling that we are moving forward, and desire

to keep momentum going; recognition that the Board's work is in progress; appreciate breakout rooms to use meeting time to do some work; appreciate a growth mindset, feedback, and additional perspective; some are more adept at data mining than others; the Board showed grace for next year's budget; the Board showed respect for all opinions; it is nice and rewarding to watch new Board members grow as they serve; the group fostered belonging; discussion was rejuvenating and refreshing; we're sick of Zoom, but this was a good use of it; the meeting was engaging throughout; we look forward to meeting in person; appreciate comments regarding onboarding new Board members on Teams/SharePoint; appreciate one another and being together as "different library people;" appreciate staff; and, if people are comfortable to meet in person in August at the MCLS office, we could make it happen.

IX. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Pohjola Andrade. Seconded by R. Smith. Motion approved – meeting adjourned at 3:11pm.

Reminder about upcoming meeting dates and locations:

- August 30, 2021 Board Meeting – online/MCLS office, Lansing, MI
- November 8-9, 2021 Board Retreat at Harbor Grand, New Buffalo, MI (*tentative*)
- November 19, 2021 MCLS Annual Meeting – online webinar