

**MLA Legislative Advisory Panel  
Minutes  
September 2, 2011, 10:00 a.m.  
Anne Arundel County Library Headquarters  
Annapolis, MD 21401**

Attending: Skip Auld, Mary Baykan (Chair), Darryll Batson, Joan Bellistri, Alan Bogage, Kay Bowman, Margaret Carty, Renee Croft, Denise Davis, Natalie Edington, Jim Fish, Martha Grahame, Valerie Gross, Mary Hastler, Carla Hayden, Lucy Holman, Glennor Shirley, Mary Somers, Evelyn Tchiyuka and Linda Williams. Donna Denny was the recording secretary.

Mary welcomed the Panel and introduced new member Lucy Holman. Ms. Holman is the Director of the Langsdale Library at the University of Baltimore and President Elect of the Maryland Library Association (MLA).

Minutes

Mary Hastler moved to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2011 meeting as amended. Jim Fish seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Federal Legislation

Natalie provided her federal plan of work for review.

Natalie reported that Congress is in recess this month, so there is not much to report except the following:

- As Congress works through the Appropriations bill, there are several programs that are at risk of being cut: the Government Printing Office (GPO); the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP); and the Federal Digital System (FDsys, which stores and archives all digital government documents). Please contact your members of Congress and ask them to fund the GPO at the President's FY 2012 recommendation. It is critical to stress the value and importance of these programs and resources in providing access to government information. If you have a story to demonstrate the value, please share that as well.
- The SKILLS Act has been referred to committee, so no progress at this time.
- After three years, Congress finally passed a bill that protects libraries from enforcement of Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act. All Maryland congressional representatives signed the bill.
- Next year's National Library Legislative Day will be held on Monday, April 23 and Tuesday, April 24.

Natalie noted that the default signature can be modified on Capwiz to let congress know the organization driving the advocacy. She provided the current default and asked for other ideas. Mary Baykan said it would be more impressive to our legislators if our advocacy came to them under the MLA banner instead of ALA. In addition, users should consider adding their other memberships to their tag line (i.e. MASL, etc.), when appropriate.

## Legislation - Review of Last Session

Mary Baykan reported that the last session of the General Assembly ended fairly well for the library community, considering the circumstances. Public libraries went to the mat and ended up in conference committees to preserve our capital grant funding and to prevent a pension administration fee. Going into the final hearings, we had done our homework with MAPLA's lobbying firm. We accepted the Governor's budget, but pointed out that flat-lining library funding was actually a cut, since we were due for an increase.

The House Appropriations Committee introduced an amendment to charge an administrative fee to Maryland Boards of Education and Community Colleges. The fee is for employees in the teacher's pension fund at a cost of \$162.67 per employee. We learned about it after the fact, but we did have time to get to the Senate and get it rejected for libraries, because we, unlike them, are not covered by maintenance of effort. Because of the work of many advocates, we were opted out of this administrative fee.

Once again, we defended the capital budget against the Department of Legislative Services (DLS). Our funding mandate was kept, but we lost 20% of it, so we are limited to \$4 million instead of \$5 Million this year. Mary already has appointments lined up with legislators to try to stave off another future attempt by DLS in the coming year.

Skip asked when we might try to increase the \$5 million for capital grants. Mary explained that in the six years it has existed, it has been reduced almost every year. We won't be asking for an increase for the next two or three years, but is a goal we should strive for. Recent applications totaled just over \$5 million. The purpose of the grants is to leverage fifty percent matches from local governments.

Pensions were a big focus last year. Employee contributions were increased from 5% to 7% and vestment of new hires was increased from 5 to 10 years. Interestingly, part of our 7% contribution is not going into the retirement fund but to the general fund. Wouldn't this make it a tax?

Maryland ended its fiscal year with a fund surplus. Mary shared a recent news article from the *Maryland Reporter* quoting Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot.

## State Affordability Report

Mary shared another article from *Gazette.Net* about capital debt affordability. The committee that determines how much can be spent says that the state can't afford to borrow because it is about to reach its debt limit. Since our capital grants will be at risk, we need to see this report when it comes out.

## Committee on Pension Sustainability Final Report

The Pension Sustainability Committee came out with its final report which reviewed and compared their recommendations with what passed in the legislature. They made a good start, but some things still need work such as state/county cost sharing of pensions and providing an ability to opt out of pensions and into a 401K environment. The report focuses on teachers and community colleges with no mention of librarians or media specialists. The corridor funding method has allowed the state to underfund the pension for years.

We learned that the boards of education have made a deal with leadership of the General Assembly. They will accept the push down of the pensions to the counties (graduated and phased in over the years) if they leave maintenance of effort alone.

A discussion on upcoming redistricting ensued.

Two additional recent articles were provided. One article was from the *Gazette* on a Montgomery County library issue in which Darryll and Parker were quoted. Another article from the *Daily Record* was about Hannah Powers of Alexander and Cleaver.

Joanie said the *Uniform Electronic Legal Material Act* will ensure that government information will be authenticated and accessible over time. Her colleagues are keeping an eye on it. Mary said if a bill drops for this, the panel would support it.

### Panel Plan of Work

Mary Baykan said everyone received a copy of the Legislative Panel's plan via e-mail this week. She asked that everyone look it over and suggest modifications as needed. It should be approved by the first of the week so she can submit it. The change needed to reflect MLA's strategic plan has already been made.

### DLDS

Renee reported for Irene that on September 6, the MSDE Board voted to submit a request for repairs to the State Library Resource Center (SLRC). The cost estimate is now at \$88 million because it has been deferred for 15 years. It will take a lot of work to make it happen. Mary Baykan said that the City of Baltimore should help with this. Although the state has been responsible since 1972, it is housed within Enoch Pratt and it must become a priority of the Baltimore city delegation for it to occur. The Panel recommended a strategic planning meeting with Irene, Carla, etc. on how to proceed. SLRC needs to get in the budget planning process with a three year funding period over the life cycle of the project.

### MLA President

Lucy Holman thanked everyone for welcoming her to the Legislative Advisory Panel. Lucy reported that Glennor Shirley, last year's MLA President, coordinated efforts to work on MLA's strategic plan. Lucy's goal is to bring the revised plan into implementation. Advocacy is number four of MLA's five major goals and they are trying to align all plans to this goal.

### MLA Executive Director

Margaret reported the following:

- The Baltimore Book Festival in Mt. Vernon will occur September 23-25. The MLA booth will be designed similar to the booth used at MACO and volunteers are needed. A flyer will be given out to ask people to thank their legislators for their support to libraries.
- Maureen O'Neill teaches at Baltimore Poly Tech and finished her PhD last year. She has more time now and joined MASL. She has had her talented students put together a video to promote

school libraries which we could use. It might be a good idea to bring these students to Library Day in Annapolis.

- The annual mailing for nominees to the Maryland Library Leadership Institute to be held July 16-20, 2012 has been sent out.
- The keynote speaker for the Annual Conference in Ocean City, May 9-11, 2012 will be Anirban Basu, Chairman and CEO of Sage Policy Group, Inc., an economic and policy consulting firm in Baltimore. The banquet speaker may be Doug Davidoff, the founder and CEO of Imagine Business Development.
- Jack Webber of Uptown Press is a member of the Governor's Commission on Prisons. He learned of the severe budget problem for prison libraries and is sympathetic. Margaret has arranged for Jack and Glennor to meet and share information.
- A push is on at MLA to develop the trustee division. Jim Fish is helping with a related survey.
- The upcoming annual CML meeting will include a program on the Future of Libraries. This is a great program we presented at MACO a while back and should be shown more often and in other venues.
- Thanks to everyone for signing the petition to support financial literacy in Maryland public schools. Margaret can sign anyone up for a related meeting to be held on September 28.
- Margaret showed booklets containing the official legislative committee membership roster. She picked some up at MACO and will try to get more copies.

Mary added that we still do not know the date of MLA reception in Annapolis and there may be a delay before we know.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on November 4, 2011.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Denny, Executive Assistant, AACPL.