

**Minutes
MLA Legislative Advisory Panel**

October 4, 2013

**Anne Arundel County Public Library Headquarters
Annapolis, MD**

In Attendance: Mary Hastler (Chair), Skip Auld, Darrell Batson, Joan Bellistri, Margaret Carty, Denise Davis, Natalie Edington, Jim Fish, Mark de Jong, Ann Gilligan, Sharan Marshall, Irene Padilla, Carrie Plymire, Glennor Shirley, John Sondheim, Evelyn Tchiyuka, and Linda Williams. Donna Denny was the recording secretary.

Guests: Darnice Jasper from Anne Arundel County Public Library (AACPL), Pat Hofmann from Citizens for Maryland Libraries (CML); and Sarah Jane Miller from Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL).

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. The minutes of the September 6, 2013 meeting were approved as corrected. Carrie moved to approve the minutes. Skip seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as revised.

Mary Hastler welcomed and introduced Darnice, Pat and Sarah Jane.

Federal Legislation

Glennor reported the following:

- There are no federal legislation alerts posted on the website of the American Library Association (ALA).
- While the ALA Washington Office remains up and running, the federal government shutdown will have a noticeable impact on library services across the country. Including:
 - The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is closed and will be unable to disperse grants and funds to libraries as part of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).
 - U.S. Census websites and collection surveys will be unavailable until the government is funded.
 - The Government Printing Office (GPO) is closed. Gpo.gov will not be updated during the shutdown. Federal Register services will continue in a limited capacity.
 - The Library of Congress will be closed to the public and researchers for the duration of the shutdown
- ALA is accepting submissions for the best library practices using cutting-edge technology. Nominations must be submitted by November 15, 2013, and winners will be announced at the upcoming 2014 ALA Midwinter Meeting, which will be held January 24-28, 2013.

State Issues

Mary Hastler reported the following:

- Mary Baykan could not attend the meeting as she is preparing for tomorrow's grand opening and ribbon cutting for the Alice Virginia and David W. Fletcher Branch of the Washington County Free Library in Hagerstown.
- Montgomery County is joining many other local groups in asking state and federal lawmakers to take on publishers that sell eBooks for higher prices to libraries than to individual consumers.
- Elections are only a year away, and there will be many changes and key players to watch. This will be a key year to be vigilant and not be victimized by any legislation we do not want. We should not assume a category that affects us will come under the heading of libraries.

Per Capita Aid Increase

The Panel considered pursuit of an increase in per capita aid for public libraries during the next legislative session. Sharon provided a history of the state's per capita aid to libraries. Maryland public libraries had been doing well until the recession impacted the 2008-2009 session of the General Assembly. Legislators deferred any additional increases and then they deferred them again the next year. The one increase we saw took over four years to achieve and we will not see another increase until FY17. In addition, rather than provide libraries with \$1 per capita, they delayed it, and chopped it up to about .50 cents per capita. They also cut State Library Resource Center funding by about 10%, the equivalent of about \$1 million. At the end of the last session, and up until the government shutdown, we thought it might be possible to get the next per capita increase to come sooner than FY17. Delegate Sheila Hixson suggested we investigate the possibility, and her committee might help us draft an appropriate bill.

Irene reported that she was contacted by the National Federation for the Blind to see about increasing per capita aid to the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Irene added that she is helping to bring her new colleague, Dennis Nangle, up-to-date on the history of library funding. In considering a push for a per capita increase, she recalled that former Maryland Speaker of the House Casper "Cass" Taylor once said *"If you want to play with the big dogs, you have to get off the porch."*

John noted that there is \$90 million in the capital budget for the renovation of SLRC and we need to make certain the work is begun this year. It is a four year project and legislators will not be likely to drop the project in the second year, once work has begun. The architect involved in the renovation of SLRC has been invited to the November meeting and will provide a presentation on the project.

Division of Library Development & Services (DLDS)

Irene Padilla reported that the process for the 2015 capital grant awards has been completed and recommendations were presented to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) last week. They are now being reviewed by the Department of Management and

Budget. When the Governor's budget is released, we will know if they will be included. DLDS is confident that the awards will be successfully granted and will include many new library systems due to the revised match formula.

John asked if MLA's Awards Committee would consider special recognition for Governor O'Malley on Maryland Library Day. It was noted that a nomination form is on the MLA website.

Irene noted that DLDS can withstand the federal government shutdown because it has enough money in its reserves to get through June. If the shutdown lasts longer, they might have to close the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. They cannot currently communicate with IMLS and were notified by them prior to the shutdown that this would happen.

MLA President

Carrie and Pat provided a copy of the "Declaration for the Right to Libraries" and noted that at the recent Baltimore Book Festival, CML collected signatures from the public to show their support. It is the cornerstone document of the ALA's initiative, *Libraries Change Lives*, which is designed to build the public will and sustained support for America's right to libraries of all types – academic, special, school and public. The document will continue to be signed by constituent groups and eventually sent to ALA to use as part of a special event prior to National Library Legislative Day (NLLD). The document is available in poster size and a digital declaration will be coming out soon. John suggested asking Maryland legislators to sign the document.

MLA Executive Director

Margaret Carty reported the following:

- The State Ethics Commission has new regulation that requires lobbyists from registered associations, such as MLA, to complete certification training every two years. Margaret will attend the training and invited anyone else to join her on Monday, October 21, at 10:00 a.m. in Annapolis. Participants are required to register and Margaret's certification will cover the MLA for two years.
- MLA representatives gave everything they brought with them away to participants who stopped by their booth at the *Baltimore Book Festival*. The crowd was not as large as in year's past, but Sunday saw steady traffic. Glennor noted that Friday was very busy and they gave away a lot of bottled water.

Letter – MLA Surveillance Concerns

The Panel was presented with a copy of a draft open letter to Congress that was co-authored by combined members of MLA's Intellectual Freedom Advisory Panel (IFAP) and a Legislative Advisory Panel sub-committee. The members included Steven Labash, Monica McAbee, Denise Davis, and Mark de Jong. Its purpose is to lodge an organizational concern on the part of MLA in lieu of MLA becoming a signatory of the *StopWatchingUs* open letter to Congress, which is the recommended action for state library associations to take by ALA's

Office of Intellectual Freedom. The Panel reviewed the draft and a discussion ensued. It was determined that more time should be allowed for membership input and approval of the letter. It should also not be sent while the government is shut down. Mary thanked everyone involved for revising and returning the draft so quickly. The overall consensus was that the letter reads well and speaks from the Liberians' perspective.

Other Business

Denise asked if *Maryland Library Legislative Day* had been set for 2014. Margaret reported that Senator Edward's office will help MLA obtain a date on the legislative schedule.

Irene noted that DLDS staffed a booth at the 2013 Library of Congress National Book Festival in September on the National Mall. Next year, they would like to expand on the information they provide to include organizations other than public libraries. A suggestion was also made for the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to combine booths with MLA.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned 11:15 a.m. The next meeting will be held on Friday, November 8, 2013.