

**MLA Legislative Advisory Panel  
Minutes  
November 8, 2013, 10:00 a.m.  
Anne Arundel County Library Headquarters  
Annapolis, MD**

Attending: Darrell Batson, Joan Bellistri, Alan Bogage, Margaret Carty, Mark de Jong, Natalie Edington, Jim Fish, Valerie Gross, Mary Hastler (Chair), Pat Hofman, Darnice Jasper, Glennor Shirley, John Sondheim, Evelyn Tchiyuka, John Venditta, and Linda Williams. Guest: Mary Jo Lazur. Donna Denny was the recording secretary.

Minutes

Jim moved to approve the minutes of the October 4, 2013 meeting. Darrell seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Federal Legislation

Glennor reported the following:

- *From the ALA Website:* Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and Representative Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI) have introduced the USA FREEDOM Act. This bicameral piece of legislation is intended to end bulk collection of telephone metadata, prevent bulk collection of Internet metadata, and permit companies to report publicly on the number of FISA orders and National Security Letters they have received and complied with, and the number of users (or accounts) whose information was sought under those orders and letters. The bill would also require the government itself to make additional disclosures about the intelligence surveillance it conducts. It would also establish a process for declassifying significant opinions issued by the FISA court and create an Office of the Special Advocate charged with arguing for privacy at the FISA Court. Please ask both your U.S. representative and senators to co-sponsor this important legislation. If any of your legislators have already co-sponsored, please thank them for bringing more transparency and oversight to these spying programs.
- *From The Schools, Health and Libraries Broadband Coalition (SHLB) Website:* In announcing his ConnectED Initiative earlier this year, President Obama challenged America to ensure that virtually every student has access to high-speed Internet access at our nation's schools and libraries within 5 years. Unfortunately, AT&T wants to eliminate one of the most important mechanisms to achieve that goal. A recent blog post from AT&T argues that amending the E-rate program to support "dark fiber" would be akin to subsidizing a "digital bridge to nowhere." AT&T's clumsy attempt to coin a phrase that analogizes schools and libraries to "nowhere" is a bit insulting, considering that schools and libraries often serve as the gateway for expanding the reach of broadband to nearby homes and businesses. More importantly, however, AT&T suggests that the E-rate program should not support dark fiber even when it is the most cost-effective broadband solution. AT&T posits that schools and libraries may not have the wherewithal to administer dark fiber networks, and that supporting dark fiber is inconsistent with the goals of universal service. The record shows otherwise. Many school districts and library systems are already using dark fiber networks today.

## *Privacy Letter Update*

Mark provided copies of the revised draft open letter to Congress which was co-authored by members of MLA's Intellectual Freedom Advisory Panel (IFAP) and a Legislative Advisory Panel sub-committee. 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 was the action recommended for state library associations to take, by ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom.

Mark also provided comments made about the letter during its review by the Panel in October. Mark noted that the letter now better explains the library community's perspective. The revised letter was discussed and additional edits were suggested. Jim moved to recommend that MLA's Executive Board sign and send the letter to Congress as amended. Joan seconded the motion. The letter was approved for MLA's Executive Board to sign and send to Congress.

## State Issues

Mary Hastler reported that although the state's budget shortfall is of some concern, the MLA LAP will pursue an increase in the per capita funding of Maryland public libraries. The *Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped* is also requesting an increase in its per capita funding, and the Panel is exploring whether or not to pursue this legislation as well.

John noted that *Alexander and Cleaver* will hold its annual breakfast and legislative preview next Tuesday and MAPLA members can attend. The lobbying firm feels confident that the push for increased per capita funding can be pursued. They also suggest that the state's budget shortfall may not as important as we have heard.

## *Uniform Electronic Legal Material Act (UELMA)*

Joan reported that Maryland state delegate Sam Arora (D-Montgomery County) will be sponsoring the Uniform Electronic Legal Material Act (UELMA) in the 2014 Maryland General Assembly. The act establishes an outcomes-based, technology-neutral framework for providing online legal material with the same level of trustworthiness traditionally provided by publication in a law book. The Act requires that official electronic legal material be: (1) authenticated, by providing a method to determine that it is unaltered; (2) preserved, either in electronic or print form; and (3) accessible, for use by the public on a permanent basis. UELMA has become law in eight states: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Minnesota, Nevada, North Dakota, and Oregon and hopefully this spring, Maryland.

John noted that the cost of the bill will be revealed by its fiscal note. He added that everything online is not free, and there are responsibilities involved.

The Panel will follow-up with Alexander and Cleaver to promote this legislation and Joan will continue to advise the Panel on the status of the bill.

## DLDS

John reported for Irene that DLDS may ask library leadership to contact their representatives in the General Assembly and let them know that approving the SLRC renovation is critical. The state's budget shortfall may trim its capital budget, but the SLRC project will cost more if it is revised a third time. \$18 million is the first installment for the four year project. The architect of the project may attend the next MLA LAP meeting to provide details.

## MLA President

John reported for Carrie that the last MLA Steering Committee meeting centered on the topic of intellectual freedom.

With regard to collecting signatures and further promoting the "Declaration for the Right to Libraries," Natalie reminded the Panel that MLA is only able to set up action alerts to reach out to *Maryland* Legislators, not federal legislators. ALA may be able to set up a letter for our use on their CAPWIZ site and Glennor will follow up to see if this is possible.

## MLA Executive Director

Margaret Carty reported the following:

- Margaret completed the certification training required of lobbyists from registered associations, and MLA is covered for the next two years with the State Ethics Commission.
- *Maryland Nonprofits* will hold their Legislative Preview Breakfast at the Doubletree Hotel in Annapolis on January 6, 2014 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Several MLA LAP members have already signed up. The early bird price to register is \$50 and will increase to \$150. A group rate for four people at \$65 each on their website.
- The date has not been set for the 2014 Maryland Library Day Legislative Reception. Mary Baykan is working with Senator Edward's office to set the date. Reception sponsorship request letters from Valerie Gross will arrive soon.

## Other

It was noted that representatives from Overdrive are visiting individual libraries and seem to want to be rid of the consortium.

Once again, next year's National Library Legislative Day in Washington, D.C. will conflict with the MLA Annual Conference, particularly difficult for those who want to get to Ocean City for the conference on Tuesday, May 6.

There being no further business, the meeting was concluded at 10:42 a.m. The next meeting will be held on Friday, December 6, 2013