

Metropolitan Library Service Agency Trustee Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August, 14, 2024

Oakdale Library

10am-12pm

Trustee Members Present:

Anoka:	not present	Ramsey:	not present
Carver:	not present	Saint Paul:	Beth Burns
Dakota:	Laurie Halverson	Scott:	Jody Brennan (virtual)
Hennepin:	Debbie Goettel	Washington:	Karla Bigham

Advisory Board Members/Representatives Present:

Anoka:		Ramsey:	
Carver:	Jodi Edstrom	Saint Paul:	Maureen Hartman (virtual)
Dakota:		Scott:	
Hennepin:		Washington:	Drew Wylie

Staff Present: Abigail Dillon (virtual), Gina Goettl, Kathleen James, Sally Lederer, and Susan Marschalk

I. Call to order

Chair Halverson called the meeting to order at 10:05am.

II. Introductions and Public Comment

Drew Wylie is in attendance in the place of Jacquie Kramer for Washington County.
There is not a quorum so no motions can be approved.

III. Discussion/Action Items

- a) Review and discussion of June/July financials and checks

There were no questions on the June/July financials. Financials will be approved at the September meeting.

- b) Acquisition of ConsumerReports.org for MELSA Electronic Resources Collection

The regional e-resources collection does not include a consumer resource. What is available, either locally or through Minitex, is frequently unable to address customer needs as reported by library reference staff.

Member library reference staff have had trial access since mid-April. Staff have highly endorsed CR.org as the best option to meet user information requests.

There is \$130,000 available in the Electronic Resources budget for new acquisitions. ConsumerReports.org is a third-party resource available through EBSCO. Because we are bringing all eight systems into the subscription we receive a 50% discount on individual subscription pricing. They also guarantee not to exceed 3% increase for renewal years 2 & 3. They have seen 5 to 7% increases in the last few years.

SYSTEM PRICING YEAR 1	
Anoka	\$15,837
Carver	\$7,386
Dakota	\$26,399
Hennepin	\$38,142
Ramsey	\$12,316
Saint Paul	\$15,837
Scott	\$7,386
Washington	\$12,316
1-year Total	\$135,619

Regional Pricing	
Year 1	\$67,810
Year 2	\$69,844
Year 3	\$71,940
3-year Total	\$209,594

This item will be added to the September agenda.

c) Advisory report – overview

The Advisory Board has been talking about 2025 legislative priorities. Sam Walseth, the MLA lobbyist, came to the last advisory board meeting to discuss these priorities. The board has also been talking about drugs in the libraries and how each of the systems have been handling this situation. They are in the beginning stages of discussing resources. Halverson mentioned that MELSA-funded training in this area could be an option due to the increased funding received this year. HCL has been using kiosks so library patrons can meet virtually with social workers (and court services at some locations). ACL has been trying this as well, but it hasn't been used very much. SCL has in-person family resource centers in some library locations.

The board has also been receiving monthly updates from Abigail Dillon and the Collection Development team. They are working to improve hold ratios in OverDrive and weeding the OverDrive collection.

(i) Equity Fund guidelines

In November of 2023, the Advisory Board approved a recommendation for changes to the MELSA distribution formula which was discussed at the December Board of Trustees meeting. The recommendation was refined at a February Finance Committee meeting and

approved by the Board of Trustees in March. At the June meeting, the Board of Trustees approved three additional recommendations from the Advisory Board related to the new formula, including a recommendation to combine the Formula and Phase allocations for a total of \$2 million for member library systems.

As explained during the December discussion, the new formula has two components:

1. Library Operations

Using 70% base and 30% population factors, this portion of the formula is meant to fund general library operations. This is analogous to the existing purpose of prior “Formula” funds and there are no use or reporting requirements for these funds.

2. DEI / Equity (\$250,000 of total \$2,000,000 allocation)

The Equity component factors are 50% base and 50% poverty (using information from the Metropolitan Council Community Profiles) with the goal of providing funds for member library systems to identify and remove barriers to library services informed through connections with communities who have experienced historical marginalization. A subcommittee of the Advisory Board developed criteria for qualifying projects, services and programs to be funded through the equity allocation. A draft document of these guidelines for the use of the Equity funds was approved by the Advisory board in February 2024 and was included in the meeting packet.

Note: a recommendation from the Advisory Board to rename the combined Formula/Phase allocations as the Library Systems Allocations Fund will be presented at the August 14 meeting.

As part of the Advisory Board’s recommendation, we indicated that a working group would develop the criteria for qualifying projects, services and programs to be funded through the equity allocation. The draft document included in the meeting packet reflects their work for your consideration and approval and was approved by the Advisory Board in February 2024.

- (ii) Advisory board legislative priority report and follow-up discussion

The various priorities from related groups (CRPLSA, Minitex and Metronet) were distributed in the meeting packet. There was an MLA legislative workshop at the beginning of August where these priorities emerged. MELSA would like to suggest some changes to the wording on Minn. Stat. 134.51 (the bill to ban book bans). Further discussion will need to take place with the Advisory Board and Sam Walseth if this change is something we want to push forward during this legislative session. Statewide, an increase to library construction grant funds is one

of the priorities. CRPLSA is also supporting efforts to reduce the cost of digital materials such as e-books and e-audiobooks. Burns has a connection with the literary critic at the Star Tribune and will work with Sally Lederer to get some coverage and educate the public about how much libraries are paying for e-books and e-audiobooks. Halverson mentioned that it is important to have a Library Day again at the legislature and to have a unified story and talking points.

The Equity Fund Guidelines will be on the agenda for approval at the September meeting.

d) Reports and information

(i) Transition committee report

Three finalists will be coming in person to interview. They will also be giving a presentation, and some topics suggested by the directors were: challenges and future of public libraries, advocacy strategies (and advocacy as it relates to MELSA and state-wide with our partners), innovation and strategic priority development. They are hoping to get videos from each of the candidates for stakeholders to review.

(ii) Executive director report

The report is included in the meeting packet.

(iii) smARTpass presentation

A report was included in the meeting packet and included a survey about smARTpass users during this summer. Lederer distributed smARTpass bookmarks that describe how to access the smARTpass website. She demonstrated the use of the website and some of the events available to patrons on the website.

(iv) Twin Cities Pride report

During this year's Pride event, over 5,000 buttons and bookmarks were distributed. Another popular feature was interactive and allowed Pride attendees to recommend their own Pride-related books, movies, and shows.

Halverson adjourned the meeting at 11:45am.