

Metropolitan Library Service Agency Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Friday, February 14, 2025
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
10:00am-12:00pm

Advisory Board Members/Representatives Present:

Anoka:	Colleen Haubner	Ramsey:	Pang Yang
Carver:	Jodi Edstrom	Saint Paul:	Maureen Hartman
Dakota:	Margaret Stone	Scott:	Jen Schultz
Hennepin:	Scott Duimstra	Washington:	Jacque Kramer

Staff Present: Abigail Dillon, Gina Goettl, Kathleen James, Sally Lederer, Mona Scott, and Sherry Wichitchu

I. Call to order

Chair Edstrom called the meeting to order at 10:03am.

II. Introductions and Welcome

III. Consent Agenda

- a) Approval of agenda
- b) Approval of meeting minutes (January 10, 2025)

Motion to approve the agenda and meeting minutes by Duimstra. Second by Stone.

Roll call vote:

ACL - aye	HCL - aye	SCL - aye
CCL - aye	RCL - aye	WCL - aye
DCL - aye	SPL - not present	

Motion carried.

IV. Discussion/Action Items

- a) PLA (Public Library Association) 2026 in Minneapolis

Planning for PLA 2026 has started, it will be April 1-3, 2026. Duimstra would like PLA to come to one of the Advisory Board meetings to talk about volunteer opportunities.

b) Read and Ride Day Funding Rebrand

Per Advisory Board request, MELSA is proposing reassignment of the Read & Ride Day Legacy funding (\$17,650 annual budget) to the MELSA Legacy Community Connections Fund. Features of this fund would include the criteria: regionwide, Legacy appropriate. The program priorities would include collaboration with statewide or metro partners, diversity and inclusivity, and kids/teens/family audiences. Stone suggested adding an interim report to the Executive Director's report once new events are scheduled.

Motion to approve rebranding Read & Ride Day funding to the MELSA Legacy Community Connections Fund within the outlined features, amending the program priorities to note that the Community Connections Fund will prioritize diversity and inclusion programs that meet one of these two criteria: collaboration with statewide/metro partners and kids, teens, family audiences). Motion by Yang. Second by Stone.

Roll call vote:

ACL - aye HCL - aye SCL – aye
CCL - aye RCL - aye WCL – aye
DCL - aye SPL - not present

Motion carried.

c) NCIP Payments to Library Systems

Since 2012, the MELSA budget has included support for NCIP costs for the eight library systems. Because a regional purchase of the software was unavailable for all systems' ILSs when this support originated, systems received an annual NCIP allocation, beginning at \$2,600/system and increasing to the current amount of \$3,000/system. The MELSA executive director and Advisory Board at the time elected to add the NCIP allocation to systems' Phase (technology) allocations each year rather than issue payments to the systems.

Over the years it has sometimes caused confusion to have this allocation bundled with Phase, and now that LSAF has replaced Phase/Formula, a change in the distribution method for these funds may be helpful. MELSA is suggesting a reimbursement by check each year, supported by a copy of the system's NCIP invoice. This would offer transparency and allow MELSA to keep up with current costs and adjust the budget as needed. Keeping NCIP and LSAF balances separate for the library systems' and MELSA's recordkeeping may also be beneficial.

Motion: Beginning in 2025, the Advisory Board supports a reimbursement of NCIP allocations from MELSA to the systems by check rather than the past practice of adding

NCIP to the systems' Phase (now LSAF) allocations. Motion by Stone. Second by Haubner.

Roll call vote:

ACL - aye HCL - aye SCL – aye
CCL - aye RCL - aye WCL – aye
DCL - aye SPL - not present

Motion carried.

d) Conversation with State Library Services

Tami Lee and Emma De Vera from State Library Services attended the meeting and gave an overview of the function of State Library Services, which is part of the Minnesota Department of Education. They administer funds for RLBSS, LSTA, ACH (Legacy), and construction grants. Tami talked gave more information about these funds, the public library survey, diversity efforts, book challenges, upcoming trainings, as well as statewide advocacy initiatives.

e) MELSA Teams and Interest Groups

A past practice at MELSA was to do an annual review of Teams/Groups with the Advisory Board. MELSA staff updated the current list of Team/Interest Group members. I would like to discuss how you feel the Teams/Interest Groups are functioning, clarify any directives and responsibilities needed for any of the Teams, and discuss if there are any existing Teams/Groups that are no longer needed. Included in the packet to help facilitate discussion is the current list of each group and all staff that are on each Team/Group, a general overview of the Team/Groups from 2021, and a more detailed document from 2004 that are guidelines for Teams/Groups. MELSA staff have also identified two potential new Teams/Groups for the Advisory Board's consideration, which are listed below. Kramer would like some time to talk with their staff and get their feedback on MELSA teams and interest groups. Yang would like more clarification on procedures, objectives, roles, and expectations of these groups. A 2004 teams/interest groups guideline document was distributed, and MELSA staff will work to update this document and bring it for review to the Advisory Board. Wichitchu asked the directors about the Facilities interest group, since it has lapsed over the last few years. When the group used to meet, the members would tour different library branches that had been recently remodeled, and much of the discussion centered around upcoming projects and exchanging this kind of information between member libraries. The general opinion was that this could be a good group to bring back and would like it to have an objective or charter. It may be a good idea to reevaluate the purpose of the Accessibility interest group. At last discussion (over a year ago), it was agreed that this group would stay together for the purposes of keeping the disability awareness page on the MELSA

website up to date, but there is potential for additional activities for this group. The directors would like to see charters from groups if they exist. Hartman entered the meeting at 10:49am.

A suggestion was received from one of the systems to invite interested Finance/Budget staff at the library systems to meet occasionally to share information, ask finance-related questions, and discuss best practices. Each of the MELSA systems handles finance information and works with their county/city finance people in different ways, and the positions may require different levels of expertise, but staff may appreciate this opportunity to connect with others doing similar work at the systems. Meeting remotely up to twice a year may be sufficient and if it is an interest group, representation from each system is optional. Does the Advisory Board support MELSA inquiring if there is interest among the systems for a Finance group? The directors were interested in proceeding in having MELSA inquire with the systems to see if there is interest in creating this group.

MELSA's 2025 budget currently includes \$25,000 for MELSA-coordinated regional training for library staff. (In 2023 and 2024, this budget line was increased by \$20,000 and \$25,000 to support two cohorts of ToP training.) In past years, MELSA has used these funds to coordinate training open to staff from all eight systems on a variety of topics related to library services and operations. Topics are suggested by MELSA team members, the Advisory Board, and other library staff. Examples in recent years include electronic resources training, de-escalation strategies, early literacy topics, social media skills, inclusive data, and disability awareness.

For coordination of trainings beyond team-suggested topics, MELSA staff have been working with staff responsible for training at the systems. In March of 2024, this group met remotely to meet each other and share information about current projects and needs. A discussion about the use of MELSA regional training funds to meet training needs shared by the systems continued via email on an infrequent basis in 2024. Further action was put on hold until the new MELSA executive director was in place.

While an official team or interest group may not be needed, MELSA values the input of these advisors and is wondering if they should be formally assigned by the Advisory Board to provide direction to MELSA for exploring and/or coordinating regional staff training as needed. Major training projects supported by the group will be brought to the Advisory Board for approval prior to implementation. Additional meetings may not be needed unless there is interest by the advisory group members.

Does the Advisory Board authorize the current group of advisors (distributed in the meeting packet) from the systems to provide direction and assistance to MELSA for regionally coordinated library staff training? The directors were supportive of this

suggestion. Hartman would like to receive more information about the timing, how this group is communicating with each other, and when decisions need to be made. (Mona) Scott will work on adding structure to the process of requesting direction from this group of advisors for any regional staff training, including timing, communication, and topics.

f) Continuation of Advisory Board priorities for collaborative spending assignments of the 2025 fund balance – tabled until March

g) Round table sharing

(i) Library Legislative Day February 20th Planning

The library directors shared their plans for Library Legislative Day (as allowed by their counties). Most of the systems have plans to be at the Capitol or have virtual meetings.

(ii) Responding to Federal Law Enforcement – tabled

V. Reports

a) Executive Director Report – distributed in meeting packet

b) Update from E-Collection Task Force - tabled

c) Collection Development Team Report

In our continued discussion around holds management, it was proposed that we follow the trend of other libraries on OverDrive and delete holds that are over several years old. It was proposed to the team that OverDrive will remove holds older than 4 years on a quarterly basis, to be reviewed in January 2026 to evaluate if this practice should cease or continue. The team voted, and the vote passed and is now presented to the Advisory Board for discussion and approval.

The Advisory Board will review this information and due to time constraints, will discuss this issue and possibly approve at the March meeting. Dillon will send more exact numbers to the Advisory Board via email. The Collection Development team will propose a patron communication plan for the March meeting.

d) Update about Prince-Themed Library Cards – Duimstra will send an email update

Edstrom adjourned the meeting at 12:13pm.