



**MLA Board Meeting Minutes January 18, 2017**  
**Montana State Library**  
**Helena, Montana**

President, Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, Mary Guthmiller, Matt Beckstrom, Mitch Grady, Carmen Clark, John Finn, Conor Cote, Jim Kammerer and Debbi Kramer. Diane Mattila and Stephen Haddad via web connection.

Guests: Bruce Newell, Jennie Stapp, Heather Johnstone, Tammy Luther, and Marie Habener.

**BOARD MINUTES:**

Matt Beckstrom moved to approve the October 17, 2016 Board meeting minutes. Carmen Clark seconded. The motion passed.

**ASSOCIATION REPORTS:**

Debbi indicated she had a question regarding the Professional Development report, deferred that query as it is a New Business agenda item. Dianne asked how school librarians can assist with the MLA conference. Carmen inquired about the totals for DA Davidson, Ameriprise and Cates. Debbi said the Cates fund is separate. Debbi said the budget is looking good.

**LEGISLATIVE BUDGET HEARING:**

John Finn reported that Jennie Stapp presented to the appropriations committee regarding HB261 (extending state aid to libraries). Both she and Bruce Newell were there and were asked several thoughtful questions from the committee. Both he (John) and our MLA lobbyist, Nanette Gilbertson, were there to provide public comment on HB261. He reported that good feedback was given by the appropriations committee members.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1) The ASLD/PLD retreat (Chico) netted a profit of \$1,342.00 even after a \$700.00 fee to reserve for the next retreat, which is slated for October 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017. There were some concerns voiced regarding slow internet connections and lower attendance. Board members asked if this retreat should remain at Chico or move it around the state. Mitch voiced that a perception of having it there might not be seen as work, but more of a get-away. It was suggested that feedback be sought after the next retreat for both those that did and did not attend. It was also suggested that there be an exit survey for the next one.

2) Jim Kammerer provided more information to the board regarding MLA's possible membership in the Montana Newspaper Association (MNA). He indicated that both associations support and defend the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment's rights, libraries already subscribe to news, libraries are repositories of government information and make efforts to ensure that access to that information is available, natural ally for issues important to MLA, direct access to 83 newspapers to include about 4 press releases per year, MLA logo on its website, possibly MNA's membership in MLA. There are 3 membership levels: bronze (\$225), silver (\$350), and gold (\$475). After consideration, Conor Cote made a motion that we apply for the bronze membership. Matt Beckstrom seconded. The motion passed.

3) Debbi talked to a representative at D.A. Davidson regarding concerns about our investments. She reported that the current investments are mostly in bonds and that the rate of return are not what they could be. After discussion, we would like to see if D.A. Davidson can improve our rate of return perhaps by shifting some of the investments, maybe rethinking investment in different higher risk ones. If that's not possible, then we may look into going with a different company. Carmen asked about what the parameters were when the account was set up, especially what role MLA plays in any management. Bruce Newell shared some history about MLA moving funds from a regular bank account to D.A. Davidson. The board gave Debbi the go ahead to investigate possibilities and bring back information to the March 2017 meeting.

4) Debbi spoke with an agent with Ameriprise investments regarding different investment scenarios. The agent suggested a partial investment in municipal bonds. One suggestion was using \$8,000 from our reserve fund and reinvest that for one year. Jennie Stapp recommended that we look into what our investment goals are and that would give Debbi a better direction regarding those investments. Bruce Newell also provided some background on the reserve funding. It was initially thought to be a percentage to be used for future upkeep or unexpected expenses. A small group comprised of Debbi, Lisa, Jennie Stapp and Bruce Newell will be formed to suggest an investment course of action to bring to the board at the March meeting. Carmen suggested that a yearly pulse check of investments be presented to the board. All agreed that this would be a good recurring agenda item at the yearly board retreat.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

1) Matt Beckstrom reported on ALA's position regarding the incoming U.S. presidential administration. He said that ALA has issued a press release (which the draft accidentally was released, redacted, then re-released) with statements regarding its dedication to finding solutions to help people. As of this meeting, it was not on ALA's website. ALA did apologize for jumping the gun and a town meeting with the council and membership. Matt was unsure if councils will be asking for feedback from state representatives. He will send out a recap after council, but indicated that if any vote is expected, he will come back to board members.

2) Jennie Stapp gave an update on HB 261, which is an extension for the funding for state aid to libraries, sponsored by Representatives Frank Garner and Kimberly Dudik. She shared the informational packet that was put together and dispensed at the hearing. This information is on MLA's website under 2017 Legislative Resources. She reported that the hearing went very well and that everyone was looking forward to this evening's reception.

3) Jim Kammerer approached the board with a fundraising idea. He provided information about the Center for Car Donations program (<https://centerforcardonations.com/become-a-partner/>) and an overview of how it works. After a short discussion, the question that was posed was, "What's our liability?" Lisa will contact the business to ask for contract specifics, look over, and then decide a plan of action from there.

4) The updates to the Professional Development Committee documents (chair, committee, and guidelines for grants) were discussed. Debbi posed the question about awarding the same person different grants within the same year. Lisa asked if a timeline for the grants could be included with other MLA ones. It was pointed out the members can apply for funds anytime, not just when a call for applications go out. It was reiterated that an expenditure report for professional development should be an agenda item at each board meeting.

5) MLA webmaster, Stephen Haddad provided an update on the MLA website redesign. He said that all information from the current website has moved to the new one except for a few events. "Bread crumbs" have been added for navigational purposes. He still also wants submission of high resolution photos from all

parts of Montana to include on the home page. The “go live” date will be at the debut at conference. The current site will go away first of May, 2017. Information from Google Analytics for MLA’s website for November & December 2016 was shared. He also indicated that more information needs to be added, especially to the front page. Lisa indicated she will work with Stephen on updated information.

6) Bobbi Otte submitted four (4) changes to the by-laws. These are: board vacancies with respect to the President, wording change from location to city and venue as it relates to the section regarding the annual meeting, add a section addressing the Executive Director’s position, and change of language in duties of Secretary-Treasurer. Matt Beckstrom made a motion to put forth these proposals for changes to the by-laws to the MLA membership. Conor Cote seconded. The motion passed.

7) A government documents resolution and a letter to Senator Tester are in the works to support preservation of government documents. More information will be available at the March, 2017 MLA conference.

8) Debbi indicated that registrations for the February 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Offline conference in Glendive are coming in.

9) Debbi also gave an update on the 2017 MLA conference preparations. Programs are ready to print as well as speakers and their gifts are lined up. She reported that the revamped Radisson facility in Helena was toured and that it looks like a viable venue. Based on its reasonable costs for meeting rooms, meals, etc. a proposal has been sent for possible 2019 conference. She also said that the 2018 one is slated for the GranTree in Bozeman, recommended the Radisson in Helena for 2019, and said the 2020 one is scheduled for the Holiday Inn in Missoula. Based on Debbi’s recommendation, Matt Beckstrom moved that we hold the 2019 conference at the Radisson Hotel in Helena. Carmen Clark seconded. The motion was approved. As an added answer to Dianne’s earlier question on how school librarians can assist at the 2017 conference, Debbi suggested: hospitality, vendor liaison, registration, and facilitators.

10) Conor verified that the MLA Twitter account has been set up with Stephen and as of the meeting date, had been activate for about 1 ½ weeks. Content will be put up and information will be dispensed on Wired and Focus. It was suggested that he work with Marketing & Public Relations chair Beth Boyson to get the word out.

Announcements about the advocacy legislative training happening this afternoon and the legislative reception this evening were made.

The next board meeting is scheduled for March 29, 2017 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. in Billings in conjunction with the MLA Annual Conference.

Having completed the January board meeting agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 12:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary J. Guthmiller  
MLA Secretary/Treasurer