



# Montana Library Association

*From the Mountains to the Prairies*

## Board Meeting Agenda Livingston Park County Library, Livingston, MT October 14, 2019

Board Meeting called to order at 1:03pm.

In attendance: Shari Curtis (co-Chair PLD), Elizabeth Jonkel (past President), Stephan Licitra (ASLD Chair), Carmen Clark (Director at large-East), Debbi Kramer (Executive Director), Mary Anne Hansen, (President), Rachel Rawn (MPLA Rep), Brittany Alberson (incoming SLD Chair), Megan Stark (Secretary/Treasurer), Cory Fifles (PNLA Rep), Gavin Woltjer (IF Committee Chair, President-Elect), Kit Stephenson (co-Chair PLD), Mitch Grady (outgoing PLD chair), Laura Tretter (guest and from the State Historical Society)

Attending online: Jennie Stapp (State Library)

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Agenda review
3. Approval of June 14-15, 2019 minutes  
Action item: Approval of June 14-15, 2019 minutes. **Motion to approve by Stephenson. Unanimous consent called by Woltjer. Approved.**
4. Action item: **Motion to remove discussion of ALA removing Council from the agenda, and to add Division and Committee updates to the agenda by Woltjer. Seconded by Clark. Unanimously approved.**
5. Action item: **Motion to add Conference update to the agenda by Woltjer. Seconded by Clark. Unanimously approved.**
6. Action item: **Motion to add discussion of non-profit organization membership and approval of 990 by Kramer. Seconded by Woltjer. Unanimously approved.**
7. MLA License Plates: New law enacted by the most recent legislature that requires a change to the license plate policy as of January 2020 ([see attached letter from State of MT](#)). MLA will likely not meet the required minimum, but this brings in around \$4000 annual revenue. Jonkel suggested that one idea might be to implement a \$25 donation to those who might have purchased the plates. Woltjer suggested contacting Friends and Foundations (available from the State Library) to ask for assistance over the interim period until the organization can determine a new stream of revenue. Woltjer will craft a letter for the Board to review. Upon approval, it will be posted to Wired to alert members about the change and the Board's response. There was a discussion of how the paid lobbyists were unaware of this issue during the legislative sessions.
8. Association Reports:
  - a. Divisions: Licitra reported that ASLD and PLD worked on the Chico retreat. The total attendance was 38, there were eight sessions delivered, and the speaker, Kate Hampton, was well-received. Stephenson reported that PLD discussed the conflict with the retreat scheduling on Indigenous Peoples Day and proposed a different date. Licitra indicated that ASLD also discussed rotating the venue to other hot springs across the state. There was a discussion of adding the Fall Retreat to Offline and scheduling the event for fall, which might require an expansion of the total number of dates. Kramer indicated that both the scheduling and the finances would warrant further consideration of this option. Other things to consider are MSC and MFPE annual event schedules. Stapp suggested that there be a Professional Development needs survey. State Library will continue with Fall Workshops. Stapp suggested that Flick work with the Board to develop a survey. Woltjer recommended that Chico Hot Springs be reserved for October 18-19, 2020, and a

simultaneous needs analysis be performed regarding Offline. The Board agreed with this recommendation. Kramer will reserve the venue accordingly. PLD is looking for a new co-Chair. Alberson updated on SLD: There has been a discussion of the new standards, and increasing the collaboration among public and academic libraries. SLD is looking for a new co-Chair. A school librarian practicing in the K-8 system would be welcome.

Rawn: Hansen previously shared survey results (**attached**) with the Board about a joint MPLA/PNLA/MLA conference in early August; overall the perception was positive.

Rawn will update the Board at a later date. Fifles: PNLA had a successful conference in Spokane in August. PNLA cannot do a spring joint event due to state organization conference schedules, but there is ongoing interest and willingness for further discussion around a large conference. PNLA has not yet had a discussion about the expanded use of Wild Apricot and its potential utility as a benefit for member states.

- b. Standing committees: No updates from current chairs.
  - c. Executive Director: Kramer has been attending Virtual Advocacy webinar via ALA. Advises that MLA places this information on the website for the upcoming year. The portal is focused on legislative issues and keeping members current. Engage appears to be easy to implement. Examples of its functionality include news streams, upcoming issues, searching for individual advocacy records, etc. ALA intends to assist each state during legislative years. Kramer will ensure this information is transferred to the Executive Director and/or managing company. Kramer has also updated conference statistics, and maintains a year-to-year comparison. Reminder to the Board members to submit reports to Kramer for the archive.
9. MLA Conference update:
- a. Programs were chosen according to the same process as has been used in the past. Kramer reported that it was successful. The pre-conferences appear to be cost-free, and there are four scheduled. There will be 46 programs, and the website is current. Kramer is working on speaker contracts and the schedule. The Steering Committee will make recommendations for speaker gifts, tours, etc. Registration will open January 7, 2020. One significant change: the new member breakfast will be replaced with a social hour. It was suggested that one potential speakers gift might be some type of discount for an upcoming MLA event or membership.
10. MLA Executive Director Position
- a. Licitra discussed the analysis (**attached**) that was shared with the Board. Woltjer invited the Board to welcome this opportunity as a learning moment, and that imperfection can be expected. Hansen emphasized that the Board may change its mind over time about this decision. There was a discussion about how to assess whether the decision is successful. Hansen summarized the survey results (**attached**), which include the desire of membership to have a director, in addition to a desire for more sophisticated technology. Kramer shared the concern she has heard from members regarding the need for a person, but also emphasized the need for membership software regardless of the executive director position. Software also would save web master funds and a separate fee for the FOCUS newsletter. There was consensus of the Board was that membership software is critical. The discussion moved to the wage range for the executive director. Stapp suggested that an RFP could be released, and that an individual or a firm could respond, with a timeline for hire in early December. Another option might be to contract with Smith McGowan for a determined time and evaluate at the end of the contract. The Board deliberated on several factors, including the full scope of work and understanding how to connect the membership software with the other pieces of the work. Kramer raised the concern about current MLA equipment. **Action Item: Woltjer moved to engage Smith and McGowan for an annual contract, subject to specific negotiations to follow immediately. Fifles seconded. Unanimously approved.** Woltjer will facilitate negotiation with Smith and McGowan. Hansen will work on a memo to the membership and for the MLA website for Board approval by the end of October. Kramer is on-contract with MLA through the end of FY20.

11. Montana Nonprofit Association membership and approval of 990: Kramer shared information about this organization and its membership benefits. Action item: **Woltjer moved to renew MLA's membership for another year. Alberson seconded. Unanimously approved.** Kramer presented the 990 form, which was approved by the president and the Board. Kramer will file the form with the IRS.
12. Wrap up
  - a. Next meeting: Conference call to be determined by doodle.
  - b. Final comments: Kudos to all those who brought forward the information needed to make this decision. Kramer was thanked for her long and excellent service to MLA.

Meeting adjourned at 3:39 PM.  
Submitted by Megan Stark