

NOBLE Executive Board Meeting via Zoom

August 11, 2021

Present: Ron Gagnon, Martha Driscoll, Elizabeth Thomsen, Amy Lannon, Brian Courtemanche, Myron Schirer-Suter, Linda C.W. Gardener, Nicole Langley, Tara Mansfield, Catherine McDonald, and Abby Porter.

1. Call to Order/Welcome

The meeting was called to order by Amy Lannon at 2:04pm.

2. Approval of Minutes

Corrections to Amy's name, correction of motions to monitors, any should be changed to Amy on page 3, and Catherine McDonald needs to be added to those present.

Action: Brian made motion to approve the minutes as amended, Nicole seconded. All in favor.

3. Treasurers Report

Report postponed until later.

4. Executive Director's Report

Personnel Scheduling- Ron reported that the 60% in the office plan was adopted on July 12th. There were lots of vacations in July, but it allowed for a transition to the full amount of people. Paula, George, and Ron are still in the office full time. George comes in during the morning and then goes out to libraries. Elizabeth works in the building Tuesdays and Thursdays, Martha on Wednesdays and Fridays, and the rest of the staff alternates those days every other week. Everyone is in on Mondays and gets to see each other. This seems to be working out pretty well. One employee will provide a doctor's note to continue working remotely.

George and Tom were able to repurpose monitors for in building workstations and office cleaning has been increased to daily with focus on high touch areas.

ECCF Grant- Ron and Martha have been working with the Essex County Community Foundation to improve internet connectivity in Gateway Cities including Salem, Lynn, and Peabody. The equipment would cost \$15,565 and NOBLE has also applied for an additional \$7,560 for internet bandwidth upgrades for the three libraries for one year. This opportunity is an outgrowth of a meeting with ECCF back in December about the digital divide. The ECCF is channeling money from both federal and state organizations. Federal funds require internet filtering so there were several go arounds to try to make sure the funding comes from the state. Ron and Martha met with the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative to find out what types of statistics would be required and Martha is working on pulling those statistics. Things seem to be going well and there are lots of ongoing questions and discussions.

NOBLE needs to upgrade all library equipment as it is nearing end of life and limited to 100Mbps, so these upgrades will be need to be funded soon anyway. This grant would help pay for some of the upgrades and having a few libraries test the upgrade instead of all the libraries being upgraded at the same time is helpful.

Bookkeeping Transfer- Paula is still working on the bookkeeping software over from to Account Edge to QuickBooks and talking with consultants about migrating the data. They have selected a vendor and are moving forward. The new software will be on a server instead of Paula's PC, and will eventually move to the cloud.

Working Groups- Ron has received a good number of volunteers for working groups. A message was sent out in late June and wrapped up on August 6th. The results have been tabulated and Amy will officially appoint the volunteers. Executive Board authorized the working groups back in June. The Electronic Resources and Database Working Group has ten volunteers, Collection Management has seven volunteers, and Resource

Sharing has five volunteers. The Collection Management group was not active last year, and the volunteers are new to the group.

Each working group is required to have an Executive Board liaison. Myron is on ERDWG, but a liaison is needed for Collection Management and for Resource Sharing. Nicole volunteered to be on either committee. Amy will send out an email after the meeting seeking one other volunteer and will appoint the volunteers to the working groups.

New Directors- NOBLE has been meeting with new library directors. There has been quite a bit of changeover lately. There was an in person welcome meeting last month with Kim Grad, the new director at Marblehead and a Zoom meeting with the interim director at the Phillips Academy, Shawna Egan. Back in May, there was also an in person meeting with Greg McClay, the new Winthrop director. Elizabeth provided additional training for Kim and Greg after the welcome. Danvers has also hired a new director, Noelle Boc, who was assistant director at the Tewksbury Library. Alyce Deveau has announced her retirement.

State Budget- The FY22 State Budget was signed by the Governor on July 16th. It was great news for Board of Library Commissioners and for the libraries of the commonwealth. They were focusing on State Aid to Public Libraries and received the requested amount, which was an increase of one million dollars. The Library Technology and Resource Sharing line, which funds networks and databases, received the requested 3% increase. State Aid to Regional Libraries, which funds the Mass Library System and Library for the Commonwealth, received an unexpected \$624,000 increase. State income continues to come in higher than estimates.

LEA Funding- NOBLE received additional LEA funding for Overdrive from MBLC to acquire shareable ebooks. There was leftover LSTA money that needed to be spent, and NOBLE received \$33,000. The money was primarily used for reactivating titles, popular demand titles, audiobook titles, and popular series. NOBLE is expecting a similar amount to be awarded this fiscal year.

The MBLC is working on a law similar to Maryland's law that would expand the availability of e-books to libraries. ALA and MLA are supporting the effort. Some books are available to the public and not to libraries, and these efforts are to correct that.

ARIS Data- The circulation and collection data was released last month. There was a slight correction to the serials numbers. The dollar figure for Novelist was also distributed and libraries may count their assessment as part of their materials expenditure.

Melrose Building Grant- The MBLC awarded the Melrose Library a provisional construction grant of almost \$8 million and they have until January to find matching funds. Linda noted that as the vote was happening as the staff were putting buckets under leaks and relocating materials in the local history room.

5. Vote to Approve FY22 Executive Board and Members Calendar

Motion: To approve the FY22 Executive Board and Members meetings calendar as presented.

Discussion: Ron proposed that Executive Board would meet the second Wednesday of the month at 2pm and Members would meet the third Thursday of the month at 10am. There were not any holidays or conflicts. The annual meeting will be in May because Marblehead is hoping to be under construction before June.

At the September Executive Board meeting Ron will present the proposed budget for FY23 and any changes to the FY22 budget. The budget will then be voted at the October Members meeting.

Action: Linda made the motion to approve, seconded by Catherine. All in favor.

6. Vote to Approve FY22 Distribution of Overdrive Assessment

Motion to approve FY22 distribution of \$233,200 in Overdrive funds as presented.

Discussion: Ron noted that Overdrive magazines have been an evolving piece of the assessment. The changes resulted in \$5000 available to reallocate. The overall collection has increased due to the Overdrive Advantage purchases made during the pandemic.

Action: Brian made the motion to approve, seconded by Linda. All in favor.

7. Vote to Consider Termination of Temporary Pandemic Change to Standard Overdue and Billing Policy

Motion to recommend terminating the temporary pandemic change to standard Overdue and Billing Policy.

Discussion: Amy stated that Executive Board will make a recommendation to terminate or maintain the policy which will be voted on at the Members Meeting in September.

Ron noted that the policy has been in place since last September and it was time to look at it again. Statistics were distributed. Amy noted that there should be a definite timeline for the recommendation. Ron noted that reinstating blocks could be phased in over weeks and months. Notices could be sent in chunks to patrons instead of all at once. NOBLE could also send a notice about accounts being blocked two weeks before sending bills.

Linda noted she was in support of terminating the policy. Catherine noted that she would like to know if any library had objections to terminating the temporary change. The standard policy applies to all libraries.

Ron recommending drafting an email to directors to explain the current practice and proposed change.

Action: Catherine made the motion to approve, seconded by Nicole. All in favor.

8. Lease Update

Ron stated that the building NOBLE is leasing was purchased by Abiomed back in the spring. NOBLE has two full years through the end of August 2023 left on the current lease. Ron met with Abiomed's real estate agent who was interested in knowing where NOBLE stands. Ron reached out to a competing firm to get market figures about office space. Based on those numbers, NOBLE is better off staying at the current location through the end of the lease because they are paying less than market rate and the space was specifically designed for NOBLE's needs. Staying put will allow NOBLE to have time to see how trends go with workspaces.

9. Discussion of Remote Evergreen Hosting

Ron stated there is an objective in this year's action plan to investigate remote hosting of Evergreen. This needs to be accelerated due to the impending move. The current servers have their own space, power needs, and upgrade costs.

Ron has contacted Equinox, MOBIUS, and Emerald Data. Equinox would provide their own servers and the cost would be \$136,000 plus \$65,000 for data migration fees. MOBIUS would host via Google Cloud and the cost would be \$60,000 and would include bigger servers and redundancy back up. Emerald Data would host via Amazon Web Services and the cost would be \$40,000, but offers smaller servers and redundancy back up.

Ron stated that switching to cloud based servers would allow NOBLE to move in to less specialized office space because they would no longer need a server room, which may help offset the costs. Ron proposed using the funding from the Payroll Protection Plan totaling \$184,300 to fund nearly three full years of MOBIUS hosting. This proposal keeps with the spirit of the Payroll Protection Plan, as NOBLE would need to reduce staffing to fund the transition to cloud based hosting.

Martha stated that NOBLE gave the server specifications to all three vendors. MOBIUS was the most realistic and Emerald offered a more standard boilerplate proposal that fell short of the current set up. The cloud platforms can spin up or spin down capacity, so the amounts can be adjusted so you pay for what you are using. NOBLE is currently running 64 CPUs for the current database. The other nice thing about the cloud is that upgrades would be invisible and would not require downtime.

Ron noted that the MBLC gives funds for infrastructure which could be used for remote hosting. NOBLE will continue to look into the options.

10. Consideration of Discontinuing Web Site Hosting Service

Ron stated that NOBLE hosts websites for majority of public libraries and some academics. The websites are hosted on hardware in the server room, which will need to be reconsidered with the impending move. NOBLE started out hosting websites to help give libraries a web presence. Things have gotten more sophisticated, which has made web hosting more sophisticated. Ron recommends outsourcing webhosting to companies that provide commercial services by June 30, 2022. More options will be available to libraries including user friendly management consoles, 24 hour customer support, and increased security. Some libraries are already contracting with designers and using professional webhosting. NOBLE will be shopping for these services for themselves and will share what they find. They stand ready to help with the transition.

Elizabeth noted that WordPress used to be very simple and NOBLE staff was able to provide support for issues. The more complex websites have many layers of services and alternative composers that NOBLE does not use. Basic security is offered through Jetpack Pro, but this is not comprehensive and may not be able to fend off attacks. Security is much better with commercial hosting companies. This transition will be similar to moving from NOBLE hosted email to Gmail.

Catherine noted that Wakefield's new website is far more advanced than their old website and really needs professional hosting services. Elizabeth noted that WordPress is widely hosted. Some hosting companies offer concierge services to assist you and consulting services for an additional fee. NOBLE will continue to support the library shelves and help libraries collect data with ListMaker and other tools.

Ron noted that NOBLE is paid \$500 per year for webhosting and this will need to be taken into account for the FY23 budget. Elizabeth and Martha will collect payment method information while they are researching webhosting companies. The discussion will be continued at the September Executive meeting.

11. Vote to Approve Signing of MBLC Grant Contracts by Executive Director

Motion to approve Ron as the authorized signatory for MBLC Grant Contracts until further notice.

Discussion: Ron stated that NOBLE receives money from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for separate contracts and they ask for the authorized person to sign. The contract is generally signed as a package, so delays can hold up the distribution of the money. Ron being able to sign these contracts could expedite help the funding.

Action: Linda made the motion to approve, seconded by Brian. All in favor.

12. Sustainability Subcommittee Update

Brian reported that the Sustainability Subcommittee includes Lisa Racine from Reading, Lauren Gardner from Reading, Nicole from Stoneham, Brian from Endicott, Jenny Benedict from Gloucester, and Ron from NOBLE. The subcommittee has met three times via Zoom and the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 14th. They are looking at a NOBLE-wide sustainability session on Tuesday, October 19th or Tuesday, October 26th at 10 am. It will be a hybrid one hour meeting at NOBLE and will feature a keynote speaker followed by a Q&A session. Finding a keynote speaker has been a challenge. There is an Endicott professor named Dr. Mari Butler who is considering accepting and would like to better understand the parameters of the event.

The Sustainability Subcommittee would also like to take a poll of what sustainability means to libraries to make sure they are headed in the right direction. The subcommittee will probably take the speaker out to lunch to thank her.

13. New Business

Ron stated that Executive Board needs to nominate a clerk. Amy spoke to Theresa and she was willing.

Motion: To nominate Theresa Hurley as clerk for FY22.

Action: Brian made the motion to approve, seconded by Linda. All in favor.

14. Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Tara Mansfield