

**NORTH OF BOSTON LIBRARY EXCHANGE INC  
MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION MEETING - VIDEO CONFERENCE  
MARCH 20, 2025**

**PRESENT:** Members attended by authorized voting representatives (**Attachment A**).

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** President Brian Courtemanche called to order at 10:04.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Motion:** Myron Schirer-Suter moved to approve the January 16, 2025 Minutes, Catherine McDonald second. One abstention. Motion passes.

**3. TREASURER'S REPORT:** Myron Schirer-Suter reported expenditures are on target. Capital fund balance is \$766,378, investments are \$2,515,246.

**4. MANAGER'S REPORT:**

**Kathy Lussier**

**Aspen Implementation**

- First Aspen implementation meeting with Equinox was this week.
- Soft launch date is scheduled for the second week of June. Scheduling training for NOBLE staff. Once those training dates are in the calendar, training dates for NOBLE libraries will be scheduled.
- Emailed library directors to designate a primary implementation contact for Aspen. Their first task will be to fill out a form identifying electronic resources that will need to be included in an Aspen search.

**Marketing Working Group**

- NOBLE Strategic Plan identifies NOBLE-wide marketing as a priority over the next five years.
- Marketing Working Group was going to be established in FY26, but with the upcoming Aspen project, asked the Executive Board to establish the Working Group sooner to assist with marketing of Aspen.
- A request for Working Group members will be sent shortly.

**Library Expo**

- With the Aspen soft launch scheduled for the second week of June, the Library Expo, typically held the first Thursday in June, will be reschedule to the fall.

**NOBLE Legislative Breakfast**

- The NOBLE Advocacy Committee held the legislative breakfast at the newly-renovated Abbot Public Library, Marblehead on February 7th, 77 people were in attendance.
- Featured speakers were from the Marblehead community, as well as from Rep. Jenny Armini.
- Thank you to the committee for organizing a great event: co-chairs Shilpa Jacobie (Danvers) and Rhea Heaven (Revere), Meghan O'Neill (Gloucester), Abby Porter (Lynnfield), Jackie Powers (formerly Wakefield), and Al Hayden (MBLC).

**EBSCO Renewal**

- Received the 3-year contract for our EBSCO products. There will be a 2% increase each year, which matches the increase in previous years.
- The Electronic Resources & Database Working Group (ERDWG) reviewed the renewal information. There will be an item on the Annual Members Meeting agenda related to the renewal. We are reconsidering our subscription to Bibliograph, the linked data service provided by EBSCO.

**Evergreen Community Development Initiative (ECDI) Updates**

- ECDI has completed its strategic planning process. The interim governance group will be voting on the plan in the next couple of weeks. Next step for the ECDI transition is to set up new governance procedures and to hire a new Program Director. As fiscal sponsor for the project, NOBLE will be the employer. We are waiting on the agreement from one remaining ECDI partner before moving forward with a new hire.

**Legislative Updates**

- MLA Legislative Committee has been working on the following since January:
  - Freedom to Read and e-book pricing legislation has been re-filed for this session. Both bills incorporated changes that came out of Committee during the last session.

- Another citizen-petition bill has been filed that would remove some protections for librarians from being prosecuted for distributing materials considered harmful to minors. Don't expect this legislation will make much progress in Massachusetts, but it shows that Massachusetts is not immune from legislation that is being enacted elsewhere across the country.
- There is a new school library standards bill that MLA is supporting with our partners from the Massachusetts School Library Association.
- The Institute of Museum and Library Services has been asked to eliminate "non-statutory components and functions." There are many unknowns to the impact of this directive. The IMLS' Grants to States Program that sends \$3.6 million to the MBLC is in statute. Library leaders in Massachusetts are working to ensure these funds are protected. MBLC is making contingency plans for any loss to this funding. The agency is scheduling a meeting with all affiliates to provide further details.
- From previous conversations, my understanding is that if the MBLC needs to make up shortfalls, one of the only library lines which they have discretion is line 9506, the source of grants to networks. Still too much uncertainty to know if any of that funding is at risk.

Alan Thibeault asked what the salary will be for the ECDI Program Director. Kathy stated she will look it up. She reported the range used was for a full time Supervisor level, \$73,000-\$88,000. The midpoint was used with part time hours, so it would be \$62,000.

### **Elizabeth Thomsen**

**New Forms** - On the Staff Information System, on the right side under "FORMS"

- Adding new library staff form is released, feedback welcome
- Form for uploading confidentiality agreements in testing (add up to 5 at a time)
- Form for departing staff being worked on

**Training/Meetings** - The following sessions were held:

- Circulation Roundtable
- Annual Holds Meeting
- Cataloging Administration (2 sessions, aimed at designated contacts)
- Meet Me at the Corner of Cat and Circ
- Tech Services Roundtable – Meaghan Kinton did a discussion on Rethinking Shelving Locations, Prefixes, Suffixes, and Itemscats
- Attended a Children's Services meeting at Swampscott, and
- Visited Danvers to discuss some potential changes to one of their collections.
- Conference - attending Computers in Libraries next week.

**Evergreen Development** - Sponsored by NOBLE:

- Ability to customize displays in search results and on the Staff View tab, specifying which fields display and in which order, and the ability to truncate fields with More link.
- Add the Hold Groups to the new staff catalog

### **Aspen**

- Gabe working on Browse Categories
- Christine working on theme and appearance issues
- Chris and I working on search and limiter issues
- Sending out forms to gather information from libraries and appointed Aspen contacts.

### **Martha Driscoll**

#### **Aspen**

- Working on data loads that will send our Evergreen data to Aspen. Trying to resolve some technical issues getting the scripts to run. There are scripts that run daily, weekly, and an update script that runs every 10 minutes. Aspen also reaches into Evergreen for updated information. should have the data in the Aspen test system soon.

**EnvisionWare CloudNine Migration**

- Mike Ahearn is leading this project; several libraries are migrated to the CloudNine platform from PC Reservation. Mike is scheduling onsite visits for libraries in the PC Support Program, and providing information to the non-PC Support libraries.

**Holds Cancellation Notices**

- On March 18th, started sending weekly hold cancellation notices to library staff. This allows tech services to delete records even if there are holds on the record.

**SMS Hold Notification**

- MessageBee, the company who provides SMS services for hold notices, made improvements to their portal, which allows libraries to see a failed text notification. We opened the portal to libraries who are interested in having a login to follow up on the failed texts and resolve the issue in patron records. Sixteen library staff users have been added to the portal.

**Evergreen**

- Past several months the system has had slow downs caused by BOT traffic from other countries. Short term resolution, we had MOBIUS block all traffic from countries other than the US and Canada. MOBIUS is looking at other resolutions to block traffic.

**Erate Pilot**

- Been working with a filtering program, SafeDNS, that could be used by libraries who want to qualify for e-rate. I showed some of the filter functionality at the E-rate meeting held earlier this week.

## **5. VOTE TO APPROVE NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FROM GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY SYSTEM - Kathy Lussier**

**Background -**

- Daniel Flores, library director at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, reached out to NOBLE in October about potential membership. The institution has four campuses with libraries and 1,723 students (680 FTE's). They have a collection with 278,731 items.
- Two of Gordon-Conwell's campuses are in Massachusetts (Hamilton and Boston) and the other two are located in Charlotte, NC and Jacksonville, FL. The initial quote sent to Gordon-Conwell was to only include their Massachusetts libraries in NOBLE. However, Daniel requested that we consider including the out-of-state campuses.
- NOBLE staff spent time investigating technical options for including out-of-state libraries in our system and with working out policy issues.
- Consulted with an attorney specializing in data privacy to identify any potential legal risks with providing access to our database to staff in other states where laws may differ from our own.

He noted:

- Does not have legal concerns about patron confidentiality. North Carolina and Florida have similar laws as Massachusetts when it comes to protecting patron confidentiality and Gordon-Conwell also must comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protections.
- A key principle in data privacy law is ensuring that access to data is limited to people with a need to see that data. We don't expect NOBLE patrons from Massachusetts to walk into the out-of-state Gordon-Conwell libraries to use their resources, we are planning to configure the system so that the out-of-state staff logins cannot view data for Massachusetts patrons, with the exception of those that are from the Gordon-Conwell campuses. In the hold interface the patron's first and last names, even if they don't have permission to view that patron, are visible. They will not be able to retrieve the patron record from those interfaces.

- We can prevent the system from allowing current NOBLE patrons to place holds on items in the out-of-state campuses and from patrons of the out-of-state campuses to place holds on current NOBLE library materials. All Gordon-Conwell campuses will be able to place holds on each other's materials.
- The Board decided against recommending any changes to hold policies. Although the out-of-state campuses won't be able to place holds through Evergreen, this recommendation leaves the door open for the Hamilton campus to potentially handle requests on behalf of the other campuses.
- An unknown was how to handle the display of items for out-of-state campuses in our public catalog with the Aspen Implementation. Our Aspen Implementation Project Manager believes there are options available that could potentially remove the out-of-state items from display to the public.

The quote for Gordon-Conwell for year 1 services is below. If we migrate their records after July 1, we will prorate the year 1 assessment based on the amount of time they are NOBLE members.

<b>Quote for NOBLE Services</b>	
<b>One-Time Joiner's Fee</b>	\$5,000
<b>FY26 Base Assessment</b>	\$45,185
<b>FY26 Academic Branch Fee (3 campuses)</b>	\$5,286
<b>EBSCO Core Collection Assessment</b>	\$10,763
<b>OverDrive Assessment</b>	\$460
<b>TOTAL ONE-TIME FEES</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>\$61,694</b>
<b>TOTAL YEAR-ONE FEES (ONE-TIME AND ANNUAL)</b>	<b>\$66,694</b>

Executive Board unanimously voted at its March 12 meeting to recommend that Members accept Gordon-Conwell's application for membership.

Jenny Benedict asked if OverDrive assessment allowed access to all their campuses. Kathy said yes.

*Motion:* Amy Lannon moved NOBLE accept Gordon-Conwell as a new member to our consortium. Jenny Benedict seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

## **6. PRESENTATION OF NOBLE ASSESSMENT FORMULA RECOMMENDATION**

Kathy Lussier did a presentation of the NOBLE Assessment Formula Recommendation. A detailed report was included in the meeting packet. Today is the presentation with the vote taking place at the May Annual Meeting. Key points reviewed:

### **Background:**

Prior to the FY21 budget, the assessment for NOBLE members was based on the following:

- 75% flat fee
- 12.5% average annual circulation over the past three years
- 12.5% number of active users, defined as unexpired cardholders from public libraries and student FTE's from academic institutions.
- A flat branch fee for multi-branch libraries

### **Process:**

The subcommittee, comprising six NOBLE Executive Board members representing different library types and sizes, met four times from January through March to evaluate the formula.

**Metrics Considered:**

Flat Fee, Telecommunications, Circulation Fee, Active Users, Items Added, Holdings, Budgets, Cooperative Purchasing, Resource Sharing, Historical Assessment.

**Recommendation:**

The final recommendation was devised by including all the metrics the subcommittee identified as ones that best represent a library's use of network services.

The components of the recommended formula are:

- Flat fee - 60%
- Average circulation - 7%
- Active users - 12%
- Items added - 9%
- Holdings - 9%
- Cooperative purchasing value - 3%
- Resource sharing credit / fee - 7% of net lends / borrows.

**Formula Implementation:**

The subcommittee recommends gradually implementing the formula over a five year period. With the gradual implementation, calculation is frozen for five years. The total increase/decrease to the library's assessment, as calculated by the formula, will be divided by five and implemented over the next five years.

Brian Courtemanche thanked the committee members:

- Allison Babin, Beverly Public Library
- Brian Courtemanche, Endicott College
- Theresa Hurley, Lynn Public Library
- Jonathan Nichols, Swampscott Public Library
- Anna Sarneso, Bunker Hill Community College
- Myron Schirer-Suter, Gordon College
- Kathy Lussier, NOBLE (ex officio)

Jenny Benedict requested that there is some kind of policy around what happens if a library is not able to pay their assessment. Within the next 5 years Gloucester will be in that situation, unless things improve. It's not part of the assessment formula, but some thinking around what NOBLE's response to that scenario would be nice.

Brian Courtemanche stated it's an unknown and would have to process that so we do something that is wise, many factors involved.

Kathy added that in her previous job, she came on board when one of the longest running decertified libraries just got their certification back. They had 3 decertified libraries at one time, and made allowances for the formula for that. But also need to make sure that the formula makes it visible, that when those budget constraints are over, that the library is brought back up to where it should be.

**7. BORROWERS CARD RECORD RETENTION POLICY:** Kathy Lussier

Resource Sharing Working Group and Executive Board are recommending this policy, **Attachment B**. Also, the Board is starting a process this year of going through all of our policies and having them on a schedule to be reviewed every 2 years. The actual policies may not need changes, but terminology changes over time and may need revising.

**Motion:** Greg McClay moved to accept the Borrowers Card Record Retention Policy. Greg Dachille second. Motion carried unanimously

**8. QUARTERLY FY25 ACTION PLAN REVIEW:**

Kathy Lussier presented a 3rd quarter review of Action Plan items that had a time frame due around this time or hadn't previously been reported on. A full review of the year will be at the annual meeting. See **Attachment C** for 3rd quarter review.

**9. NEW BUSINESS:** None

**10. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion:** Amy Lannon moved to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 11:45.

Respectfully Submitted,

Abigail Porter  
Secretary

## ATTACHMENT A

NOBLE Members Meeting Attendance

Thursday March 20, 2025 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Videoconference

#	Name	Library
1	Allison Babin	Beverly Public Library
2	Meghan Karasin	Beverly Public Library
3	Greg Dachille	Bunker Hill Community College Library and Learning Commons
4	Noelle Boc	Danvers - Peabody Institute Library
5	Brian Courtemanche	Endicott College - Diane M. Halle Library
6	Jenny Benedict	Gloucester - Sawyer Free Library
7	Myron Schirer-Suter	Gordon College - Jenks Library
8	Theresa Hurley	Lynn Public Library
9	Abby Porter	Lynnfield Public Library
10	Kimberly Grad	Marblehead - Abbot Public Library
11	Linda Gardener	Melrose Public Library
12	Sara Heng	Merrimack College - McQuade Library
13	Kathy Lussier	NOBLE Staff
14	Paula Cartolaro	NOBLE Staff
15	Elizabeth Thomsen	NOBLE Staff
16	Martha Driscoll	NOBLE Staff
17	Amy Lannon	Reading Public Library
18	Jim Riordan	Salem Public Library
19	Alan Thibeault	Saugus Public Library
20	Catherine McDonald	Wakefield - Beebe Memorial Library
21	Greg McClay	Winthrop Public Library and Museum

# ATTACHMENT B



NOBLE

## **Borrowers Card Record Retention Policy 2/2025 recommended revisions**

### **Patron Verification**

To keep patron contact information up-to-date, public library borrower records will be verified every three years. Cardholders will be notified of upcoming need for verification thirty days in advance via email and other electronic means, with a follow up fourteen days prior to suspension. Libraries may also generate system reports in advance for other contact efforts, and to renew cards for local officials, faculty, etc..

Libraries must verify the accuracy and completeness of contact information when renewing the account for an additional three years. Information to be verified includes mailing address, telephone number and email address. Libraries may verify information in person or via telephone or email.

Patrons who live in Massachusetts or New Hampshire with a valid billing address on their account will also have the option to renew their accounts through an online form. For an online renewal, patrons will be asked to review and verify their current contact information. If no changes are made to the address, their accounts will be renewed for three years. If changes are made to the address, the online system will verify that their last name is associated with the new address before renewing their account for three years. If this verification fails, the account will be renewed for 30 days to allow time to contact their library to complete the renewal.

Use of the borrowers' card for borrowing materials and for use of electronic resources will be suspended at the anniversary date until the cardholder contacts the library to verify their contact information.

### **Patron Purge**

Cardholders without checkouts who are expired for three years will be purged on a monthly schedule. Cardholders with bills for items will not be purged; borrowers owing only fines/manual charges will be purged.

Libraries can review a list of users due to be purged on a regular basis to renew cards for local officials, faculty, etc.

### **Academic Library Option**

For cardholders owing only fines and/or manual charges, academic libraries may set a threshold amount for total charges over which their Student/Faculty/Staff/Alumni etc. borrowers will not be purged.

**Definitions**

**Bills** - A charge for an item that was never returned. (Evergreen- Lost and Long Overdue)

**Fines** - Charge for an item returned past the due date (Evergreen - Overdue Materials)

**Manual Charges** - An amount of money a staff member places on a user's record. (Evergreen - Grocery Bills)

DRAFT

# ATTACHMENT C

**North Of Boston Library Exchange, Inc. (NOBLE)**  
**FY2025 Action Plan**  
**Kathy Lussier, Executive Director, klussier@noblenet.org**

**FY2025**

1. Provide high-quality services to our member libraries, staff and users. Responsiveness, quality of service, support, continuing education and technology leadership will be maintained through a staff of adequate size that is well-trained, equipped with current tools, facilities, learning opportunities and knowledge, and competitive compensation.

Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom	Status
A. Revise and update staff job descriptions to reflect move to remote hosting and new office location, as well as normal evolution of services.	December 31, 2024	Executive Director	Deferred until April 30
B. Implement Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software to track information on member libraries and their staff.	December 31, 2024	Systems Manager, Member Services Manager and Office Administrator	Salesforce license obtained. Quotes from consultant due at end of month.
C. Implement a ticketing system to track issues and requests from libraries.	December 31, 2024	Systems Manager in cooperation with the Member Services Manager and the Executive Director	Salesforce license obtained. Quotes from consultant due at end of month.

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**2. Sustain strong member relations and community among participating libraries.**

Work with member libraries through committees, working groups, roundtables and discussion groups and virtual and in-person formats to achieve mutual goals and shared objectives. Advocate with vendors, user groups and the open source community to further NOBLE goals and explore business opportunities and models. Collaborate with the networks, the Mass. Library System, the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners, library associations, Digital Commonwealth, Digital Public Library of America, Internet Archive, news media and members to advance the future of libraries in our area. Work with the Membership and Executive Board to guide NOBLE's future directions and keep libraries informed of current and planned initiatives.

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<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe for Activity</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Status</b>
A. Investigate report and recommend implementation of a courseware system to support NOBLE training efforts.	March 31, 2024	Member Services Manager	Deferred until next fiscal year.

### 3. Enhance the library management system and related technology.

Maintain and improve core NOBLE services, including the library management system and related technology, electronic resources, Digital Heritage, web and social media services to assist our member libraries to serve their users. Investigate, test and highlight new technologies through demonstrations, meetings and trials. Information and input will be exchanged with staff through a variety of formats and channels.

Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom	Status
A. Implement open-source discovery services for the catalog such as Aspen and VuFind	September 30, 2024	NOBLE Evergreen Team in consultation with ERDWG	In progress. Expected soft launch is 2nd week in June.
B. Conduct meetings with NOBLE academic members and public members to gather input for Evergreen development resulting in an updated listing of NOBLE library needs for discussion and prioritization.	March 31, 2025	Management Team	Continuing focus on staff catalog enhancements
C. Conduct an update session on the Commonwealth Catalog to cover enhancements and to insure smooth operations with our Evergreen system.	February 28, 2025	Member Services Manager and Systems Manager	Scheduled for April 15
D. Investigate and recommend a deduplication/standardization process or service for the bibliographic database.	January 31, 2025	Member Services Manager	With staff turnover in the Member Services Department, deferring until end of fiscal year.

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## 5. Provide strong fiscal stewardship.

Being mindful of the declining demographics faced by our academic members and aware of the fiscal constraints experienced by our municipalities, NOBLE will seek to contain costs and seek additional funding beyond our membership or from within our membership via a la carte options. Advocate to retain and increase federal and state funding and partake of grant opportunities that may be available. Have information available for any potential members and support existing members in reaching out to their colleague libraries. Work with vendors for creative pricing options and group pricing.

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<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe for Activity</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Status</b>
A. Develop an information packet for potential new members to expand membership.	March 31, 2025	Executive Director	Will develop based on experience with Gordon-Conwell
B. Participate and encourage participation in the Mass. Library Association's Library Legislative Day to improve and maintain state funding for the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners' budget, and support and encourage related efforts.	April 30, 2025	Executive Director	Legislative Day has been discontinued, but active in other legislative advocacy efforts.
C. Support a legislative event to advocate for state funding for the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners' budget,	February 28, 2025	Advocacy Committee with assistance from Executive Director	Successful legislative breakfast in Marblehead on February 7.
A. Migrate QuickBooks bookkeeping system to the cloud for greater security and access.	March 31, 2025	Office Administrator	Deferring this goal for now and making other improvements to our use of Quickbooks.

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6. Improve accessibility and inclusivity in NOBLE services and assist libraries in improving accessibility and inclusivity.

Seek to assure that NOBLE services are accessible to all. Facilitate discussions, cooperative ventures and information and resource sharing. Work with the Evergreen community and vendor partners.

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Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom	Status
A. Work with the Evergreen community to evaluate the accessibility of the Evergreen catalog and advocate for accessibility improvements as needed.	March 30, 2025	Member Services Manager	Active in UI Interest Group. Evergreen community is making significant improvements to accessibility. New <a href="#">accessibility conformance report</a> available.