



**Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
June 15, 2020
Minutes**

This meeting was held under the NYS Governor's Executive Order No. 202.1: Continuing Temporary Suspension and Modification of Laws Relating to the Disaster Emergency

Trustees Present: G. Brandt C. Corcoran, R. DeGuzman, L. Giess, P. Knapp, J. Lovenheim, A. Moffitt, M. Shelly, S. Stockman, M. Thompson, W. Yust (quorum present)

Trustees Excused: None

Staff and Guests: County law liaison D. Crumb; FFRPL liaison N. Davis; staff members B. Harrison, A. Traub, P. Uttaro, D. Mansour

Call to Order

Ms. Shelly called the meeting to order at 12:01 pm and confirmed that a quorum was present.

Meeting Minutes

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Dr. Knapp AND SECONDED BY Mr. Lovenheim to approve the minutes of the meeting on May 18, 2020. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Trustee Appointments

Ms. Thompson presented the recommendations of the Nominating Committee for trustee reappointments. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Thompson AND SECONDED BY Mr. Corcoran to approve the Nominating Committee's recommendation of Rachel DeGuzman to be appointed by the Monroe County Legislature to the MCLS Board of Trustees for the term July 1, 2020-June 30, 2025. THE MOTION PASSED WITH Ms. DeGuzman ABSTAINING.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Thompson AND SECONDED BY Mr. Brandt to approve the Nominating Committee's recommendation of William Yust to be appointed by the Monroe County Legislature to the MCLS Board of Trustees for the term July 1, 2020-June 30, 2025. THE MOTION PASSED WITH Mr. Yust ABSTAINING.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Thompson AND SECONDED BY Ms. Giess to approve the Nominating Committee's recommendation of Suzanne Stockman to be appointed by the Monroe County Legislature to the MCLS Board of Trustees for the term July 1, 2020-June 30, 2025. THE MOTION PASSED WITH Ms. Stockman ABSTAINING.

Election of Officers

Ms. Thompson presented the recommendations of the Nominating Committee for officers. The Committee recommends for the term July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021, Marjorie Shelly to serve as President and Suzanne Stockman to serve as Vice-President. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Thompson AND

SECONDED BY Dr. Knapp to approve the slate of officers as presented. THE MOTION PASSED WITH Ms. Shelly and Ms. Stockman ABSTAINING.

Claims

Ms. Harrison answered a clarifying question on one of the claims. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Mr. Yust AND SECONDED BY Ms. DeGuzman to approve the claims as presented. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Proposed 2021 MCLS Budget

Ms. Harrison reviewed the proposed budget and highlighted several areas of decreased expenses. She also explained a projected decrease in State Aid of 3% and requested to use \$90,000 from the fund balance to support the 2021 budget. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Mr. Yust AND SECONDED BY Mr. Brandt to approve the proposed 2021 MCLS Budget as presented. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Mr. Lovenheim AND SECONDED BY Ms. Stockman to approve the use of \$90,000 of the MCLS fund balance to support the 2021 MCLS Budget. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MCLS Annual Report to New York State

Mr. Traub reviewed the highlights of the annual report to the state and pointed out some minor corrections identified since the report was distributed to the Board. A MOTION WAS MADE BY Ms. Stockman AND SECONDED BY Dr. Knapp to approve the MCLS Annual Report to New York State. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Rochester Public Library (RPL) Board Liaison

Mr. Brandt reported that the RPL Board discussed the success of the curbside service, approved budgets for Central Library and the Community Libraries, discussed new requirements from New York State requiring trustees to have 3 hours of training per year, and heard from Deputy Mayor, James Smith regarding the City's expense cutting measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rochester Regional Library Council (RRLC) Liaison

Dr. Knapp reported that the RRLC approved a budget with a 20% reduction from the prior year. They accepted the report and recommendations from the executive committee regarding the annual review of the Executive Director. They also elected officers. Mr. Yust will continue as president for RRLC, Terry Keys will be the vice-president, Mary Ellen Dowling will be the secretary, and Jim Eckl will be the treasurer. They have also revised their by-laws to allow for online trustee elections. The new office is operational, and some staff are reporting. The RRLC is also working on how to address issues of racial inequity within the organization. In response to a question, Dr. Knapp explained that the 20% budget cut will likely impact grants to member libraries and support of very expensive database support. He also pointed out that all RRLC staff have had their wages frozen.

Friends and Foundation of the Rochester Public Library (FFRPL) Liaison

Mr. Davis offered to answer any questions on his written report. He shared that the \$240,000 goal for the Annual Campaign has been reached. Also, FFRPL will be providing financial support for a special collection in Overdrive focused on Black Lives Matter related books and materials.

Director's Report

Ms. Uttaro offered to answer questions on her written report. Several trustees praised the staff for their creativity in providing virtual programming.

MCLS Office & Central Library

Mr. Traub reported that the MCLS Directors' Council has a very active reopening team to guide planning for member libraries. In response to a question, Ms. Uttaro clarified that some libraries are currently able to participate in interlibrary loans. Ms. Uttaro also shared that the City of Rochester has rolled out guidelines to require all staff reporting to city building need to fill out a health self-assessment and have their temperature checked. In response to a question, Mr. Traub explained that there is a cost for each circulation of the books in the Black Lives Matter collection on Overdrive. In response to a question, Ms. Uttaro explained that in relation to the coronavirus, the current belief is that a book should be quarantined for 72 hours to be considered safe. There is scientific research being conducted to specifically study the coronavirus life on library materials and preliminary results are expected at the end of August.

Next, Ms. Uttaro asked trustees if they had any questions on the draft Document of Understanding that was included in their materials packet. In response to a question, Mr. Traub explained that in-person outreach services have been halted since mid-March. However, the MCLS Outreach Coordinator is still contacting patrons to offer assistance.

Other Business

Ms. Uttaro asked for discussion on an email she sent to the Board regarding racial equity and diversity. She started by reviewing her suggestions which included the formation of a joint committee with the MCLS Board and the RPL Board to look at issues of racial equity over the next few months.

Regarding issuing a statement from the Board, several trustees expressed concern over any statement without actionable items being viewed as politically expedient and hallow and all agreed this is something to be avoided.

One issue observed by Ms. Uttaro and several trustees is the lack of racial diversity on the MCLS Board. Ms. Uttaro then gave several anecdotal accounts of observed prejudice and implicit bias by white library staff members.

Ms. Uttaro also discussed the issues of the structural racism inherent in the Dewey Decimal classification of materials and gave examples. There was also a discussion on the bias inherent in purchasing decisions and Ms. Uttaro offered some insight on how the use of the Collection HQ product is helping to correct some of those issues.

Ms. Uttaro then pointed out that both MCLS and RPL are due to revise their strategic plans in the next year or two and this is an opportunity to address racial inequity and the entities' visions for addressing structural racism.

Several trustees expressed support for the idea of a joint committee to look closely at the issue of racial inequities and come up with actionable items. There was concern expressed about the difference between the RPL Board having authority over operations and the MCLS Board not having operational authority over member libraries. Ms. Uttaro stated that she believed the member libraries are looking for guidance and leadership and the MCLS Board can offer both.

Another point made was Ms. Uttaro's ability to tap into resources outside of the RPL or MCLS through her relationships in the NYS Library Association and the American Library Association. These resources can help guide the work of the Boards and prevent the joint committee from wasting time or effort in creating something that already exists.

In response to several trustees expressing a lack of clarity on defining issues of racial equity in libraries, it was suggested the Board seek outside expert help to become educated. It was also recommended that all trustees avail themselves of the materials in the Black Lives Matter collection currently available on Overdrive. The specific recommendations are *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo and *How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi. Ms. Uttaro suggested a special meeting be called in July to further this discussion and several trustees agreed.

Adjournment

A MOTION WAS MADE BY Mr. Lovenheim AND SECONDED BY Mr. Yust to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Uttaro, Secretary