

MPLA Executive Board Meeting
 September 21, 2020 by Videoconference
AGENDA

PRESENT (indicated by **)			
Name	MPLA Position	Name	MPLA Position
**Stephen Sweeney	President	**Elena Rosenfeld	CO State Rep
** Robin Newell	Vice Pres/President Elect/ Professional Development Chair	Shanna Smith/	KS State Rep /Communications Chair
**Leslie Langley	Past President	**Rachel Rawn	MT State Rep
**Judy Kulp	Executive Secretary	**Randi Monley	ND State Rep
**Whitney Vitale	Recording Secretary	**Evonne Edgington	NE State Rep
Diana Weaver	Awards Committee Chair	Dale Savage	NM State Rep
**Frances Brummett	Bylaws Committee Chair	**Luise Davis	NV State Rep
**Roy Degler	Webmaster	**April Miller	OK State Rep
Leslie Langley	Nominating Committee	**Nita Gill	SD State Rep
**Mary Ann Thompson	Awards Committee Chair	**Joe Frazier	UT State Rep
Melanie Argo	Newsletter Editor	Cindy Moore	WY State Rep
**Annie Epperson	Archives Task Force	**Aubrey Madler	Leadership Institute Coordinator
Mickey Coalwell	Administration Committee Chair	**Tom Taylor	LI Committee
**Amadee Ricketts	AZ State Rep		

Welcome and Call to Order

Stephen Sweeney called the meeting to order at 10:03am (MDT). All members present introduced themselves.

*** Announcements**

Stephen thanked Stephen Boss, Annie Epperson, Eileen Wright, Mary Ann Thompson, Roy Degler and Judy Kulp for agreeing to serve again on the archives taskforce. Looking forward to action and reports as we move forward.

*** Agenda changes**

No agenda changes were put forward.

Action & Discussion

*** Approve minutes of March 25, 2020 meeting, Whitney Vitale, Recording Secretary**

Elena submitted a motion to approve the minutes. Randi Monley seconded.

Discussion: Aubrey Madler asked how much MPLA actually subsidizes the leadership Institute. In the minutes, it lists \$20,000 and that seems too high. Stephen suggested changing the language in the minutes to read that the subsidy to the Leadership Institute varies from year to year, for better accuracy. Whitney will make those changes.

Elena amended her motion to approve the minutes as amended. All approved. The motion passed.

- * **ULA/MPLA Joint Conference.** *Leslie Langley, Chair of Administration Committee; Stephen Sweeney, President; Robin Newell, Vice-President*

Leslie Langley reported that, in August, the ULA/MPLA joint conference committee met. At that time, ULA was not certain whether they would host an in-person or virtual meeting. There was discussion and they were going to meet again in September to make that decision. The topic of MPLA's contract with them came up. ULA, because of the timing of the conference and concerns about conference revenue, offered MPLA the option to back out of the contract. The administrative team met and we discussed this and that is what we are bringing to you this morning. In the meantime, Utah has decided to hold a virtual meeting this year. Stephen and Robin Newell attended the meeting.

Robin reported that it changed things when it went from physical to virtual. There had been concerns about people not being able to travel. We need to decide today whether we want to continue and do a joint virtual conference with them or look to future options of working with them.

Stephen reported that this has not yet resulted in the creation of a taskforce to study virtual conferences and changes that brings. The MPLA Partner/ Member State Letter of Agreement does not have language about liability. If this is a year where Utah, as our partner, were to lose money, MPLA's liability is unclear. There will be a later discussion on the topic of looking at the Letter of Agreement. We have been given the opportunity to step away from the agreement, while still encouraging our members to attend the virtual conference.

Leslie added that ULA has already spent money towards the conference. As is their practice, they have hired a conference planner and they made contracts with the venue. They are willing to let us to step away without paying any portion of that. The money we get from the conference every year is the basis of MPLA's budget, but with careful planning, we will be able to step away from the conference without a huge financial impact. ULA has extended an offer to co-host a conference again for 2024.

Leslie made the following motion: The motion from the Administration Committee is that MPLA steps away from the ULA contract for May 2021, that we charge our president Stephen Sweeney with seeking dissolution of the contract, and that we advise ULA that we are open to being re-approached to share the 2024 joint conference.

Stephen clarified that the motion does not require a second since it was put forth by the administrative committee, but will not vote until after a discussion.

Discussion:

- * Mary Ann Thompson is not surprised that they are going virtual. She recently attended a virtual event with ALA. It was okay, but it was not the same kind of conference that we are used to. She is okay with us backing away.
- * Luise Davis concurs with Mary Ann's observations. Since it is virtual, it will not be the same, and she agrees that we should back away.
- * Annie Epperson commented in the Zoom chat that the Colorado Assoc. of Libraries has hosted some successful virtual meetings since March. Maybe folks who know about how that has worked out - revenue-wise if nothing else - could share some details? Aubrey Madler noted Annie's chat comments and asked if we knew what kind of income comes from virtual conference registration.
- * Judy's concerns are the budget and the risk we would be taking on with a joint virtual conference. Robin agrees with Judy. There is a conference planner cost and they will be purchasing a platform to host the virtual conference. The financial liability is a concern. Our contract does not speak to that. This has been a concern discussed at every ULA/MPLA meeting they we have had so far.
- * Roy submitted that if we choose to pull out, it might be interesting to address other state conferences that are going virtual and ask if our members can register at a member rate. They would benefit from the extra attendees. This might be good for our members who miss conference and like to pick up new

ideas. Stephen thinks this is a good idea. Colorado did offer MPLA members registration at a member rate their conference. He would like to see other conferences do the same.

- * Annie Epperson agrees. She also suggested that MPLA could offer a clearinghouse or guidance for other organizations hosting virtual conferences. Colorado did a good job hosting their virtual conference and that was early on.. Maybe MPLA could help put state associations together with others that can offer guidance.
- * Joe Frazier added that we have nothing to gain from staying in and everything to lose. Utah allows MPLA members to register at member rates to any conference they hold. ULA will be reaching out to MPLA members to provide conference sessions still.

The motion was voted on. All were in favor. The motion passed. Stephen will take the decision back to the ULA conference planning committee.

* **Leadership Institute.** *Aubrey Madler, Leadership Institute Coordinator; Tom Taylor, Leadership Institute Committee Chair*

Aubrey reported that she is having a similar discussion regarding the Leadership Institute. Do we go online or meet face to face? The venue, Yavapai, is not available during the first two weeks in June. They are only available in later June and into July. She is dealing with timing and logistics. She and the committee are looking for discussion items, thoughts and concerns for the Board.

Stephen asked if she is looking to make a decision or a conversation now for a discussion later. Aubrey would like have a discussion now and then take the points back to the facilitator and the cohort.

Discussion:

- * Joe Frazier thinks that if the cohort is still interested and can make the new date work, we should go ahead with it. Amadee noted that given the degree of uncertainty, the Institute committee has been doing a great job keeping the cohort engaged. It would be wonderful to hold an in-person event, but there is no guarantee that in-person events will be a thing then. She likes the fallbacks that Aubrey mentioned in her reports.
- * Judy asked Aubrey for clarification about how much the cost would go up if they were to move to having single rooms for Institute, as mentioned in her report. Aubrey estimates an increase of \$3,000. It might calculate out to less. If we were to reduce our Institute by a day, it would decrease costs to \$1,600 per day. If we could do more online, we could help with the increased cost.
- * Leslie reported that Oklahoma has a Leadership Institute every three years. They have 6 weeks of online learning and discussion before the 3 days in-person. It is effective and keeps costs down. Aubrey said it might be easier for the fellows to decrease to 3 days.
- * Robin asked Aubrey if the fellows knew that available dates in June are the same time as ALA (Thu, Jun 24 – Tue, Jun 29). Aubrey will look at ALA dates and remove them from the available dates that she will share with the fellows. She asked if other state organizations are having any other events planned for later June and early July. Tom added that they would reach out to fellows to see if they will have travel funds and if their institutions will allow travel this year.
- * The committee will need a cut-off date for when we would make this decision. Feedback from the cohort may help establish a cut-off date. Aubrey will get in touch with the cohort for feedback and go from there. The venue is also asking her for a cut-off date.
- * Shanna noted that the timing is tricky since every state is in different levels with the pandemic. She

typically likes to have 6 months to make flight plans. Aubrey thinks at least 8 weeks out, especially when you have to make flight connections. The committee will narrow this down and make a decision by February at the latest. They would like to make some decisions and get some contracts into place before then. She will talk to Yavapai about their cancellation deadlines. Mark is still committed to facilitating. She will keep the Board updated.

Tom: In regards to funding the Institute, if we need to adjust to single rooms, that increases the cost. We are working on adjusting the language of our funding raising asks to take into account the current times. We did discuss a virtual option for the Institute. It can be fashioned after graduate school classes, spread out over several days. The committee's preference is to have the traditional face-to-face. We are looking to raise more funds for face-to-face. It might cost less if it was virtual. The committee discussed other funding opportunities.

Tom brought up making MPLA masks for general MPLA funding, not just for the Institute. A print-on-demand company can do it. He has experience with Red Bubble, a company that works with artists. When you place your order, they make it for you. There can be multiple color options. Would like feedback from the Board on a fundraising option like masks.

Discussion:

- * Stephen: Colorado uses Custom Ink, where you need to meet a threshold to generate shirts and masks.
- * April: Oklahoma Library Association is doing this through Café Press. It is print-on-demand, so you do not have to have a large stock.
- * Elena: For Colorado we got enough orders that Custom Ink will run the printing. The threshold was 25 orders to break even.
- * Tom: Should this be a general fundraiser for just for Leadership Institute? Judy added that we do not have a separate account for LI for fundraisers. Any money we receive would help the Institute. It would be good promotion and awareness for MPLA.
- * Roy added that the MPLA logo has gradients and multiple colors, so that would increase the print costs and the difficulty in printing. When we pick a vendor, we need to choose someone who can do gradients and multiple colors. Tom asked if we have a scaled down version. Judy has it in a few formats. She will check if she has it in Illustrator. Roy thinks that if we have it in Illustrator or Photoshop formats, we would get a better quality from the vendors.
- * Tom will get quotes on how much it will cost and how much we can make and will get back to the Board for approval.

Aubrey and Tom have enough information from the Board to move forward. The Committee has their next meeting on the second Friday of October. They will be in contact with Stephen after that and Tom will have the mask quotes before then.

* **Payroll Tax Deferral**, *Judy Kulp, Executive Secretary*

From now until the end of the year, it is optional to defer the payroll tax, but it needs to be paid back in the first four months of 2021. Her recommendation would be that the Board not direct her not to do this. There are links in her report about her research into this option. A CPA will audit the 2020 accounting, so it is important that this decision be an official statement from the Board.

Judy asked what other institutions have chosen to do. No one on the call works for institutions taking the deferral option.

Joe Frazier made a motion that we do not implement deferral of the payroll tax, Luise Davis seconded. There was no further discussion. All approved. The motion passed.

- * **MPLA Roundtable Conversations** – *Mary Soucie, Chair, and Jake Rundle, Membership Committee*

Stephen reported that the Membership committee has been holding roundtable conversations by Zoom. Registration numbers have been between 30- 70 attendees. If you have the opportunity to promote these please do. The membership chats have served MPLA well for connection and networking. This could potentially be a recruiting opportunity. If you have not had the opportunity to sign on to one, there are four more planned (September, October, November and December). Jake would be happy to share the hosting. If you or anyone in your state is willing to work with Jake, let Stephen know. He would like to highlight this programming feature.

Officers & Staff

Individuals with * have discussion or information items. All other reports will be accepted electronically without discussion.

President – *Stephen Sweeney*

Vice President – *Robin Newell*

Past President – *Leslie Langley*

Recording Secretary – *Whitney Vitale*

- * **Executive Secretary** – Budget & Membership Statistics. *Judy Kulp*

Judy raised a concern regarding budget and membership reports. Our membership is declining. The numbers are lower later in the year, than we had been later in the year in previous years. Library budgets and personal budgets are tight, but there are ways to increase membership. She can provide state reps with lists of the members that have not renewed or past members or current members. The reps are the best people to contact members. She can send out targeted messages to targeted groups of members, such as Leadership Institute attendees. We do not have too many state librarians who are members and very few institutional members. Institutional membership include individual membership, so would be a good way to get library directors involved. Right now it has been our custom, that if you join in September or later in the year, your membership will be for the next year and the rest of this year. Right now is the time to use this.

We will not be having conference income this year. The balance sheet shows that we can sustain losing one conference year of income. We will need to be careful with budgeting over the next couple of years.

Stephen pointed out that membership is the responsibility of the state reps. State Conferences have been the best way to recruit members, and that has been difficult when they go virtual. All states are having conferences in some form, so keep recruiting. It is very important.

Roy suggested that MPLA could ask conferences that co-host for a list of attendees that we could reach out to like vendors often do.

Judy will create the list of lapsed members and will send it out to the administrative board and to the state reps.

Newsletter Editor – *Melanie Argo*

Leadership Institute Coordinator- *Aubrey Madler*

Webmaster & Systems Administrator – Refer to written report - *Roy Degler*

- * **MPLA Website.** *Roy Degler, Webmaster*

Roy reported that he is in the process of rebuilding the back end of the MPLA website. He shared the link to his work so far: <https://c0908.paas3.tx.modxcloud.com>. He is working to rebuild the report uploading area. He is also grooming Phillip Doehle, his colleague at OSU, as a backup webmaster.

Roy would also like to move the e-mail to GMAIL. If we make that transition, it would mean that the forms currently on the website would not work. We cannot host the form processor on a Google server. We would have to come up with a new approach to handle forms. He would be anxious to do so without speaking to someone else who has experience doing so.

The website is hosted very cheaply and the domain is also cheap. He may go with a more modern look and feel for the website redesign, if everyone approves.

Robin and Stephen expressed their thanks to Roy for all of his hard work with the website.

Roy needs to update the Manual Procedures and Bylaws on the website and asked Frances Brummett to send him current copies of these, so he can make sure everything is correct.

Committees

Individuals with * have additional discussion or information items. All other reports will be accepted electronically without discussion.

Administration– *Leslie Langley*
Awards – *Mary Ann Thompson*
Bylaws and Procedures – *Frances Brummett*
Communications – *Shanna Smith-Ritterhouse*
Leadership Institute – *Tom Taylor*
Nominating Committee – *Leslie Langley*
Membership – *Mary Soucie*
Professional Development – *Robin Hastings*
Archives Task Force – *Annie Epperson*

State Representatives

Individuals with * have discussion or information items. All other reports will be accepted electronically without discussion.

Arizona – *Amadee Ricketts*
Colorado – *Elena Rosenfeld*
Kansas – *Shanna Smith-Ritterhouse*

* **Montana** — *Rachel Rawn*

Rachel: Montana Library Association signed a contract with the Hilton Garden Inn in Missoula for the MPLA/PNLA/MLA conference.

Stephen will work on a letter accepting MLA and PNLA's offer. The conference will be held August 2 – August 6, 2022.

* **Nebraska** – *Evonne Edgington*

Evonne, on behalf of the Nebraska Library Association Board, asked if MPLA is still interested in a joint conference in the future. If so, NLA would like to hold it in Kearney, NE since there is a new conference center and that location typically draws more participants from the western half of the state. The last time MPLA was in NE was in 2012.

Robin asked where MPLA members would fly into to get to Kearney. Omaha has better flight availability.

Evonne suggested that Grand Island would be the closest airport. For NLA, if we hold it in Omaha, we do not make much money due to low attendance. If we do in Kearney, we make more money and have better participation since we attract members from the western part of the state. Nebraska is also looking at smaller venues in Omaha.

Stephen reported that MPLA's potential future joint conference schedule is:

- 2022: Montana/PNLA,
- 2023: Oklahoma,
- 2024: maybe Utah,
- 2025: NDLA/SDLA
- 2026: Stephen suggested holding the Nebraska conference, once we cycle back to the fall conference schedule. That would complete the cycle of 12 states in 12 years. If Nebraska wants to invite us, then we can talk about it in the next board meeting.

Evonne asked if the new location of Kearney be acceptable. It is about 3 1/2 hours from Omaha. Cheyenne, Wichita and Denver are about 4.5 hours from Kearney.

Nita Gill and Randi Monley reported that South and North Dakota Library Associations were also looking at 2025 for tri-conference with MPLA. Evonne clarified Nebraska is not committed to a set year.

Roy mentioned that MPLA had a joint conference at a more remote location in Oklahoma years ago and it was a challenge to navigate and get there. For years after, we did not want to schedule it somewhere not as accessible to an airport. Others reported that they would not mind driving to Kearney.

Elena suggested that Nebraska should make the decision that works best for them and not base their location on MPLA attendance. Figure out what works best for Nebraska's attendance and we will make it work the best we can.

Evonne will take this information back to the Nebraska Board. Stephen: it potentially looks like 2026 may be the year for the conference.

Nevada – Luise Davis

New Mexico – Dale Savage

North Dakota – Randi Monley

Oklahoma – April Miller

South Dakota – Nita Gill

Utah – Joe Frazier

Wyoming – Cindy Moore

* **Final Announcements**

Judy thanked Annie Epperson. Annie made masks and asked for donations for the Leadership Institute. We have gained \$225 from this effort.

Roy showed off the rubber ducks purchased for the Utah conference. He will find a way to get those to people who desire them.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:22am.