

POLLARD MEMORIAL LIBRARY BOARD of TRUSTEES  
Meeting Minutes

Meeting took place on January 6, 2021 by conference (Zoom) call.

➤ Call to Order

- Meeting was called to order by Donna Richards at 5:35pm.

➤ Attendance:

Present:

Excused:

Donna Richards, Chair

Suzanne Frechette, Vice Chair -absent

Linda Kilbride, Secretary

VACANCY

Syed Hasan

Helen Littlefield

Sara Marks

Anne Mulhern

Muriel Parseghian

Christine O'Connor -absent

Amy Watson

Victoria Woodley, Director

Guest: Belinda Juran - Foundation

Katy Aronoff – potential applicant for trustee position

➤ Acceptance of / Amendment to Agenda

- The agenda was unanimously approved on a motion by Donna Richards and seconded by Linda Kilbride.

➤ Meeting Minutes – December 2, 2020

- The meeting minutes were unanimously accepted on a motion by Donna Richards and seconded by Syed Hasan.

There was a spelling error noted in the December minutes. It was corrected by the secretary.

➤ Resignation of Marianne Gries

- According to the By-Laws: Marianne's term ends December 31, 2022, therefore, there is a 2 year opening. An Associate Member can apply.
- The opening is posted on the PML website, Employment Opportunities, but NOT the City of Lowell website.
- Donna requested that Victoria add the Trustee opening to the Board and Commission Opportunities which is listed under the Government heading. Under Current Vacancies it is not listed. I did find the posting on Employment Opportunities in Lowell but if I were interested in a Board opening I don't think I would look there first.

➤ Slate of Officers for 2021

- Nomination needed for Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Donna Richards, Suzanne Frechette, and Linda Kilbride have served in these rolls for 1 year.
- Donna and Linda agreed to continue in their roles as Chair and Secretary respectively.
- Anyone who wants to be vice chair should email Vicky and Donna

- Update on the CARES Act Spending \$73,000 was received
  - Extended funding to Dec 31, 2021
  - Items to be purchased are ready to go there is some money left.
  
- Update on State Aid (SEE COMPLETE eMAIL BELOW)
  - *Received December 10, 2020*  
*At the MBLC Monthly Board Meeting last week, Liz Babbitt and I updated Commissioners on the status of the current State Aid Program and the extended timeline for certification, due to budget delays at both the state and local levels. We are awaiting the Governor's sign off on the FY 2021 budget which was approved by the Legislature last Friday. If the Governor approves the budget as passed by the House and Senate, State Aid will be funded at \$12 million, a 20% increase over FY 2020.*
  - Waiver request has been received, they requested a MUNIS report to double check the numbers. They will decide on waiver in January, should get payments in February. Many of the metrics are waived or more lenient.
  
- Public Access to Agendas (posting) and Minutes
  - It was asked if the Trustee Meeting could be added to the PML Event Calendar. According to Vicky it should be on there, but she will double check and make sure.
  - Vicky will have to put it on the Lowell event calendar.
  
- Circulation Report Comparison of 2020 to 2019
  - Mulhern requested an update on the following statics:
    1. Number of physical items checked out by our library.
    2. Number of physical items sent to other libraries for checkout
    3. Number of electronic items checked out
  - She is looking for comparison of a month the library open and one where the library was closed. The report was run for the entire year.
  
- COVID vaccinations for City of Lowell employees
 

Joanne Belanger sent a message saying that the state decided on the phases of the vaccine rollout and the city would be following those guidelines.  
 Discussion followed about the need for the library staff to get vaccinated.
  
- Chairperson's Report (Donna Richards)
  - There was no Chairperson's report.
  
- Directors Report (Victoria Woodley)
  - Victoria prepared the December Director's Report and distributed by email.
    - Syed questioned the fact that there was only one incident and Vicky confirmed.
    - Lot of money in FY21 budget, meeting with director to spend down the money.
    - Donna Richards requested that they look at purchasing chairs, because the physical appearance of the library needs updating.
    - Received first installment of literacy grant
  
- Foundation Report (Donna Richards)
  - The foundation did not meet in December.

- The next meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2021 at 8:30am via Zoom.

> Friends of the Library Report (Helen Littlefield)

- Next meeting January 9, 2021, they are going to be discussing membership categories
- Start 2021 membership drive
  - Sara Marks asked about people who have been paying \$10 and how will this be categorized. Helen said they will be assessing different categories, discussion on how many and what the cost will be.
  - The members of the Friends board are the only ones that get the invitation to the meeting

> Old Business

- MVLC Automatic Renewal Feature  
Results from the new report Alicia Verno created for us. Can be run on a custom date range. Please be advised that we will have to run this on a regular basis if we want to keep statistics long term. The info will eventually disappear from the system once the borrowing periods conclude.

Automatic Renewals by Date Range

Trans Stat Date	Number of Renewals
2020-11-25	110
2020-11-27	100
2020-11-28	31
2020-11-29	3
2020-11-30	42
2020-12-01	36
2020-12-02	18
2020-12-04	69
2020-12-05	57
2020-12-06	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>495</b>

- Will run for one year to see if the data is meaningful.
- Christine O'Connor had brought up an idea of working with the senior center to have volunteers who are willing to read be partnered with elderly clients. Christine was not here, so it was not addressed.

> New Business

No new business

> Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 PM on a motion by Donna Richards and seconded by Helen Littlefield. All in attendance were in favor.
  - The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, **FEBRUARY 3, 2021** at 5:30pm

- Minutes prepared by Linda Kilbride
- January 6, 2021

## OLD BUSINESS STILL PENDING

- Museum passes
- Homebound patron delivery - defining home delivery parameters.
- Inquiry to MBLC Construction grant department regarding site visit to PML.
- Trustee openings ... the Trustee would like to be involved in the process – *suggest* resumes to HR to CM to Vicky to Trustees (vet) – Trustees provide feedback to CM
- Feasibility study for library branch was put on hold from February.
- Sara Marks reach out to nursing department at UMASS Lowell ?? – possible internship at library. This in response to social worker at the library.
- Update on Outline and Schedule for City Council and School Committee Library tour(s) – sent to asst city manager.
- Purpose of the Boards discussion (postponed).
- Acceptance of Donated print “Round House’, Lowell, MA” by Frank Wyman. Rosemary Noon wrote : *My advice is to decline the donation. While I understand that this may be awkward for the donor, the print is not to the standard of the library's collection. A print of the Round House is not an original drawing. It is not a rare piece. I knew Frank Wyman, a lovely man and a talented graphic artist. There are many versions of this wonderful Lowell house also done by Janet Lambert-Moore, Janine Tardiff and others active in the 70s and 80s. I wouldn't even suggest going to the Whistler House, they will decline as well.*

Received December 10, 2020

At the MBLC Monthly Board Meeting last week, Liz Babbitt and I updated Commissioners on the status of the current State Aid Program and the extended timeline for certification, due to budget delays at both the state and local levels. We are awaiting the Governor's sign off on the FY 2021 budget which was approved by the Legislature last Friday. If the Governor approves the budget as passed by the House and Senate, State Aid will be funded at \$12 million, a 20% increase over FY 2020.

Our plan is to bring forward to the February Board meeting for a vote, the complete list of libraries meeting full requirements. There have been no State Aid awards or payments to this point and there will not be until after the February Board Meeting.

Revisions to the State Aid Program policies for FY 2022, which reflect FY 2021 hours and materials, will go to the Board for approval at their January meeting. These changes will be similar to those approved for FY 2020/2021 last April. Last year's revisions are detailed in the Emergency Preamble for FY 2021 and the Overview and policy statements (see <https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/state-aid-and-arls/policies.php>), specifically related to suspending the Hours Open and the Materials Expenditure Requirements for this current fiscal year.

The Commissioners vote in January will be retroactive and will cover the entire FY 2021 Fiscal Year back to July 1, 2020 for the Hours Requirement. Libraries are encouraged to purchase new materials for their collections throughout the year but will not be penalized for not meeting the spending requirement percentages.

We also recommended to the Board that the 5% Disproportionate Cut benchmark be moved to 10% for this year. The percent benchmark determines whether a municipality must petition the Board in person. Municipalities with cuts between 5% and 10% will receive a follow up review in the next State Aid cycle but will not have to present their petitions in person. The Board will vote on this change as part of the Policy revisions in January.

With this change, the eight municipalities with over a 10% disproportionate cut will be required to present their petitions in person at the February Board Meeting. Commissioners will vote at the March Board meeting whether to grant "waivers with reservation" to these municipalities. These petitions range from slightly over 10% budget decreases to slightly below 20% reductions to library funding. The other waivers (under 5% and between 5 and 10%) will be presented and reviewed in February and voted as a group in March. More will follow about Waivers in a separate email later this month.

As we head into the winter months and the second COVID 19 surge, our main concern at the MBLC is for all of you to stay safe and well. Please do not worry about trying to meet State Aid Hours requirements this year. Continue to offer only those services you are able and at levels that provide you, your staff members, and your communities with the greatest possible health and safety precautions, given the ongoing pandemic.

The artist Mico Kaufman's estate will be publicly auctioned. The estate is managed by Flavia Cigliano, is allowing Lew Karabatsos to select a piece for the Lowell Historical Society and the Pollard Memorial Library. The Brush Gallery is also a recipient of a piece.

**Mico Kaufman** (1924 - 2016) was born in Buzău, Romania on January 3, 1924. He was a sculptor, educated at the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome, and the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence, Italy. He survived a Nazi labor camp for 3 years during World War 2, leaving when he was 21 and in 1951 immigrated to the United States. He lived in Tewksbury, MA and died on December 12, 2016 at the age of 92.

Mico Kaufman was best known for making inaugural medals for United States Presidents Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, and George H. W. Bush. He was a freelance artist for the Medallic Art Company and designed over 100 medals for them, including 192 medals for their American Bicentennial and the Judaic Heritage series. His preferred materials include bronze, stainless steel, and plastic. Six of his works are located in Lowell and another six are located in Tewksbury. In January 2016 he published his book *A Chiseler's True Story: The Art of Mico Kaufman*.

- "Wamesit Indian" in Tewksbury, MA (1989)
- "Water" in Tewksbury, MA (1985)
- "Homage to Women" in Lowell, MA (1984)
- "The Muster" in Tewksbury, MA
- "Touching Souls" in Tewkesbury Abbey, UK and Tewksbury, MA
- James McNeil Whistler Memorial in Lowell, MA
- World War II Memorial in Tewksbury, MA
- Blessed Eugene de Mazenod in Tewksbury, MA and Lowell, MA
- The Rouses Memorial in Lowell, MA
- Claude Debussy at UMass Lowell in Lowell, MA
- Italia in Lowell, MA

Lew is at the Kaufman studio and is suggesting this figure of a young boy. He is the plaster cast for the boy in the Christos Rouses Memorial at JFK Plaza: <https://www.lowellma.gov/224/Christos-G-Rouses-Memorial>

The figure is 4 feet tall and is a plaster cast. The boy mimics the pose of the Rouses figure, but I think holds it as a single piece. [Christos G. Rouses Memorial - In the Line of Duty](#) This monument, dedicated in 1980, is named for Officer Christos G. Rouses, who was killed in the line of duty by an armed robber while responding to a silent alarm at a local pharmacy.

The memorial, located at JFK Plaza, directly in front of Lowell Police Department Headquarters, depicts an officer with his hand on the shoulder of a young child and features the names of Officer Rouses and other fallen Lowell officers.

In accepting this work, there will be related costs. Fine Art Services could be contracted to move the work. It is light because it is plaster, but fragile. The Trustees will need to think about placement and appropriate protection - plexi cover, pedestal, label, etc.

This is a unique donation that will come with some financial output. I can start to do some research in preparation for the Trustee vote.

I would estimate this would take two art handlers 4 hours, including travel time, for \$640. I think a simple blanket wrap should be fine for transport, so no added cost for packing materials.

The City of Lowell adopted the Plan E form of government effective January 1, 1944. By charter, the City of Lowell follows a [Plan E Form of government](#), in which the popular vote of the City of Lowell's residents elects nine members to the City Council to serve a two year term of office. City Councilors then elect one of their members to serve as City Mayor, who serves as the official head of the City, presiding over City Council and School Committee meetings.

The Office of the City Manager is the Executive Department for the City of Lowell, responsible for the long term financial planning as well as the day-to-day activities of every department in the City, with the exception of the School Department. As the City's Chief Executive Officer, the City Manager provides leadership to and administration of all departments and services. All operational decisions and all contracts require the City Manager's approval.

The City Manager is responsible for the enforcement of all laws and City ordinances; appointment of department heads, **appointment to numerous City boards**, commissions, and other advisory bodies; and submission of the annual budget to the City Council. In addition, the City Manager and her staff recommend policies and programs to the City Council and implement Council decisions.

The Library Board of Trustees have responsibility through the City of the general care, administration, and policy making for the library. The Board engages in an ongoing planning process, which assesses the needs of the library and the role of the library in the community and ensure that the library develops to meet those needs.

## **BUDGET FACTS:**

- State Aid to Public Libraries is an annual, voluntary program administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners that distributes local aid to municipalities. It encourages municipal support and improvement for public library service, bolsters reciprocal resource sharing among libraries, compensates for differences in municipal funding capacities, and offsets costs to libraries that circulate materials to patrons from other certified municipalities. Of the 351 municipalities in Massachusetts, 350 provide public library service to their residents.
- Lowell received \$186,049.28 in FY2020 from MBLC (Mass Board of Library Commissioners).
- A municipality and its library must be certified by the MBLC as meeting statutory and regulatory requirements to receive State Aid to Public Libraries funding. To be certified each fiscal year, a municipality and its library must:
  - meet its [Municipal Appropriation Requirement](#)
  - meet [Minimum Standards of Free Public Library Service](#)
  - submit [annual reports and forms](#) to show compliance
- Massachusetts General Law ([M.G.L., c.78, s.19A](#)) states that a municipality must appropriate a figure of at least the average of the last 3 years' municipal appropriations to the library for operations, increased by 2.5%, in order to be certified for State Aid to Public Libraries. This calculated figure is known as the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR).
- Disproportionate budget cuts greater than 5%. Disproportionate budget reductions are one factor in the Board's consideration of whether or not to grant a MAR waiver. The library's budget reduction is compared with the overall reduction in the municipal budget. Cuts beyond the 5% budget reduction used as the benchmark for disproportionate cuts indicate that the library has been targeted for budget reductions much greater than other municipal departments.
  - Require a waiver to provide evidence that any reduction to the library budget is not disproportionate relative to changes in other municipal departments and the overall municipal budget.

Vicky,

I would like added to the agenda an **update, review, and discussion of the budget process and it's possible affect on library operations**. I am concerned that as the city faces financial woes, the library will be seen as an easy target for cuts. Now more than ever the library needs to be in a position to help people coming out of the pandemic. What adverse outcomes would result with severe budget cuts and what can we do as Trustees to support your efforts ??