Minutes

Attending: Skip Auld, Jay Bansbach, Mary Baykan (Chair), Margaret Carty, Denise Davis, Natalie Edington, Mary Hastler, Pat Hofmann, Ann Gilligan, Darnice Jasper, Catherine MacRae, Sharan Marshall, Irene Padilla, and Kathleen Tease. Donna Denny was the recording secretary.

Minutes

Mary Baykan asked for review and approval of the minutes of the September 4, 2015 meeting. Sharan moved to approve the minutes, Kathleen seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

State Legislation

Mary noted that on October 27, the state issued a fiscal update with projections for next year. Currently, the state expects a budget surplus at the end of the year, and it may be worth approximately $200 million.

Mary reported about two possible bills in the upcoming legislative session, one sponsored by Senator Nancy King and the other by Delegate Sheila Hixson. The two bills would not change the per capita funding increases that are currently scheduled for public libraries, but would expedite the timing of their release. Mary provided some background history, noting that in 2005, Maryland public libraries were granted a multi-year funding increase that was supposed to begin in 2007 but was delayed by the recession. We reminded the legislators about it and were looking for it, but rather than cut the increase, they stretched its payment out over ten years. The intent of both bills is to have the remaining eight years for this funding be cut in half, to four years. At the time, we met with Secretary Brinkley, current Chair of the Department of Management and Budget. While we knew it was good they did not cut us, he suggested that when times are better its timing might be collapsed. This advice provides us with an opportunity to have the increase come a little faster to help poorer libraries. Libraries have had many stresses these last 5-7 years, and many systems cannot raise wages to be competitive.

In a discussion, Denise noted how increases in the minimum wage scale puts pressure on library pay scales. The minimum wage will go from $7.30 to $10.10 per hour. Denise has been trying to phase-in improvements to the bottom of her system’s pay scale. They are at $8.00 now, will be up .50 in July, and .85 the July after that.

Mary reported that her library system received a letter, which she showed, from the Maryland State Retirement Board of Trustees recommending that the current law for governmental units be amended, not for teachers, but all other participants, to a different amortization policy. They will start to phase in a contribution rate increase by December 2017. The
contribution rate is at 7% now, and it could go up to as high as 14%. If they choose the recommendation, it will increase earlier, so that the increases are more graduated. If your county is affected, make sure someone from your human resources staff attends one of the meetings that are listed in the letter to find out more...

Mary said another bill is one being drafted by MAPLA that seeks a task force to look at the oversight of libraries under MSDE. This bill is not to remove DLDS from MSDE, but to examine where public libraries fit into the overall education picture.

Mary passed out an interim list of the members of Maryland House and Senate committees with whom the MLA LAP frequently works. Often our bills end up in the Budget and Tax Committee, and the Education Subcommittee in the Senate. In the House, we often work with Appropriations, Health and Government Operations, and Ways and Means.

Federal

ALA is speaking out against the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act in keeping with their efforts to restore the Constitutional privacy rights of library users. ALA strongly supports rapid passage of the bipartisan Electronic Communications Privacy Amendments Act.

Libraries Transform is the American Library Association’s new, multi-year public awareness campaign. Its ultimate goal is to increase funding support for libraries and advance information policy issues in alignment with ALA advocacy goals. Visit www.librariestransform.org for more information.

National Library Legislative Day (NLLD) is scheduled for May 2 and 3, 2016, in Washington, D.C.

Jay reported that the ESEA reauthorization bill is still in committee. Earlier this year, a coalition of over 20 education leaders joined ALA in signing a joint letter addressed to HELP Committee chairman Senator Alexander and ranking member Senator Murray to ask that Congress incorporate the SKILLS (Strengthening Kids’ Interest in Learning and Libraries) Act (S. 312), a specific amendment about dedicated federal school library funding, in ESEA’s reauthorization. This sets up school libraries for professional development funds under federal law. It is the first time we have made an inroad on the law. Currently, legislative leaders are arguing over everything else. It is unknown how new Speaker of the House Paul Ryan will change things. We are very hopeful about getting this legislation through, as we don’t want to have to fight it again.

Natalie gave a tour of the Engage website and answered questions. A link to the site may be found on the MLA website. ALA provides Engage as a library advocacy tool.

DLDS

Irene said that despite the good news Mary reported about the budget surplus, state agencies are likely to receive a 2% cut in the coming fiscal year. Officially, she has not been informed about the budget. No communication is unusual, but the current administration is new.
Irene reported that the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped has been given funding via federal dollars which will revert to DLDS to be distributed. A discussion ensued about IMLS funding. It was noted that IMLS does not like to pay wages out of federal funds. IMLS provides for LSTA funding and is the only federal funding source for public libraries. A discussion ensued on the history of state support for libraries.

Mary noted that recently the student test scores collected by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) were published and Maryland’s scores were subpar. Expecting a negative reaction, school systems have been preparing parents for this bad news. The scores of subgroups of developmentally disabled students which were previously exempted are now in the mix, resulting in lower overall scores. This has become a political football with a lot of finger-pointing going on.

A discussion ensued about population shifts in counties, schools closing in rural areas, and surging urban populations. The population is aging too, and some trends are world-wide. Darnice noted that she see elders and youngsters together more, coming from multigenerational households.

**MLA President**

Mary Hastler arrived, after cohosting a local radio show earlier in the morning to get the message out about libraries.

Mary Hastler reported that with the retirement of James H. Billington effective January 1, 2016, MLA sent a letter to President Obama to encourage him to select a new Librarian of Congress with a library background. The letter does not stipulate the need for a leader with a MLS degree, but someone with a background and understanding of libraries. So far there has been no response. No term limits for have been suggested, but some would like to see a 10 year limit on the position. The vacancy will be filled by presidential nomination, with confirmation by the U.S. Senate.

Mary Baykan noted that the deadline for awards for next year’s MLA Conference is imminent. She asked who should be nominated for the Distinguished Service Award. A discussion ensued, and a subcommittee was formed to consider and draft the award.

**MLA Executive Director**

Margaret reported that the MLA Annual Conference has been put together. There will be a lot of great programs. She provided a preview as follows:

- One speaker will be Michael J. Tougias, the author of a number of books, including *The Finest Hours*. Disney plans to make a film from the book, which is about a 1952 sea tragedy and the Coast Guard.

- The Keynote speaker is the Curator of the National Cryptologic Museum at Ft. Meade.

- The winner of the Author Award is yet unknown.
Another speaker will be Siobhan A. Reardon, President and Director of the Free Library of Philadelphia, *Library Journal’s* 2015 Librarian of the Year.

There will be one preconference program for mid-level managers, focusing on public speaking.

Online registration for the conference will open online in January 2016. This will be our 15th and last year at the Clarion in Ocean City. They have been wonderful to us, but we have outgrown them and their broadband issues have been a problem. The 2017 MLA Annual Conference will be held at the Hyatt in Cambridge.

Margaret said it was last call to join MLA’s International Cruise in May 2016. There are currently 50 people going and if anyone else is interested please let her know. They will tour Barcelona, Nice, Pisa, Florence, Rome, Naples, Capri, Venice, Croatia, and Montenegro. There are 3 days at sea, which can be spent attending CEU programs.

Margaret has been invited join a WWI Commission in 2016. She has been working with Lynn Wheeler to consider a display that could be representative of libraries. One idea is to have paintings and models by an Easton artist now displayed at the Air Force Museum be displayed in Maryland. Since the exhibit requires museum quality conditions and security, they are considering the Mitchell Gallery at St. Johns College with perhaps a reception. Let Margaret know if you have any ideas.

Margaret spoke about concerns the MLA office has had with a sub-lessee in their building. The sub-lessee gave out building keys and passcodes to unknown people, leaving MLA staff feeling very vulnerable. Some items from their office were stolen. Baltimore City owns the building and the sublets are illegal, so fortunately they are moving out.

Margaret said Maryland Library Day will be held on February 3, 2016. Enoch Pratt Free Library is sponsoring the evening reception this year, and Margaret is making the arrangements. Enoch Pratt is also providing books for Maryland legislators to donate to their favorite libraries. The Board of Trustees of Enoch Pratt came up with this idea. Their head of selections will choose the books, which will have bookplates inserted for dedication purposes.

Margaret said the legislative assistant to Senator Edwards has recommended that both Speaker Busch and Senator Mike Miller have *Maryland Library Day* declared in both the Maryland House and Senate on February 3, 2016. Skip and Sharon will ask them to do this. On the floor of the chambers for this event will be Irene, Jay, Mary Hastler, and a CALD representative yet to be determined. CML will hold its annual meeting that day at 2:30 p.m. in the Law Library.

The meeting was adjourned 11:58 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for December 4, 2015.