

MiALA Board Meeting Notes
Thursday, November 2 at 1:00pm

Present: Darlene Johnson-Bignotti, Katrina Rouan, Mies Martin, Ed Eckel, Lori DeBie, Aaron Kilgore, Sheila Garcia Mezari, Denise Leyton, Carin Graves, Jen Mikesell, Rebecca Tull

Absent: Veronica Bielat

Call to Order: (Immediately following a special presentation by Debbie Mikula, Executive Director, Michigan Library Association at 1pm. See [Addendum](#) below.) The meeting was called to order at 1:58pm.

Board Business Meeting:

1. Approval of Agenda - Eckel made a motion to approve the agenda. DeBie seconded it. The motion passed.
2. Approval of [Board Minutes from October](#) – Revision to Old Business, Item #1: the contact email to use during Kaylyn's leave is mialasupport@mcls.org. The email address was changed after the meeting. - Martin made a motion to approve the revised October minutes. Leyton seconded the motion. The motion passed.
3. Approval of Consent Agenda: - Moved Membership to Old Business. Martin made a motion to approve the consent agenda as revised. Mikesell seconded the motion. The motion passed.
 - a. Committee reports
 - i. Advocacy – Group will do survey of MiALA membership on needs. Group only has two active members. They are not sure if the committee will continue this year.
 - ii. Awards – See item #2 Old Business. (Darlene)
 - iii. Conference Planning
 1. Venue contract is ready sent to Kalyn
 2. Tentative catering menu
 3. Tentative theme is set but will be finalized this Friday
 4. They have a preliminary budget which is aligning nicely with previous budget
 5. Next up is getting Programming up
 - iv. Communications and Marketing – LaCharmine Jefferson and Jodi Coalter have been trained on editing/publishing the newsletter and will start this month (articles due 11/6 for 11/10 publish date). Committee has been notified of Kalyn Huson's upcoming leave and the MCLS email to use for help with the website.
 - v. Executive – Met via email and approved designating Kalyn as the owner of our MSUCU account to have someone consistent in that role. Denise and Kalyn are working on finalizing the paperwork. (Darlene)

- vi. IDEA – First meeting held 10/17. Committee is robust with plans for professional development, student engagement, maintaining the resources list, etc. (Katrina)
- vii. Membership –
- viii. Nominating –
- ix. Ad-Hoc Committees: None.
- b. Partner Reports – None.
- c. Treasurer’s Report –
- d. Interest Group Coordinating Council – IGCC is working on a revision of bylaws to simplify rules around reporting from Interest groups. This will be shared with the Board for future action once a draft is completed.
- e. Board Actions via Email: Motion: To accept MCLS proposal outlining coverage during Kalyn Huson leave as presented. **Passed** (10/12/23)

Old Business

1. Strategic Planning- Next Steps (Darlene)
Johnson-Bignotti - Debbie Mikula’s presentation was wonderful. We will send a gift card to thank her. I plan to make notes based on the presentation and we will discuss next steps at the December meeting.
2. Awards Committee Update (Darlene)
Johnson-Bignotti - Asked for members in the October newsletter and received no volunteers. I’ll try again this month.
3. Membership Committee (Denise)
Leyton - Membership Committee has an interested Chair, but is having trouble getting started.
Eckel - Advocacy Committee is also struggling. Two people are ready to engage, but others are not replying to emails.
Johnson-Bignotti - We may need to revisit committee structures and charges.

New Business

1. December and January Meetings (Darlene)
Johnson-Bignotti - I am not available for our December 7th meeting until 1:30.
Martin - I can cover the first part of the meeting.
Johnson-Bignotti - Let’s move the January meeting to the 11th.
2. Nominations committee/compliance with bylaws (Carin)
Graves - I am putting the Committee together and all of the volunteers are from public universities. However, the bylaws say we need two representatives from each type of academic library (public, private, community college). I will put a call out for the November newsletter.
Rouan - This may require a bylaws adjustment for a more realistic makeup of future committees.

Kilgore made a motion to adjourn. Eckel seconded. The motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 2:18pm.

Issue Bin / Future Agenda Items:

1. Student Liaison Position

Upcoming Board Meetings: First Thursdays at 1pm unless otherwise noted.

- December 7
- January 11
- February 1

Next Executive Officer's Meetings:

TBD (convenes as needed)

Addendum: Debbie Mikula Presentation Notes

Debbie has served as the Executive Director of the Michigan Library Association since 2019. Her background is working with arts and cultural organizations including leading the Arts Council of Greater Lansing, ArtServe Michigan, and the League of Historic American Theatres.

MLA began its process shortly after Debbie was hired, and was guided by the nonprofit consulting group NEW (Nonprofit Enterprise at Work). NEW created tools, guided sessions, and synthesized data based on 600 survey responses, interviews with the Executive Board and partner groups including MiALA, stakeholders such as library trustees, and one on one interviews with about 20 library directors from across the state. Their fee was \$10,000 which did not include writing the plan. From start to finish the process was completed in about six months.

A Strategic Plan workgroup determined three "pillars": advocacy, engagement, and education. The pillars are included in MLA's mission statement and serve as guiding priorities for the organization and plan. From the pillars and data/feedback MLA developed goals which outline initiatives. This gives members a common sense of purpose.

Although MLA's current plan covers 2023-25 it is a "rolling plan" and reviewed and updated annually by the Strategic Plan workgroup with advisement from the Executive Board. It is not a complete overhaul. Debbie does not advise creating a five or ten year plan as they can become outdated quickly.

Things to consider as you begin the planning process (sage advice):

- The simpler the planning process, the more likely you are to succeed. What you want is to get people within the organization thinking about the future and what the organization could and should like down the road. Keep in mind that as you bring groups together and talk to members/stakeholders that consensus will be hard to achieve. Look for common themes.
- Goals are not a “do list” but provide overall direction for the future. How do we deliver what we said we would ? What would the organization look like if we actually achieve our goals and how do we keep building on them?
- Planning may not always mean growth. May need to scale back or shift focus in some areas to effectively achieve your goals. Are we stretching ourselves too thin? Cannot be all things to everyone.
- Look at external issues and how they affect the organization- who is your “competition”? What could you do differently or that is unique?
- Include one goal that is very internal. Can you improve your workgroups, communication? Is being an all volunteer group sustainable or do we need a staff?
- The plan itself should follow the “Three C Rule” and be clear, concise, and compelling. The author should be internal. Consultants can interpret data but they don’t know the nuances of your organization. Assign one person to tweak and write the plan, but be sure that others are at the table who represent a cross section of the organization, and that everyone at the table has a voice. In MLA’s model the President and VP lead the process aided by a workgroup of 15 members.
- Look at other plans from other academic library associations and adapt models that would work for MiALA. No need to reinvent the wheel.
- The budget should support but not be incorporated into the plan. You don’t want to assign dollar amounts to goals. Look at the budget through your pillars; do/will you have the income to support what you want to accomplish? May need to adjust the plan or the budget accordingly.