

**MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY ASSOCIATION**  
**Executive Board Minutes**  
**March 6, 2019**

**MLC Conference Room**  
**Jackson, Mississippi**

**Call to Order:**

The March meeting of the Executive Board of the Mississippi Library Association was called to order by Mary Beth Applin, President, at 11:05 a.m. on Friday, March 6, 2020, at the Mississippi Library Commission in Jackson, Mississippi.

**Roll Call/Signature List of Attending Members:**

Present – Mary Beth Applin, President; Mara Polk, Vice-President; Tamara Blackwell, Secretary; Lori Barnes, Treasurer; Sarah Crisler-Ruskey, Immediate Past President; Patsy Brewer, Parliamentarian; Angela Mullins; Stephan Parks; and Rickey Jones.

Others Present: Paula Bass, Hulen E. Bivins, Brandon Cain, Joy Dubose, Kate Dutro, Tina Harry, Terry Lajaunie, Rachelle Moore, Carrie-Ann Pierson, and Jennifer Todd.

**Approval of the Agenda:**

**MOTION: To adopt the agenda for the March 6, 2020, meeting of the MLA Executive Board with one amendment to move Hulen Bivins' report ahead of the MLA Officers and Staff Reports.**

**Made by: Terry Lajaunie    Second: Mara Polk**

**Passed unanimously**

**Approval of Minutes:**

**MOTION: To adopt the Minutes for the December 6, 2019, first Board meeting of the MLA Executive Board as sent out via email.**

**Made by: Lori Barnes    Second: Mara Polk**

**Passed unanimously**

**MOTION: To adopt the Minutes for the December 6, 2019, second Board meeting of the MLA Executive Board as sent out via email.**

**Made by: Mara Polk    Second: Lori Barnes**

**Passed unanimously**

**MLA Officers and Staff Reports:**

MLC Executive Director:    Hulen Bivins reported on the ALA Fly-In in May and concerns about the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The Departments of State (DoS) and Defense (DoD) have restricted employee travel to domestic travel with Washington State off-limits and the DoS has issued a level 4 travel alert, meaning that employees may travel only with the permission of

supervisory staff. The DoD announced Tuesday it will be revisiting rules and regulations pertaining to travel with security in mind and the issue of money already spent and whether these expenses are refundable? He noted that expenses associated with the Fly-In are probably not refundable. Currently, ALA has no plans to cancel the Fly-In. Mr. Bivins said there was concern about the concentration of library talent that would be attending, noting the drastic effect on the profession the Coronavirus illness could have and what safety measures would be in place in May. At Mary Beth Applin's request, he agreed to keep the Board informed of developments.

Mr. Bivins reported that budget work is moving along. In response to Mary Beth Applin's inquiry, he expressed optimism for library budget requests, noting that Mississippi "coffers" are in good shape this year.

Secretary: Tamara Blackwell – no report.

Treasurer: Lori Barnes reported that MLA is still awaiting dues from many members and reminded the Board that the invoice for Wild Apricot needs to be approved. She stated for the record that she appreciated Jennifer Wann and how well she performed the duties of treasurer last year. She noted that MLA is changing CPA firms, but still has no news if the cost of the service will increase or not. [See attached budget statement.]

President: Mary Beth Applin reported that she attended the ALA Fly-In in February, where she met with several representatives or their aides, including Roger Wicker, who supports MLA funding and plans to send a letter of support to Congress, and Bennie Thompson's aides. She reported that Tonja Johnson, Legislative Chair, who could not be present today, reported to her that the legislative days had been going well, but expressed disappointment with the amount of participation from legislators. Mara noted the need to increase school and academic library participation in these events.

Mary Beth reported that she had updated the Advocacy webpage, calling attention to the added links that make it easier to contact our state representatives. She met with Tonja Johnson and Kate Dutro, MLA Advocacy Chair. Noting that MLA advocates mostly for public libraries, they agreed that MLA needs to advocate for K-12, too. As to the question of who determines advocacy talking points, Board members agreed that the Long-Term Planning Committee needs to address this issue and that membership should approve the advocacy agenda at the October meeting. The Board agreed that Kate may make suggestions for K-12 advocacy content to be added to the website.

Mary Beth reported that the Ad Hoc Committee on Fees was created with Patsy Brewer as Chair and committee members Deborah Lee, Janet Armour, Elizabeth Simmons, Jennifer Todd, and Josh Haidet. The committee will investigate the MLA organizational fee structure and will make recommendations by July. She questioned whether a long-term committee should be formed to look at fees on a regular basis, which the Board did not act on at this time. She will ask Amanda Clay Powell, Long-Term Planning Committee Chair, to assist with how to market the need for changing the fee structure to the membership.

Mary Beth reported that she also talked to Amanda and they agreed that the Long-Term Planning Committee should have four members in addition to the chair.

Mary Beth reported that Membership and Outreach chairs have not been appointed, but she is actively recruiting nominees at this time.

Vice-President: Mara Polk reported that she met with conference site representatives in Meridian. Noting the difficulties with travel to/from the conference site in 2018, the committee is working to provide shuttle service. To promote library card usage, she plans to work with the local Chamber of Commerce to provide local discounts to conference participants who present a library card. The theme of this year's conference is: "Improve, Innovate, Impact." The recruitment of speakers continues.

Mara suggested the Board consider changing the exhibit space registration fee schedule for vendors, but the Board membership agreed that the current fee schedule is profitable for MLA. Mara noted that the conference site had suggested it would be a cost-savings for MLA if we use the conference center's tables, tablecloths, and trash cans for vendor spaces. She noted some vendors may not like the change, but it would save MLA money. While the Board agreed that it was a good idea, Mary Beth suggested she ask vendors what they think about the change.

Mara reported that she was considering other changes, as well:

- Do away with the Tuesday special event and have a meet-and-greet instead. Mara stated that there would still be a pre-conference training, for which she is brainstorming ideas.
- Move the Awards ceremony to the Opening ceremony timeslot on Wednesday and hold it in the theater. This would allow awardees to be recognized throughout the conference. Also recommended having photos and details about awards on the website so that MLA membership will know who the nominees are and what their accomplishments are.
- On Friday, have more sessions to take the place of the moved Awards ceremony.
- No changes to the Author Award ceremony or the Presidential Bash. She was investigating the possibility of having the Presidential Bash at the Meridian Museum of Art (the old Carnegie Branch Library).

In response to Mary Beth's inquiry, Mara noted that the one- and three-day conference registration options would remain the same. Mara stated that she is waiting to hear from one more vendor to confirm rates.

Past-President: Sarah Crisler-Ruskey reported that in addition to the annual conference, she would like to suggest one-day regional conferences for front-line staff, noting that front-line staff often do not have the opportunity to attend the regular conference but would benefit from this type of training and networking would be an added bonus. Conferences would be a four-hour day with several sessions followed-up with one large meeting with themes and topics changing each year. She spoke with Joyce Shaw, director at Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, USM, about using her site for the Coastal region conference, noting GCRL is an excellent facility. Cost for such a conference would probably be around \$1,500 for the day with May or August being good times to hold the conferences. There would be a registration fee, but no catering; instead, have participants bring a lunch or eat out. She hopes that one or two conferences would be held each

year in different locations with a local organizer. She stated that she would organize the Gulf Coast conference. Mara noted the need to consider chair turnaround each year and suggested asking others to help with organization. In response to Sarah's request for approval to the plan, the Board agreed she should pursue this with a target of May 2021 for the first conference. Patsy noted that personnel could attend the closest conference to their libraries, and this could be touted as a benefit of MLA membership.

Sarah raised the question of whether the annual conference should remain a four-day event or changed to a three-day and recommended including in the conference RFP requests for quotes for both options. Patsy also noted the desire among the membership for a casino on the Coast that is non-smoking, which Sarah agreed to investigate. Patsy noted that we usually receive several bids and that the question of a three-day conference has been discussed for the past several years by various vice-presidents as something that could be changed to save the organization approximately \$2,000 for just one meeting on Friday.

MLA Administrator: Paula Bass reported that the MLA database has 653 listed as members, of which 305 are active, 320 are lapsed, 11 are pending-new, 16 are pending-renewal, and 1 is pending level change. (See attached "MLA Administrator's Report.")

Paula stated that she would set up a booth at the Children's festival and solicit volunteers to work the booth. Angela and Mara both agreed to help.

Paula suggested a training session at the annual conference or a workshop at MLC to instruct legislation day attendees on how to advocate for libraries. Lori mentioned the need to hire a lobbyist to advocate for libraries, which Mary Beth agreed to forward to the Long-Term Planning Committee for consideration.

ALA Councilor: Meredith Wickham is not present but sent her report (see attached "ALA Councilor's Report") to Mary Beth. Mary Beth stated Meredith attended the ALA Mid-Winter and reported on ALA's financial problems, noting that she herself and several other Councilors had requested more transparency and sharing of information, which she has yet to receive. Meredith noted that despite difficulties, "ALA's financial health remains strong." Due to these on-going financial problems and ALA membership dissatisfaction with the Executive Board, Meredith recommended MLA wait to decide its position on the Forward Together recommendations for organizational restructuring until fall 2020, when she will report her findings on the situation.

SELA Councilor: Ashley Dees is not present – no report.

### **Section Chair Reports:**

ACRL Section: Kristy Bariola is not present – no report.

Public Library Section: Phillip Carter is not present – no report.

School Library Section: Angela Mullins reported the School Library Section is now the Mississippi Association of School Librarians (MsASL) as reported in the last Board meeting, where the new by-laws were also introduced. The name change and new by-laws are meant to provide a group voice to school librarians. MsASL plan to make presentations at three Language Acquisition through Motor Planning (LAMP) workshops this year. She also noted that she is working on a database that will include all school librarians and their contact information in the state, which has 140 school districts. Angela talked about the fee structure in which school districts will pay for memberships and individual libraries will pay dues to their district for their members. Angela noted that school library stats are in the works. (See their attached “Mississippi Association of School Librarians Constitution.”)

Special Libraries Section: Stephen Parks – no report.

Trustees Section: Rickey Jones reported that he attended MLA Day and met with two representatives, advocating for, among other things, broadband coverage in libraries and the importance of libraries in our communities. He also visited several libraries, participating in several projects, and met with the Jackson Association of Neighbors.

Web Committee: This item was moved up on the Agenda at Mary Beth’s request. Jennifer Todd recommended renewing the Wild Apricot System. (See attached “Wild Apricot” invoice.)

**MOTION: Renew the Wild Apricot system (Website, Event Manager, Membership Database) for the period of April 7, 2020 – April 6, 2021, with the professional plan at the price of \$1,728.**

**Made by: Mara Polk                      Seconded by: Stephen Parks**  
**Passed unanimously**

The new wording for Tech Support Stipend that was approved last month is:

To go under **O. MLA Web Committee [pg 48]**

*5. The MLA Board shall appoint a Technical Services Support staff person for a one-year term to provide technical support to the MLA administrator and website. The Tech Services Support is paid a \$500 stipend at the end of the budget year.*

Mary Beth reported that Jennifer Wann had recommended the President and Treasurer be bonded. Mara reported that the Board is currently bonded for \$2,000 per year up to \$1,000,000. At Mary Beth’s suggestion, the Board agreed that this recommendation should be sent to the Long-Term Planning Committee.

### **Roundtables and Committee Reports:**

Advocacy Committee: After briefly introducing herself, Kate Dutro reported that she had a meeting with Mary Beth, Tonja Johnson, and Susan Liles to discuss what her position as Chair should be for the Committee. Among other things, the group agreed that public, school, and academic libraries should all work together to build a community. Kate stressed the need to push advocacy from home libraries and not just at the capitol. (See attached “Developing an

Advocacy Agenda.”) Kate asked other sections, committees, and round table chairs to send her organizational histories of those entities. Kate suggested advocacy strategies, such as working with principals and university presidents and meetings with potential funders. Mary Beth stated that Kate should consider presenting a advocacy session at the MLA conference.

Awards Committee: Rachelle Moore stated that she is excited about Mara’s ideas for the conference. She called for nominations for the awards and encouraged more libraries to participate.

Black Caucus Roundtable: Mary Ann Peoples is not present – no report.

Election Committee: Jennifer Smith is not present – no report.

Fiscal Management: Patsy Brewer reported that the account earned \$80.35 for a total of \$34,079.41 in the account.

GGNRT: Co-Chairs Hannah Berryhill, Jamie Stanfield, Dawn Collins, and Elizabeth Minter are not present, but a report by Elizabeth is appended to the end of this Agenda. Mary Beth reported that in addition to the new co-chairs, their new by-laws were included in the Handbook. (See attached “Mississippi Gaming and Graphic Novel Round Table Constitution and Bylaws.”)

Legislative Committee: Tonja Johnson is not present, but Mary Beth reported that the committee is “on track.”

Long Range Planning: Amanda Clay Powers is not present – no report.

Membership Committee: TBA – no report.

MS Author Awards: Caroline Barnett is not present, but Caroline sent Mary Beth a list of nominees for this year’s Authors Awards:

### **Fiction**

*Sunshine in the Delta* – Erica M. Sandifer, 2017

*Desperation Road* – Michael Farris Smith, 2017

*Sleep Like a Baby* – Charlaine Harris, 2017

*Blood on the Ground: Living and Dying in Nod* – Merle Temple, 2018

*Love Letters to Jane’s World* – Paige Braddock, 2018

*The Prison* – Joe Edd Morris, 2019

*The Graceland Conspiracy* – Phillip Shirley, 2019

### **Non-Fiction**

*Heating and Cooling: 52 Micro Memoirs* – Beth Ann Fennelly, 2017

*Artist’s Sketch: A Biography of Painter Kate Freeman Clark* – Carolyn J. Brown, 2017

*Heavy: An American Memoir* – Kiese Laymon, 2018

*Cups Up: How I Organized a Klavern, Plotted a Coup, Survived Prison, Graduate College, Fought Polluters, and Started a Business* – George Malvaney, 2018

*Behind the Rifle: Women Soldiers in Civil War Mississippi* – Shelby Harriel, 2019  
*Po Monkey's: Portrait of a Juke Joint* – Will Jacks, 2019 (Photographs and essay)  
*Stark Villains: Heroic Dawg Tales from the Rivalry with Ole Miss* – Steve Robertson, 2019  
*What Would Elvis Think?: Mississippi Stories* – Johnny Lowe, Editor, 2019

**Children's / Young Adult**

*Almost Paradise* – Carabel Shofner, 2017  
*Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe* – Jo Watson Hackl, 2018  
*A Sky Full of Stars* – Linda Williams Jackson, 2018

Mary Beth called for a motion to remove the statement about author travel expenses from the Handbook:

**MOTION: Remove from the Authors section of the MLA Handbook  
"5. Reimbursement for expenses for travel according to MLA guidelines"  
which outlines the awards given to each author winner selected.  
Made by: Mara Polk                      Seconded by: Stephen Parks  
Passed Unanimously**

National Library Week:            Tori Hopper is not present – no report.

New Member Roundtable:        Jesse Pool is not present – no report.

Nominating Committee:        Tisha Zelner is not present, but Mary Beth reported that Tisha submitted the nominees for next years Board Officers for approval:

**MOTION: Accept the following nominations for secretary, treasurer, vice-president and SELA:**  
**Vice President/President-Elect:**  
          **Joy DuBose**  
          **Stephen Parks**  
**Secretary:**  
          **Roxanne Mack**  
          **Adrienne McPhaul**  
**Treasurer:**  
          **Audrey Beach**  
          **Michele Frasier-Robinson**  
**SELA Councilor:**  
          **Becky Bickford**  
          **Phillip Carter**  
          **Sarah Mangrum**  
          **Preston Salisbury**  
          **Elaine Walker**  
**Made by: Sarah Crisler-Ruskey      Seconded by: Mara Polk**  
**Passed Unanimously**

Outreach Committee: TBA – no report.

Publicity Committee: Janessa Ullendorf is not present – no report.

Scholarship Committee: Justin Easterday is not present, but Mary Beth reported the committee has started looking for items for the Silent Auction.

Technical Services RT: Joy Dubose reports that she is soliciting topics for a program and may have a virtual meeting to facilitate this goal. The RT is planning an MLA Technical and SELA Technical RT webinar/virtual meeting in April with the possibility of more webinars in the future. A session at the MLA conference is planned with topics being explored. The RT is working on a membership initiative: a basic cataloging guide that would be free to membership that would include helpful links. Mary Beth stated that it could be included on the website and asked Joy to her send paper to Jennifer, but the Board agreed that the Board should review the content before uploading to the website.

Web Committee: Jennifer Todd asked permission to use AffiniPay at the conference and the Board agreed.

YPSRT: Carrie-Ann Pierson reports she has created a membership list. She stated that she polled membership at last conference about what they want from the RT, soliciting ideas for meetings. She's exploring possibility of creating a Facebook group for YPSRT that could include content such as training videos. She stated that she will investigate the question of whether the Facebook account could be set up as "public."

Mississippi Libraries: Tina Harry reported that the next edition of Mississippi Libraries is almost ready for publication and staff are already working on the summer and fall issues. Tina solicited the Board for articles for the publication. In response to Angela's inquiry, Tina replied that they are looking for both scholarly and general articles. Mary Beth suggested that Angela write an article about K-12 libraries and what is happening in schools, to which Angela agreed.

**Old Business**: Mary Beth called for a motion to approve the Social Justice RT Bylaws. In response to Mara's inquiry, it was noted that Mac Buntin wrote the By-laws.

**MOTION: Approve the Social Justice Round Table Bylaws as presented.  
Enter them into the minutes and Handbook.  
Made by: Sarah Crisler-Ruskey    Seconded by: Stephen Parks  
Passed Unanimously**

Brandon Cain reported that he is seeking to start an Annual Marketing Round Table and asks for approval of the RT Bylaws. (See attached "Petition for an Annual Marketing Round Table at the Mississippi Library Association (MLA) Conference.") Brandon states that marketing is vital to keep the public informed and thinks the RT will have a positive effect on membership, as well. Brandon submitted his petition with the required signatures. Jennifer noted that some signatories had lapsed memberships. Tamara Blackwell, Sarah Crisler-Ruskey, and Terry Lajaunie added their names to the petition, bringing the number of signatures to the required amount.



Mary Beth called for a motion to approve the RT's bylaws.

**MOTION: Approve Marketing/Public Relations Round Table Bylaws. Enter them into minutes and Handbook.**

**Made by: Mara Polk**

**Seconded by: Angela Mullins**

**Passed Unanimously**

**New Business:** As noted previously, Mary Beth reminded the Board that the question of bonding for president and treasurer will be forwarded to the Long-Term Planning Committee.

On the issue of outlining the process for establishing the Advocacy & Legislative agenda each year, Mary Beth reported that this would be sent to the Long-Term Planning Committee for action, as well.

*The next regular meeting of the Mississippi Library Association Executive Board is May 8, 2020, at 11 a.m. at the MLC Conference Room, Jackson, Mississippi.*

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 2:03 p.m.



Tamara Blackwell, Secretary