

NOBLE Executive Board Meeting (Hybrid)

March 13, 2024

Present: Kathy Lussier, Brian Courtemanche, Catherine McDonald, Allison Babin, Linda Gardener, Theresa Hurley, Amy Lannon, Tara Mansfield, Jonathan Nichols, and Myron Schirer-Suter.

1. Call to Order/Welcome

Brian called the Meeting to order at 2:06pm.

2. Approval of Minutes

Catherine made the motion to approve the minutes from 2/14/2024, seconded by Jonathan. All in favor.

3. Treasurer's Report

The FY24 Budget Report was distributed. Myron noted that there was nothing to flag, everything was normal.

4. Collection Management Working Group Report

Amy reported that the Collection Management Group met and discussed the Collection Management Reports and floating collections. She noted that Martha is working on the Collection Management Reports, which includes chunking and grouping LC and DDC call numbers to allow for a better understanding of resources in the consortium. Kathy noted that Martha has made progress on some of the problems, and should be able to streamline the code and move forward with the reports. Amy noted that running a report on a single library's collections requires a lot of system resources, and the Collection Management Reports are examining data from all NOBLE libraries.

5. Advocacy Working Group Report

Brian reported that the Legislative Breakfast was scheduled for Friday, March 22nd at Endicott College. He noted that it will be spring break week, so parking will be available, but there will also not be anyone around to participate in the day. He reported that the committee was working diligently and had a great list of legislators. Senator Lovely had not responded, but they have several speakers lined up for quick, pleasant, and impactful 2-5 minute speeches.

NOBLE directors received a save the date email, and a more detailed follow up invitation will be sent out soon. Directors are asked to invite their legislators to the event once they receive the invitation. Kathy noted that it took a long time to confirm the availability of legislators to speak at the event, which caused the delay in sending out invitations. A student who lives in Beverly and works in Revere will speak, along with an adult patron from Beverly. Brian noted they are expecting 50-75 guests, and there will be good food and good company.

6. Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee Report

Kathy reported that she, Elizabeth, and Martha had met with the consultants. The next step is to invite members to be on the ad-hoc committee. Brian noted that he had received one yes, one no, and had not heard from the third invitee. A mix of experienced and less experienced directors were invited. Myron volunteered to serve on the committee. Kathy noted that they were seeking a representative from a smaller public library. Jonathan asked what Kathy meant by small. Kathy noted it should be a single library without branches. Jonathan will volunteer if no one else does.

Brian reported that the expectations for the ad-hoc committee were emailed out by Kathy. He noted that there would be three 2-hour live sessions, about 20 hours for the full process, and the first meeting would be scheduled next week. Kathy noted that she will set up the meeting, but didn't think it would be next week. Allison noted that the following week would be better. Brian thanked the volunteers who stepped up.

7. Executive Director's Report

Annual Holds Meeting

Kathy reported that NOBLE held the Annual Holds Meeting on February 22nd to provide an overview of how holds work in the network and in Evergreen. She noted that it was a great opportunity to emphasize the importance of resource sharing among NOBLE member libraries, and that some topics were carried over to the Circulation Roundtable the following week.

Circulation Roundtable

Kathy reported that the Circulation Roundtable was held on February 27th. Challenges with staff turnover, working with disgruntled customers, policies around replacement cards, and the privacy waiver in the patron record were discussed.

Training and Roundtables

Kathy reported the NOBLE hosted a couple of training sessions around item templates, which do not work properly in the latest Evergreen release. She noted that NOBLE staff is looking forward to upcoming development sponsored by CW MARS that will address most of the issues.

Kathy reported that Elizabeth was working on reviving several discussion groups that have not been meeting. She noted that the Social Media and Marketing discussion group met last week and now has a new leader who will help keep the discussion going.

Library Selector Development Project

Kathy reported that Jane Sandberg provided a quote for \$4,400 to implement a library selector in the staff catalog. The fix incorporates shelving location groups into the dropdown menu and hides the system level option for libraries that don't have multiple branches. Jane expects to be able to complete the work in ten weeks.

Kathy reported that NOBLE has \$5,500 to go towards other potential Evergreen projects. NOBLE staff was hoping to do more work to improve the new staff catalog, but the credit card processing in the new release is sometimes creating duplicate charges, so this problem will be prioritized.

SMS Notification Service Investigation

Kathy reported that NOBLE is still waiting to hear from MOBIUS about the possibility that they will handle contract details with MessageBee. NOBLE hopes that this will lower costs.

e-Renew

Kathy reported that NOBLE had a kickoff meeting with Quipu to implement e-renew. She noted that Martha is looking at the code required on the Evergreen side to understand what options will need to be implemented. Equinox is working on this issue for other customers.

EZProxy

Kathy reported that NOBLE is still waiting for a quote from OCLC to move the instance of EZProxy to the cloud.

Evergreen Community

Kathy reported that the Evergreen Project Board held a stakeholder's two-day online retreat facilitated by consultant Carson Block. The themes included the need to generate a sustainable funding source to pay for possible project staff, external audits and certifications, and contractors. The need for improved internal communication, external communication, and marketing were discussed. Kathy noted that the underlying needs of the project were also discussed, including development for infrastructure and a roadmap that addresses

strategic needs. Kathy noted that many attendees were from Equinox, which was a little unusual, but she felt that everyone deserves a seat at the table.

Kathy reported that she is chair of the Membership Model Subcommittee, which will help with the development of a sustainable funding source. The subcommittee came to a consensus on the types of benefits that should come with an Evergreen membership. This includes credit on the web site and in the annual report, discounted conference registrations, and eligibility to run for the Evergreen Project Board. Funding tiers for the membership models will be discussed next.

Massachusetts Community

Kathy reported that the MLA Legislative Committee provided a briefing last week at the State House highlighting MBLC's legislative agenda. They will also provide an update to MLA membership at the end of the month about the bills under consideration at the State House, as well as other legislative activity.

8. Evergreen Development Initiative Transition to NOBLE

Kathy reported that she presented the NOBLE proposal to the informal ECDI governance group in February. The ECDI members showed support for the proposal, and Kathy is working on writing up an agreement for each partner to send funds to NOBLE and for the creation of an interim governance group. The agreement will be sent to NOBLE's attorney to review.

9. NOBLE G Suite Account Policy Proposed Revision

Motion: Move to recommend the proposed revisions to the G Suite Policy to Membership.

Discussion:

A draft of proposed revisions to the G Suite Policy was distributed. Kathy reported that at the last meeting, a total review of the G Suite Account Policy was discussed, including complying with public records law. Kathy noted that there are still issues around archiving email and public record compliance, but she recommended that the Board move forward with a change allowing NOBLE to keep G Suite accounts open for up to three months. She noted that language around the suspension of accounts had also been adjusted to account for circumstances involving directors.

Kathy reported that Martha had completed instructions for archiving Gmail accounts this morning, but Elizabeth reported from the Computers & Libraries conference that there was an announcement that Google had developed a new Gmail transfer feature that they will make available to nonprofits. Jonathan asked if there was a limit on the number of times Gmail could be transferred, and Kathy noted that she did not think there would be. Kathy noted there was a limit on how many accounts could be moved over at once.

Action: Amy made the motion, seconded by Theresa. All in favor.

10. NOBLE FY23 Health Insurance Renewal

Motion: Move to accept the new health insurance package as recommended by the NOBLE Executive Director by adopting the Harvard Pilgrim HealthCare HMO 2000 Flex plan and an embedded Health Care Reimbursement Arrangement that allows NOBLE to reimburse up to 75% of the maximum deductible on the front end of the expenses.

Discussion:

A FY24 Health Insurance Renewal Cost Comparison document, a Harvard Pilgrim Blue Cross Blue Shield Rate Exhibit document, and HRA proposal were distributed. Kathy reported that she is recommending a change to NOBLE's benefits package that will save money for employees as well as the organization.

Kathy reported that NOBLE's current package provides health insurance with a \$500 / \$1,000 deductible, \$350 of which will be reimbursed by NOBLE. In order to receive the reimbursement, NOBLE staff needs to provide a claims document to Paula as proof. Kathy noted that the current plan would have an 8.82% increase this year.

Kathy recommended moving to a higher-deductible (\$2,000/\$4,000) lower-cost plan and for NOBLE to work with a Health Reimbursement Arrangement to reimburse 75% of the employee's deductible. NOBLE would see a 6.68% decrease in premiums from the current plan, and there will be an additional cost of about \$1,200 to implement the HRA. Kathy noted that if all NOBLE employees were to use 100% of their deductibles, the organization would still see savings of nearly \$1,500 by going with the new plan. Employees will also see savings, despite the increased deductible. Kathy noted that the details of the new plan was shared with NOBLE staff, and nobody shared concerns about the move.

Kathy reported that NOBLE has a choice to reimburse the first \$1,500 of the deductible and requiring the employee to pay on the back end, or requiring the employee to pay their share of the deductible first. There is also a choice between reimbursing family plans in aggregate (i.e. reimbursing the full 75% regardless of how many individuals use the deductible) or in an embedded manner (reimbursing up to 75% per plan member). Amy advocated for NOBLE paying the deductible first and the embedded manner for the family plan.

Myron asked if NOBLE offered a HSA plan. Kathy noted that one was offered, but not many employees took advantage of it. Myron noted that Gordon offers employees a HRA and HSA, and that the employer contributed to the HSA. Kathy noted that NOBLE does not contribute to the HSA.

Action: Amy made the motion, seconded by Catherine. All in favor.

11. Salem Bid Process

Motion: Move to form an exploratory committee to examine the bid process for public library consortium services.

A sole source letter for OCLN Overdrive service and a sole source agency letter from SAILS were distributed. Kathy reported that a competitive procurement bid for public library services was done every two years by Salem. Tara noted that the assessments for 5 public libraries were more than \$50,000 and needed to go out for public bid. Kathy noted that a lot of networks use the sole source provider approach, and noted that Minuteman was the only other consortium that does a public bid. Kathy noted that she wanted to bring it up for discussion and ask if it was really required.

Jonathan noted that it is required for Swampscott, and that anything over \$30,000 has to go out to bid. Kathy noted that she wondered if this was something that was always done this way and was harder to move away from. She noted at SAILS, they would hear from a town every once in a while and they would just give them the letter.

Amy suggested forming a committee of five to examine the needs of public libraries and the bid process, and noted that three would be a quorum. Tara, Jonathan, and Allison volunteered for the committee. Brian will ask for two more volunteers at the Members Meeting.

Action: Amy made the motion, seconded by Jonathan. All in favor.

12. Quarterly Review of Executive Director's Goals

A FY24 NOBLE Executive Director Q3 Goal Review document was distributed. Kathy noted she was working through the first goal of visiting libraries and completed 15 out of 24. She noted that she was working on the second goal of strengthening community through hybrid meetings, and hopes for more future meetings to be held in person because the hybrid meetings did not have much in person attendance. She noted that the Tech

Expo will be renamed and held in person with some opportunities for remote participation. NOBLE is also experimenting with some in-person training sessions held at member libraries.

Kathy noted that she has been holding off on the third goal to evaluate NOBLE staffing needs until ECDI has a better understanding of what their new position will require. However, she has been thinking a combined position that provides first line support and PC support would be most useful. She plans to have a job description by the end of June.

Kathy reported that the fourth goal of leading the strategic planning process was moving forward, and that NOBLE signed a contract with Constructive Disruption. An ad-hoc committee was being formed, and a scheduling survey would be distributed and focus groups formed. She noted that the consultants expect a plan to be ready by the August Executive Board and Membership meetings.

13. Planning for FY25 Board

Kathy reported that it is time for officer nominations for the FY25 Board. Kathy noted that she reviewed the Board roster over the past ten years, and would like to discuss possible methods for more rotation on the NOBLE Executive Board. Brian noted that a healthy rotation was a worthy conversation. Linda noted that new people and new municipalities would be beneficial. Brian noted that a mix of institutional knowledge would bring wisdom. He said that the current Board thinks about all the libraries as a whole, but noted that they do not hear from some libraries and should encourage them to step up. Catherine asked when in the process can new people be tapped. Theresa noted that someone reached out to her directly about joining the Board. Myron noted that finding the right blend of experience and mix of academic and public libraries was a complicated puzzle. Theresa suggested sending out an email to gauge interest in serving on the Executive Board. Kathy noted that two directors had expressed interest in the recent vacancy. Theresa asked if someone would be asked to step down. Kathy noted that most consortia have term limits for positions, with the exception of Treasurer. Catherine noted that any director can attend Executive Board meetings.

Amy suggested that the President form a nominating committee of two to fill the officer positions. Brian asked the current Executive Board members to let him know if they would like to stay on, and for the officers to let him know if they would like to stay on in their positions by next week.

14. New Business

Kathy noted she would be baking for the Legislative Breakfast.

15. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:56pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Tara Mansfield