Discussion of the Municipal Appropriation Requirement - Options
1) Revert to calculation based on TAMI only (as in Statute (MGL c78 s19a))
2) Use TAMI only but the municipality cannot give less than current TAMI
3) Leave the MAR policy as it is currently (Use TAMI or MAR whichever is higher)

Group One
- Pretty quickly ruled out eliminating the policy (Stay with Option 3)
- Unintended consequences - if we give municipalities a way to reduce funding they will take it
- Advocacy is essential

Group Two
- Unintended consequences- decision to keep the Policy (Option 3)
- Without strict rules, municipalities appropriate funds but then take back money at the end of the year
- Having a financial goal to shoot for is powerful in defending the library budget
- 2.5% is not enough - the MAR does not increase enough each year

Meeting Consensus:
Option 3:
- From a statewide perspective, best for everyone to keep the policy and the statute as is considering unintended consequences
- Some libraries would lose municipal funds and it would take several years to get back even to the point they are now.

How many (consecutive?) years may a municipality apply for and receive a waiver?
- Absolute number of years?
- If not absolute number of years, what criteria would be used?

Table 3:
Answer 1: limit to 5 consecutive years (clock resets) clock starts at some date in the future
BUT
Answer 2: Preferred option - Not absolute # of years - criteria % change has to be 3.5% over 3 year period greater or = to 3.5 % (gaining ground)
Assumption: you would need to be in waiver status the 3 years

Table 2:
Leave it up to MBLC but 3-5 years – 5 year maximum and then no more waivers; when you first go on a waiver, must create a plan and then must revisit the Board to explain
progress; start with the waivers with reservation; there needs to be some accountability; some reporting; forces action whereas applying year after year does not

Table 1:
After 3 years of consecutive waivers, year 4 you have to come before the board with a restoration plan that brings you back to the MAR; if in year 4, you are not back up to the MAR you are not certified.

Defining fiscal hardship; not defined in legal documents
How do we define a disproportionate cut?
How many consecutive years is it reasonable for a municipality to have a waiver?

Number of consecutive years on a waiver

Table 1:
5 years overall
3 years to develop the plan; continued to be eligible to apply.
Report each year how the library met the target.

Table 2:
7 year overall.
Year 1 no questions.
2nd year, start working on the plan.
3rd year, present the plan at a board meeting and then 3 years to meet the plan. If by year 7 you have not recovered, no waiver.

Table 3:
5-8 years overall
3 years with no question but by year 4, the municipality has a plan going forward.
If no plan for year 5, no more waivers.
If a plan is in place, another 3 years possible

What should the Percentage Be that Defines Disproportionate?
Table 1:
5% too lenient; 2% too harsh;
(Why not have every waiver applicant present to the Board since it makes the municipality sit up and take notice? Municipalities don’t like to have to justify their actions or question their decisions. Formality of the hearing helps.)

Table 2:
5% is reasonable;
Take into consideration building projects or other capital projects in the municipality.

Table 3:
5% is reasonable
More able to recover than from a 10% threshold.
Higher percentage has unintended consequence for recovery.

What would a Municipal Plan for Recovery Look Like?

Table 1:
Plan can be as simple as projected annual increases MAR/TAMI Report annually as part of the waiver filing
The plan must be submitted in year 3 and completed by end of 5 Extensions would be possible but would need serious explanation.

Table 2:
Plan created by municipality in conjunction w/ CFO trustees and library director includes a layout of the financial plan including rational and status

Table 3:
Plan includes financial benchmarks: increase must restore the cut over the 5 years about 20% per year Requirement includes plan progress updates: 2nd year written; 3rd year submit plan itself
6-7 years at most