AGENDA

Welcome and Introductions

-Facilitator introduction- Nancy Rea has been a staff member at the MBLC and a library director; understands both the State Aid Program, the MAR and the Waiver process. Nancy was the facilitator for the State Aid Review completed last year.

-Task Force Member introductions

-Task force members were chosen for their experience with (or their library’s experience with) the Waiver process. Please use that personal knowledge in the review process but focus on the statewide “big picture” issues.

Charge for the State Aid Review Task Force

Examine the MAR calculation policy and the waiver process.
“The Task Force will study recommendations from the State Aid Review Committee regarding the Waiver process and the MAR calculation. Both require additional input from the library community, more focused research on current program elements, and a closer analysis of relevant data before a final determination about possible changes can be presented to the Board.”

Recap of 9/22/16 meeting

Review of meeting and NOTES; State Aid Review evaluation process started 2 years ago. We ask all libraries to evaluate their programs; therefore it makes sense for us to reexamine the effectiveness of our own programs.
- An initial committee was formed.
- The Review started with a White Paper.
- Seven recommendations were forwarded to Commissioners.
- Two surveys were sent to libraries and a number of Hearings were held around the State.
- Three recommendations were acted on.
- Two needed further consideration: The Task Force will look at the MAR and the Waiver process.

First Meeting looked at the MAR policy and discussed 3 options:
Leave the Policy (MAR or TAMI, whichever is higher) “as is”
Base the calculation of the MAR on TAMI only
Base on TAMI but never let it reset lower

Very clear from the 3 groups, the strongest position was to leave the policy in place. The Task Force started with the MAR policy because it was a more straightforward issue.
Review of Current Waiver Process

Liz: Every library fills out State Aid report Financial and Compliance. Calculate the MAR on Compliance and record the Municipal Appropriation from city/town. If not meeting the MAR, required to fill out waiver paperwork. Liz reviewed the waiver packet documents. Documentation from town include: Disproportionate cut Worksheet and letters from Library and town Disproportionate Cut Worksheet. Take out Education, debt service, etc. Looking to see if the library cut more than 5% the cut is considered disproportionate. Waiver table goes to the Board in January. Anyone who has a disproportionate cut, the library (trustee and director) and a representative of the town needs to present in person at the January meeting explaining why the library was singled out.

Focus on Waiver Issues
Waiver small group discussion: Nancy distributed 3 index cards and asked each Task Force Member to identify 3 current issues surrounding the Waiver process.

Small Group Discussion of Issues – The Task Force Members broke out into small groups to discuss their individual current waiver issues.

Report on Discussions
Table 1, Issue 1: no teeth to having unlimited waivers and unlimited time for waivers BINGO!!!!! (issue for all 3 tables)
Table 2, Issue 1: A lot of repeated waivers make it difficult to come back to full compliance (issue for all 3 tables)
Table 3, Issue 1: A sense of timing on when the MBLC be pulling back on accommodation and limitless waivers for library and community planning purposes; if we knew that within 3 to 5 years accommodation and waivers were going away or being pulled back we could work with city Table 1, Issue 2: If we do pull back, how will we determine who will get the waivers. Who will get cut off? Who will get the waiver? What would be the criteria
DC: a waiver is supposed to be given for fiscal hardship; when we had to choose years ago, looked at DOR information including EQV, financially strapped. Defining the criteria. Statutory limit is 10. Table 2, Issue 2: not clear why a waiver is received. How do we communicate the decision to officials. Director wants to know but communicating to officials….they may be able to use the information against funding the library. Appeals
Table 2: lack of requirement to have the cities/towns fill in the disproportionate cut worksheet. If there were a specific requirement for the town/city to fill out, letter. The library should not be responsible for filling in the forms. “Waivers are the libraries’ responsibility according to cities”. City/town disconnect.
LB: cities and towns are sick of the forms so they give libraries more money.
Table 1: What do we do when the next recession hits
Table 3: What do we do when the economy improves
Table 1: what happens to the municipalities already on waivers when the next cut comes
Table 3: we are talking about minimum standards not excellence of service levels.
Table 2: 5% cut, disproportionate, too much money to cut. 4.9%; what is unreasonable what cut level is too much?
Question: Can you get more than 1 waiver with reservation. Yes, but the other standards still apply. Table 3: the cut % may be the way the MBLC can step away from the # of waivers.
Table 1: BPL if not certified. They have their own network. So where are the teeth in the waiver for BPL and for not certifying Boston.
Table 2: salary funding reductions can cause a funding drop. 
Table 3: construction funds provide an incentive for funding the operational budget. 
Table 2: an option: not being on waivers to apply for grants, may be an incentive to municipalities applying for LSTA and Construction grants. 
State Aid award is too low to incentivize any city or town to fund the library. Can’t get grants on waivers? 
There is a need for change when a library director wishes for de-certification. Residents don’t get it until it happens. Not in your reality. E.g. Needham-used the library to get an operational override. Not enough residents are aware of the consequences. Angers local officials. If waivers are toughened, directors have responsibility to inform. Trustees are buffer in some cases/communities. Do municipalities know whether they are meeting the requirements or are on a waiver. Should there be a test for municipalities that do not want or will not meet the MAR? 
Definition of library/library services 
Majority of libraries in the Commonwealth can’t afford everything their patrons need so that resource sharing is extremely important (reciprocity). 

**Wrap-up and Work for Next Meeting**
Next meeting we will select a few options discussed today and work on solutions. We are looking for recommendations to bring to the Board.