Western Mass Library Advocates

February 19, 2015

MLS Whately

Members present: Jan Resnick, Eliza Langhans, Judy Clini, Mary Anne Antonellis, John Ramsay, Sue San Soucie, and Dan Paquette

Members absent: Betty Johnson, Eric Poulin, Joe Rodio, and Deb Kern

Meeting called to order at 9:45 am.

Minutes January 13, 2015, Jan made a motion to approve as written, Judy seconded, minutes approved.

Treasurer’s report

$10,073.21 balance

$670 in legislative breakfast donations

$160 collected in memberships, not yet deposited.

Bill from Easthampton legislative breakfast, $138.79.

Upcoming expenses – legislative bus, MLA scholarships, and future author programs.

Legislative breakfast review thus far.

South Hadley, Berkshire, Easthampton

All had between 60 – 80 people. A South Hadley Trustee, who is a high school library teacher, brought all library aides to breakfast. A great opportunity for young people to see library advocacy and politics in action.

The legislators often have limited time and need to leave so community members should keep presentations brief. The breakfasts usually include presentations from community members, MLA, MBLC, C/W MARS, and MLS. We could all coordinate points to be more efficient and effective. This portion of the presentations should be kept to 20 minutes.

Mary Kronholm had a very creative visual aid that clearly focused her comments on line 9506 and 9601, state aid and technology.

There is an article in the republican about what Mary Kronholm shared at the South Hadley Breakfast. Eliza will contact Betty to have the article shared on Facebook.

Breakfasts are a good way for legislators to connect with constituents in person.

We could make a tip sheet for organizing legislative breakfasts.

Frank Murphy will is scheduled to speak on behalf of the MBLC at the Springfield breakfast.

Mary Kronholm did a very good job making points about each town in the Senator’s district.

State aid is a risky state budget line, subject to 9C cuts and should not be relied upon by towns for basic operational costs.

Munson and Springfield Breakfasts on March 13th – coming up.

Legislative day bus – people have not begun registering but they will in March.

Actions to promote Library Legislative Day and Bus.

John will send an email with a link to a flyer – Betty will post to Facebook, John will send to all regions and C/Winfo and Dan will post on the website. It will be sent out via constant contact again too.

Brief discussion about what takes place at the Statehouse on Legislative day and how participants can advocate for libraries. Jan has a tip sheet that will be distributed on the bus.

Website: Breakfasts are listed, Legislative Day Bus will be added. Dan would like to create a section that illustrates what WMLA does. Dan will begin to create content and send to board for review. If we send pictures to Dan he will post on website.

Advocacy efforts including Legislative Breakfasts and Bus to Library Legislative Day should be listed under advocacy efforts on the website.

Jan would like a helper with the blog. We should increase our Facebook following and maybe use twitter or tumbler. Dan will explore Twitter – Eliza will connect with Betty about becoming an admin on Facebook.

John and Jan suggested trying to get volunteers to help with projects. There are people who are able to help with tasks but are unable to attend meetings.

Meet and greet should be pushed back until after snow season.

Judy is going to work with John to increase sign-ups for constant contact and the WMRLS list.

Building sale: Town of Whately still interested - showing some interest in renting space to South County Ambulance Service. Negotiations ongoing. There are no indications that Whately would rent to MLS after the sale. The Whately uses would be ambulance service, senior center, Whately Town hall.

Other business, WMLA raffle basket for MLA annual meeting, Judy will send out a request for donations.

Spring meeting April 14th in Lee, programming topic with panel.

We can offer to pay for travel and lunch.

Mary Anne will book room and recruit three programming librarians for a panel and send bios, topics to someone else who will promote the program.

Other topics

Final draft of info for scholarships, deadline to apply April 8th – decisions will be made and announced at semi-annual meeting on April 14th – John and Eric will review applications and make decisions about who will receive awards, WMLA members will offer to meet scholarships winners for lunch.

Scholarships are paid on a reimbursement basis – receipts must be submitted to Sue.

Jan began discussion about summer reading incentives. Target date to confirm prizes is March 21st so it can be ready for MLS summer reading conference. John will confirm with BIG E, Jan with Yankee candle and US Constitution Museum, Mary Anne with Friendly’s.

Jan adjusted dates for receiving requests and distributing prizes to be flexible and accommodate donor’s schedules.

Jan will send scholarship flyer to john who will have copies available at breakfasts.

Next meeting March 19th, 9:30 in Whately.

Meeting adjourned at 11:23 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Anne Antonellis, WMLA Clerk.