Western Massachusetts Library Advocates

Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2015, 9:30 am

MLS Whately

Members present: John Ramsay, Judy Clini, Mary Anne Antonellis, Dan Paquette, Deb Kern, Sue San Soucie, Betty Johnson, Jan Resnick

Also present, MBLC Liaison, Mary Kronholm

An amendment to the minutes from the meeting of November 20th was suggested, add the meet and greet on January, 20th. Betty made a motion to accept the minutes as amended, Judy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer report: Balance $10,054.73

$100 paid out for the author event at Holyoke Public Library in November.

$100 deposit for bus for Library Legislative Day.

$320 deposit.

Sue is keeping track of new memberships.

Need for a Vice President – President Elect discussed.

Cher Collins regretfully resigned from the board citing increasing work obligations.

Judy nominated Joe Rodio to the Board, Jan seconded. Joe was elected unanimously.

The FY16 Legislative Agenda, created by the MBLC has been released. The topic is Massachusetts Residents Need More.

Legislative Breakfast dates are still in process. Confirmed dates include Berkshire – Jan. 23rd at Berkshire Community College, Ron Latham is the contact person. The Worcester breakfast is Jan. 30th. Springfield – Mar. 13th, Eris Lesser, Senator Elect and Senator Jim Welch. Other dates will be confirmed by Deb and Eric and reported at the next meeting.

Discussion about possible state budget cuts after Governor Elect Baker takes office. John will contact Senator Stan Rosenberg and Representative Steve Kulik to discuss best ways to advocate for libraries under the new administration.

Jan reported on a small libraries in networks meeting that she attended. There was a $105,000 increase in budget line 9506, allowing for expansion of the small libraries in networks program. One topic discussed was how to best distribute funding to maximize benefit to all libraries. Currently there are 84 libraries who benefit from SLIN funds and 62 who do not benefit from this program. A formula will be created that considers population, EQV, and percentage of membership assessment compared to library budget. Libraries in communities with more than 10,000 will be phased out of the program.

Members of Mass Cat are not eligible for this program. Mass Cat is already subsidized with state funds and the focus of the program is networks that are membership driven.

Commissioners will vote on the policy at their meeting on January 8th.

Sue San Soucie will distribute flyers about the legislative bus to Berkshires and Worcester County Libraries. For Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin Counties the letter will go out with the Breakfast letter. Carolyn Noah is a good contact person in the Worcester area, regarding how best to distribute information about the bus.

Deb Kern emailed the breakfast letter to the group. John suggested one grammatical change. Deb discussed strategies for making copies of the letter. Discussion about entering breakfasts into MLS event keeper.

Discussion about ways to increase number of librarians on WMRLS listserve. Jan suggest we each contact neighboring librarians and ask them to join.

Website: Dan has added content including minutes from previous meetings. He will add dates of upcoming breakfasts, and historical info which Jan will provide. He will also add link to relevant organizations such as the MBLC and MLS and the MLS calendar.

Mary Anne will email approved minutes for posting to Dan.

Dan will send website login info to board.

MLS member forum – Jan 13th, South Hadley, followed by WMLA meeting.

Meet and Greet, Jan 22nd, Brass Cat in Easthampton, 6 -8 pm, Mary Anne will make a flyer.

The State aid Committee has begun meeting. Mary is a member. The committee has begun meeting and discussing issues such as increase in demand for services such as 24 hour online services and the burden this creates for small libraries, i.e., a full email box with hold requests, etc. on Monday mornings. Other topics discussed include inappropriate use of State aid to libraries in some towns, increased burdens for small towns with large summer populations, public computing as part of materials budget, appreciation for ability to use MAR as leverage when making budget requests, bandwidth usage.

Deb and Mary Anne both discussed the importance of the material expenditure requirement and both expressed an interest in allowing some portion of that expenditure be for programming. As libraries meet the changing needs of their communities they are providing more experiences and opportunities for patrons to gather together in public spaces, with shared resources to connect, create, learn, inspire and be inspired. Providing rich and creative program gives the public the opportunity to connect in meaningful ways. It is valuable and State recognition would add value to the good work we are already doing and support growth in this area.

Carolyn Noah, Assistant Director of MLS is retiring. The organization will be restructured slightly to include more department heads in charge of specific subjects.

Dan submitted a receipt for $60.05 for domain hosting.

MLS Whately Building – MLS continues discussions with Town of Whatley who needs space for Town Offices and Tri-Town Ambulance service and Deerfield Senior Center who are also looking for space.

Catherine Utt is leaving MLS for another opportunity.

Deb Hoadley will be interim Training and Advisory Director

Steve Spohn is the Resource Sharing Director.

Next meeting – Jan 13th.

Meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Anne Antonellis, Clerk