Western Massachusetts Library Advocates

Hatfield Public Library

January 21, 2016

Members present: Joe Rodio, Eliza Langhans, Katherine Hand, Deb Kern, Betty Johnson, Sue San Soucie, Jan Resnick and John Ramsay

Eric Poulin is absent.

Guest present: Mary Kronholm

Minutes from last meeting distributed. Motion to approve minutes made by Eliza, seconded by Katherine, passed with two abstentions.

Legislative Breakfasts:

Dates and times have been set thanks to Deb, Eric and Jan. Joe will make copies of breakfast flyer. Deb will email flyer to Jan so she can make sure MBLC has the dates.

WMLA members will address the importance of funding for State-wide services as well as importance of state agencies providing good service to all libraries, including Western Mass libraries.

Mary Anne will speak on behalf of WMLA in Agawam on Feb. 5th.

Sue will speak on Feb 12th, John will represent WMLA on March 4th, and Betty on March 18th.

Jan reported that legislators say it is significant if they get 10 letters or calls about an issue.

MBLC Legislative agenda flyer is dynamic.

MBLC sent a letter to every legislator with the cuts to 9506 and the impacts in their district by town.

Mary Kronholm has called Ben Downing twice in the past few months and has gotten no response. There are more than 50 network libraries in Downing’s district. They will all be negatively affected by the cut to network funding.

The Berkshire doesn’t usually ask for support for their breakfast but Joe should offer support to Pat McCloud.

MLS community planning workshops – the only Western Mass workshop in in South Hadley. Joe asked Greg Pronevitz to add a workshop in the Berkshires. Greg responded with “let’s see how to registration goes.”

Will Adamczyk – head of strategic planning committee for MLS, contacted Joe, asking if a workshop is being planned and told Joe that a Berkshire workshop was a reasonable request. Joe will contact Greg about this again.

A Berkshire library director contacted Joe asking him to ask MLS for a workshop in the Berkshires. This person expressed that he didn’t feel comfortable going to MLS himself.

Treasurer and Membership report.

Bus deposit paid, $100. $1,315 in membership collected recently. Membership flyers going out. Sue will email balance in checking account.

There is a lot of support for the breakfasts.

We charge $20 for each rider on the bus and WMLA subsidizes the additional costs.

Betty moved we accept the treasurer report, Katherine seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Deb will add a save the date announcement about Library Legislative Day to the breakfast flyer.

MLS Western Mass Office Location

MLS has signed an agreement with Potpourri Plaza on King Street in Northampton.

John made a motion to make a congratulatory statement about the new office. Deb seconded it.

WMLA is happy that MLS has found a suitable location for the MLS West offices. The King Street location has many positive attributes, parking, proximity to highway, ease of traffic. We appreciate their diligence and efforts to serve Western Mass libraries.

Education opportunities and planning. It would be good if we could begin planning our events earlier.

We might start planning the breakfasts as early as September.

Should we continue planning author programs? What is preventing librarians from coming? We will suspend our authors programs for now

The party was fun and well attended. Betty suggested having a breakfast. We could market it as a getting to know your neighbors program. It is great for Library Directors and staff to get out, see what others are doing, and network, make connections, and more.

Membership outreach – we talked about a WMLA newsletter. Eliza need photos.

Our brochure has lots of good info. We could send that around and include a save the date insert with upcoming events.

Eliza wants to update the website and wants to know what the goals are for our website.

Do we want to drop the blog. People don’t read blogs as much. It is better to focus on the webpage.

We will have brochures available at the breakfasts.

We need an active WMLA email address. Katherine has volunteered to read and respond to emails sent to WMLA.

MBLC update from Jan.

Ongoing discussions with Administration and Finance trying to decide if MBLC is an independent agency or not. Independent agencies are not subject to 9C cuts.

Library Legislative caucus is Feb 11th at the state house

BPL search committee for new President. Listening sessions are being planned.

Comments can be submitted to this search committee. Presidential Search Committee Chair.

Jan made a motion that we make a statement appreciating BPLs outreach activities over recent years and asking for a continued commitment to statewide service from the PBL under a new President.

Statement should be sent to the search chair. Mary Anne will send statement to Joe so he can send to search committee.

Mary Ann Cluggish is new chair of the board. Mary Ann will be an advocate for legislative activity.

Nominating report. We need a Vice-President.

Joe sent warm WMLA welcomes to a bunch of new directors.

When sending emails to the board make sure you are sending it out to the current board.

Next meeting, February 18th, Sunderland

MLA Basket – we will all contribute something.

Spring meeting. Should we have a breakfast or a speaker on social media. Anna Fahey Flynn from BPL can talk about state services from BPL. Mary will contact two people who talk about social media and ask if they are available to give a talk in April. She will find a date one of them is available and then we can find a location when we have a speaker.

We usually pay $100 or $150 for honorariums and travel.

Motion to adjourn made by Jan, seconded by Betty. Meeting ended at 11:44 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Anne Antonellis, WMLA Clerk