Western Massachusetts Library Advocates

Minutes

November 19, 2015 - Dickenson Memorial Library, Northfield

Members present: Eliza Langhans, Joe Rodio, Deb Kern, Betty Johnson, Sue San Soucie, Mary Anne Antonellis

Absent: Eric Poulin, Jan Resnick, John Ramsay, and Dan Paquette

Guest: Katherine Hand, Director, Sunderland Library and Mary Kronholm

Katherine is a Trustee in Hatfield and was the director in Hardwick.

Minutes, September meeting, Betty made a motion to accept the minutes as written, Sue seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Book Buzz feedback – publishers appreciated being asked to come. Small presses appreciate the library market. Very positive event, enjoyed by all. About 30 people attended. If we try a similar event again we could market it a little differently – highlighting books by the publishers instead of the names of the publishers.

Treasurer Report.

$905 membership money taken in this fall through constsnat contact outreach. Sue will compare

$9,841.09 total in account.

Betty made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s report, Mary Anne seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Nominating – Judy was the nominating officer. Her term has expired. Joe is currently the only member whose term extends beyond next year. According to the bylaws, directors must be limited to two full consecutive terms. There are provisions in the bylaws for making changes to the bylaws. Sue suggested that any proposed changed to the bylaws would best be presented at the spring meeting.

Mary Anne nominated Katherine to the WMLA board, Sue seconded the motion, and Katherine was elected unanimously to the board.

Eliza mentioned concern that the Optima drivers leave their vans running while they are making delivery. Deb suggested that people concerned about this should email Optima, MLS, Greg Pronovitz and the president of the MLS board.

Legislative day, Tuesday, March 8th. WMLA will organize a bus.

Joe talked about advocacy at the C/W MARS Users Council on Tuesday, November 10th.

All C/W MARS members’ assessments went up about 5% due to cuts in line 9506. Joan Kuclinski is on the MLA advocacy committee. They are trying to get the networks to form advocacy committees. One of the other networks has developed an advocacy “course” that is presented to the network membership at user’s council meetings over the year, Joan would like to bring this advocacy curriculum to C/W MARS User’s Council meetings. There doesn’t seem to be an interest in taking on advocacy at C/W MARS Users Council at this time.

There is discussion at C/W MARS about how to make ebooks more rapidly accessible to our patrons.

Meeting with Steve Kulik in Sunderland. John, Jan, Eric, Mary Anne, Mary and Joe were there, Steve seemed to come to a better understanding that when we lost money from 9506 that it is then made up from other library lines, for instance the libraries that got bills for the additional C/W MARS fee might need to pay it out of their State Aid.

Deb Kern has talked to Paul Mark’s aid.

Mary has talked to Smitty PIgnatelli and he was impressed with the burdensome impact of the $300 additional C/W MARS bills to small library budgets.

Steve Kulik suggested that MLA contact the Mass Municipal Association to advocate for libraries so the MMA can advocate for library budget line items. Eric will contact MMA.

The schedule of MMA breakfasts is on the MMA website – Mary urges library advocates to attend the MMA legislative breakfasts.

This week Sharon Sharry, Janet Moulding, Joe Rodio, Becky Plimpton, Adam Novitz, Molly Moss, and Lisa Downing, met with Greg Pronevitz to discuss concerns about inadequate services and lack of responsiveness from MLS for libraries. Greg, Sarah Sogigian, Margo Cully and Betsy Meaden represented MLS at the meeting. The Librarians spent an hour sharing their concerns. Every library had a specific concern about contacting MLS expressing a need for a service which was denied.

Greg shared some information about the budget – 50-60 % of the MLS budget is devoted to delivery. Delivery costs will increase as mandated minimum wage increases and sick time requirements are implemented.

Mary suggested that WMLA should have a task of pulling western mass libraries together – to provide support and collaboration.

Western Mass location update – MLS switched realtors – MLS is now looking at one location in Hatfield, one in Northampton, one in West Springfield near Holyoke Mall. MLS is trying to negotiate a longer stay in the current building.

Website – Dan is absent. Joe shared the C/W MARS strategic planning focus groups schedule on the WMLA Facebook page.

Announcements – Deb Bruno has retired from Adams, Ron Latham is retiring from Pittsfield, and Susan Peterson is retiring from East Longmeadow.

Eliza suggested having another party, making a point of inviting new directors. Deb suggested that Eliza create a great flyer describing WMLA and sending it out to western mass libraries.

Eliza thinks it would be good to create a flyer about WMLA and send it out in connection with a call to action. Legislative breakfast season begins in January.

Deb will contact Eric and start working on Legislative breakfast.

Katherine offered to host the Stan Rosenberg breakfast in Sunderland.

Sue asked if we will send cards to the directors who are retiring.

Deb asked if we should send cards to new directors.

Next meeting, Thursday, December 17th in Shutesbury.

Meeting adjourned at noon.