Western Mass Library Advocates

November 16, 2017

Sunderland Public Library

Minutes

Members present: Lynn Coakley, Betty Johnson, Mary Kronholm, Mary Anne Antonellis, Katherine Hand, Mike Moran, Joe Rodio, Deb Kern, Eliza Langhans, Nora Blake, Dan Paquette

Guests: Greg Pronevitz and Sarah Soggigian

The guests were welcomed and everyone introduced themselves.

Greg and Sarah were invited to join WMLA for a meeting due to concerns about dissatisfaction and confusion about MLS services expressed by member libraries.

Questions about outreach opportunities and ambiguous service around long range planning. Questions about how MLS reach out to New Directors Can WMLA help MLS connect with new directors or other new staff. WMLA expressed concerns about small libraries. What is the MLS plan to serve small libraries? It is hard for small libraries to get out to workshops and training, Sarah described that MLS is offering some one-on-one training to some small libraries. Questions about changes in service and how MLS communicates with member libraries. Concerns about complicated email system were shared.

Member libraries have concerns about customer service provided by MLS. There is a concern that calls just go to voice mail. Requests for more “yes” instead of no we can’t do that. Concerns about ongoing delivery issues and MHEC.  MHEC is very difficult to understand and use. When there are changed to contracts there is no notification.

Concerns about advocacy – it is not clear that everyone knows what MLS is or does. We are concerned that the stake holders don’t feel value with MLS. We ae looking for more ownership on the part of MLS on the role supervising the contracts with vendors.

Delivery is a good point for advocacy.

Discussion about training sessions. Questions about project SET. Is it a good value and it is fair to place so much emphasis on training a small group when libraries are being told they can only have limited service?

Greg and Sarah listened to concerns expressed by WMLA members. They will take the concerns back, reflect on them and respond to WMLA in writing about plans to address them.

Minutes from September and August tabled until December.

Legislative breakfasts: Joe, Nora and Deb are working on it.

Legislative Bus: Ordered, Deb will send a check. Deb suggested that WMLA offer to fund the coffee at Library Legislative Day. Nora will check with MLA.

Website discussion tabled to future meeting.

December meeting: 14th in Hatfield, 9:30 am.

Meeting adjourned at noon.