Western Massachusetts Library Advocates Board Meeting

Thursday, July 26, 2018

Attendees: Lynn Coakley, Katherine Hand, Joe Rodio, Betty Johnson, Dan Paquette, Mary Kronholm, Jan Resnick, Deb Kern, Nora Blake, Mary Anne Antonellis, and Eliza Langhans.

Call to Order: 9:09 am

The Board discussed the upcoming meeting with MBLC Director James Lonergan in August at the Hatfield Public Library, focusing on what the goals of the meeting should be and what questions we should ask him. The Board hopes that Mr. Lonergan will be able to raise the bar for MLS and wants to stress that this is a great opportunity to do so with the incoming new Director of MLS. The Board hopes to discuss the following items with Mr. Lonergan:

1. We wish to praise the MBLC key staff, who consistently do a fantastic job.
2. How can WMLA advocate for library needs more successfully? Is there anything we can do to support his efforts?
3. What is his plan for working with the new MLS Director? The Board hopes to see greater involvement from the MBLC in the oversight of MLS.
4. Has anything changed in the relationship between the MBLC and MLS in the past year?
5. What does he envision as the future of the *Public Libraries in Massachusetts: An Evolving Ecosystem* study? What action items does he expect to come out of this study?
6. What feedback has the MBLC received from libraries about the study?
7. We are concerned about the five year contract with Optima Delivery Service. What safeguards are built into the contract to ensure that levels of service are maintained?
8. Has his priorities for the state budget changed?
9. Some Board members are concerned about the potential changes to the State Aid MER minimum requirements. We hope to express that the minimum requirements should stay the same.

The Board discussed their impressions of the recorded MLS Director interviews, and Lynn discussed her impressions from attending the interviews in person.

The Board then discussed their impressions of the *Public Libraries in Massachusetts: An Evolving Ecosystem* study sponsored by the MBLC and subsequent informational meetings. The study presented very interesting information about how patrons use public libraries across the state. The Board is concerned that the concept of “Core” libraries and “Magnet” libraries could be harmful if the information is used to determine funding, especially when determining construction grant funding.

The minutes for April 2018 were reviewed and minor spelling changes were suggested. Nora moved to accept the April 2018 minutes as amended, and Katherine seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

The minutes for May 2018 were reviewed and minor spelling changes were suggested. Nora moved to accept the May 2018 minutes as amended, and Dan seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

The minutes for June 2018 were reviewed. Dan moved to accept the minutes, and Betty seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

The minutes for April 2017 were reviewed. Betty moved to accept the minutes, and Dan seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

The Board scheduled the meeting locations for the remainder of 2018. The Board will meet at M.N Spear Memorial Library on Thursday, September 20th.The annual meeting has already been scheduled for Thursday, October 18th at Greenfield Community College. It was suggested that the Board meet at the MLS offices in Northampton for the November 15th meeting. Katherine will contact MLS to request use of their meeting room. It was also suggested that the Board meet at a library that is not managed by a Board member for the December Meeting. Eliza suggested the Whately Public Library. Katherine will contact the Whately Public Library to see if they can host the meeting scheduled for December 13th.

Nora made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:27 a.m. Mary Anne seconded. The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.