**WMLA BOARD MEETING**

**Thursday, November 15, 2018**

**MINUTES**

Attending: Nora Blake, Lynn Coakley, Katherine Hand, Deb Kern, Mike Moran, Jan Resnick, Joe Rodio. GUEST - Laurie Millman, Executive Director of Center for New Americans

Absent: Mary Anne Antonellis, Andrea Bernard, Tony Golinski-Foisy, Mary Kronholm, Eliza Langhans, Dan Paquette

**1. Minutes from September 20, 2018 meeting:**

Minutes were not available for review so vote was tabled until next meeting.

**2. Center for New Americans:**

Laurie Millman, Executive Director of Center for new Americans, shared information about the Center for New Americans, how the organization was established and the four locations the organization currently operates. She highlighted the services that the center provides:

* English lessons
* Technology use
* Civics classes
* Navigating systems and bureaucracies
* Naturalization help

The Centers are also licensed to dispense legal advice to people.

The Center is starting to offer classes online. They’ve done a pilot and have had good success with it. They work with an online program called, USA Learns. If a student enrolls in the online program with the Center for New Americans, the Center matches them with a teacher and the teacher works with the student to review homework and work on practice tests.

The Center is looking to libraries for help. They would like to have a place to work with people to introduce them to the programs. They also were wondering what kind of computer access people are able to have at public libraries. The group felt that most libraries offer access to computers without the need for a library card. The Center also wondered about the availability of headphones for people using the computers, particularly headphones with a microphone so people could practice words. The group felt that being able to speak aloud along with a computer program could be a challenge at some libraries where the setup for public computers might be more out in the open.

There was a discussion about how the Center might best be able to reach public libraries in their service area – Franklin, Hampshire and Hamden counties. It was suggested that Laurie talk to Shelley Quezada at the MBLC as a starting point. It was also suggested that Laurie might be able to get portions of the library directory maintained by the MBLC in spreadsheet format so the Center can more easily do a mailing.

**ACTION: Katherine will introduce Laurie to Shelley Quezada via email.**

**ACTION: Nora will try talking to Paul Kissman at the MBLC to see if it is possible to extract directory information into a spreadsheet.**

**3. Treasurer’s Report:**

Balance at end of September = $8,186.09

Revenue through October = +$175

Expenses through October = -$1,285

Balance as of November 15 = $7,076.09

The group felt that the Libby Post presentation may have been too expensive for the impact provided. Expenses for the program so far total $1,150 and Greenfield Community College still needs to provide us with a bill for food service.

For next Annual Meeting we should look for cheaper (how about free!) presenters and a location that does not charge fees. We should also try to avoid repeating programs or presentations that have already taken place in the state.

Finally, we should start planning work for the Annual Meeting event earlier.

**4. Membership:**

* We had 3 renewals since last meeting.
* Barbara Wurtzel has worked to clean up WMLA’s membership list.

**ACTION: Katherine and Nora will work on maintaining the membership list and tracking each member’s renewal date.**

**ACTION: Katherine will send a bulk renewal notice out to members now and going forward, we will send reminders out based on actual renewal dates!**

**ACTION: Nora will create a renewal reminder email template in MailChimp.**

**MLS Listening sessions**

WMLA members will encourage local library staff to attend MLS listening sessions. Katherine wrote a letter introducing WMLA to libraries and attached it to the membership form and it will be sent through to delivery to public, academic and school libraries in Western Mass.

**5. MLA Legislative Committee:**

* March 5, 2019 will be the next Library Legislative Day.
* MLA is not currently able to let libraries use the Engage site for their own purposes.

**6. Branding Committee:**

This committee needs to be re-started!

Katherine would like a progress report at the December meeting.

**ACTION: Nora will email committee and move the group along.**

**7. Other items:**

Katherine is on the MLS Executive Director Search Committee!

**ACTION: Nora will reach out to Alex Reczkowski at Pittsfield Public Library to see if he might want to work with WMLA to help WMLA form and maintain a stronger connection to the libraries in Berkshire County.**

**Legislative Breakfasts:**

Going to try for another “Greater Springfield” legislative breakfast. Joe will contact Longmeadow Public Library (Lesser’s hometown) to see if they would be willing to host this year.

Wilbraham would be a backup if Longmeadow isn’t into it.

Long discussion on what library to target to host for Comerford’s district.

We’ll ask Amherst Public Library if they would like to host.

If Amherst says no, Deb, Joe and Nora will confer over several alternative possibilities:

Pelham

MLS-Northampton office

Smith Vocational Technical High School

Forbes (again)

Sunderland

**ACTION: Joe will ask Sharon Sharry later today when he speaks with her on another matter.**

**WMLA Master Calendar:**

The group added a few missed items to the master calendar that Katherine has developed.

Deb wondered whether WMLA should develop and send a “letter of introduction” to all public libraries (and academics?) in Western Mass. Seems like lots of new people serving as directors who don’t know WMLA. Could be beneficial to get information about WMLA into each library’s hands.

ACTION: Deb and Katherine will draft a letter and bring to board after the new year.

ACTION: Joe will create labels and stuff envelopes to send out via delivery.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50

**Next Meeting: December 13**