

Western Massachusetts Library Advocates (WMLA)
Meeting
February 8, 2021
Via Zoom
Minutes – Draft

1. Toni called the meeting to order at 2:05
2. Roll call: Toni Golinski-Foisy, Lisa Downing, Natane Halasz, Mary Kronholm, Katherine Umstot, Wendy Pearson, Mike Moran, Lynn Blair, Nora Blake, Jan Resnick, Misha Storm, Anna Lawrence, Sharon Sharry; Guest: Alex Reczkowski, Director of the Berkshire Athenaeum; Absent: Amanda Merk
3. Katherine made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from January 11, 2021, seconded by Lynne and approved unanimously with a minor correction.
4. Treasurer's Report -
Statement date - 1/29/2021
Beginning balance: \$6507.00
Deposits: \$9.41 (membership minus a Square fee)
Withdrawals: 0
Ending balance: \$6516.41
5. Membership Report - Natane was able to get up to speed thanks to Nora and Katherine. She plans to share a document summarizing activity each month. We had 2 new memberships and a renewal in January. She emailed membership renewal reminders to 14 members and they are starting to come in.
6. New Board Members - currently 14 members on the board; Toni to follow up with Amanda Merk about her status.
7. MLA Legislative Committee - Mike Moran shared that the FY22 Legislative Agenda is now out and it includes a \$1 million increase in State Aid over FY21 and a bump up for the Center for the Book to \$300,000 along with a 3% increase in all other lines. The Governor's budget calls for level funding for all library lines except the MBLC to cover a cost increase for office space. State revenue is coming in higher than expected and the committee is going to keep pushing for their agenda. Work continues for the legislative breakfast and legislative day.
8. Library Legislative Day - has been confirmed for April 6-8 (Tuesday-Thursday). Mike will share more details as it comes together.
9. Legislative Breakfasts - Alex Reczkowski from the Berkshire Athenaeum in Pittsfield proposed a shared Berkshire and Pioneer Valley breakfast and the board agreed that this makes sense for this year where it will be a virtual event. Alex secured a Zoom license for 500 people and he is happy to host. It was decided to set our date based on key legislators. Senator contact assignments: Lisa - Comerford; Mike - Lesser; Alex - Hines. We will offer them the options of 9 AM or 2PM on March 5, 8, 12, 15.

Jan suggested that we reach out to constituents from each district to make sure there will be people in attendance. Mike suggested that we want to keep the agenda distinct from the legislative day event and to keep it to an hour. Patron testimonies will be an important part of the event. Alex proposed a tool called FlipGrid to gather short videos from our patrons and

about the importance of the library. Other possible speakers include James - MBLC, Sarah - MLS, Toni - WMLA, Nora - MLA, Alex will assist. Alex suggested that if we pick a date where the senators are all in Boston that we send them breakfast on the day of the event. Mary suggested that we include visuals to convey our message. Slides could serve as a follow up thank you to legislators. Wendy will send a mailchimp out to our members with the zoom link.

10. Summer Reading - Misha and Lynn have offered to help and will be meeting with Jan about summer reading prize planning after the regular meeting.

11. New Business -We may want to revisit our logo again at some point.

12. Next meeting - February 22 at 2 PM

13. Adjournment - Toni adjourned us at 2:58 PM.