

**Western Massachusetts Library Advocates (WMLA)**  
**Meeting**  
**January 11, 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, Katherine Umstot, Wendy Pearson, Mike Moran, Lynn Blair, Nora Blake, Jan Resnick, Misha Storm, Anna Lawrence; Absent: Mary Kronholm, Amanda Merk, Sharon Sharry
3. Katherine made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from December 4, 2020, seconded by Wendy and approved unanimously.
4. Treasurer's Report -  
Florence Bank Balance on 1/11/2021 - \$6,507.00  
Beginning balance: \$6448.75  
Deposits: \$58.25  
Withdrawals: 0  
Ending balance: \$6,507.00
5. Membership Report - Katherine has stepped down as membership coordinator. Nora is updating our spreadsheet and will be turning it over to Natane who will be taking over this role. No new members or renewals this month.
6. New Board Members - Anna Lawrence was recently appointed as director of the Wendell Library. In addition to directing a rural library, Anna also has experience as a Young Adult librarian at a larger library in Massachusetts. Misha Storm is the recently appointed director of the Leverett Library, and has previously worked at the Greenfield Public Library and Northfield Public Library. She is currently on the Small Libraries Forum Planning Committee and the Building Committee for the Greenfield Public Library. Welcome, Anna & Misha!
7. MLA Legislative Committee - Mike shared that the state aid standards are going to continue to be relaxed through this fiscal year like they were last year because of the pandemic. He reported that Georgina Trebbe, librarian at Minnechaug Regional High School in Wilbraham, is now on MLA's Advocacy Action Committee and Vicky Biancolo, a school librarian in Pittsfield, is a new MBLC Commissioner. Virtual Library Legislative Days for 2021 are tentatively scheduled for April 6-8 (Tuesday-Thursday). Given the unusual stresses of this year on legislators and librarians alike, legislative breakfasts are being left up to regional discretion, supported by statewide coordination and ongoing local contact with our legislators. MLA is sending thank you notes to the library legislative caucus for their support of the 2021 library budget lines. Members of this board are encouraged to write to thank legislators as well. Jan encouraged regular communication with legislators throughout the year and handwritten notes are especially appreciated. State Senator Jim Welch has been replaced by Adam Gomez. Toni detailed how supportive Welch had been throughout the years with the West Springfield Public Library's construction project.
8. MBLC Committee - Jan said that we did incredibly well with the state budget. The MBLC is asking for a 3% increase across the board, an additional \$1,000,000 for state aid and a bump up for the Center for the Book. The legislative agenda will be coming out soon. Jan reviewed the

parameters of the revised state aid standards. Resource sharing is still being encouraged. Disproportionate cuts of greater than 10% will still require a waiver application.

8. Library Legislative Day - tentatively scheduled for April 6-8 (Tuesday-Thursday) based on an anticipated more typical budget cycle schedule this year.

9. Legislative Breakfasts - Katherine proposed that we plan one virtual event. Mike said that February or March would be good timing. We want to make sure to invite new members of the delegation that are not members of the library legislative caucus to join. Nora suggested that we try to work it around a couple of key members schedules. Jan suggested that we coordinate with the state agencies as well as gather statements from library patrons in each district that could be sent to legislators whether they are able to attend or not. The MLA Legislative Committee will be providing a suggested agenda and other supporting materials. We will continue this conversation at our February meeting.

10. Summer Reading - Jan is seeking someone to take over the gathering and distributing of summer reading prizes. She said that this would not need to be a board member. This work begins in February or March by contacting previous sponsors and asking them to donate prizes for summer reading. Then during the summer there is work distributing the prizes to libraries who request them across the state. There is limited record keeping as well. Sometimes demand exceeds supplies and then decisions need to be made. Katherine offered to continue to have the distribution organizing at the Sunderland Library if that is helpful.

11. Next meeting - February 8 at 2 PM

12. Adjournment - Toni adjourned us at 2:58