

Western Massachusetts Library Advocates (WMLA)
Meeting
April 12, 2021
Via Zoom
Minutes – Draft

1. Toni called the meeting to order at 2:01

2. Roll call: Toni Golinski-Foisy, Nora Blake, Lisa Downing, Mary Kronholm, Wendy Pearson, Mike Moran, Lynn Blair, Jan Resnick, Misha Storm, Sharon Sharry
Guest: Eric T. Poulin, Simmons University School of Library and Information Science - Assistant Professor and Coordinator of SLIS West
Absent: Natane Halasz, Anna Lawrence, Katherine Umstot

3. March 8, 2021 minutes were approved by Mike and seconded by Wendy.

4. Eric Poulin approached Toni about the possibility of a collaborative opportunity for professional development with Simmons West MSLIS program. Libraries often require Evergreen experience for entry level positions which can be difficult to initially obtain. Eric is wondering if WMLA can provide an introduction to the Evergreen ILS. Eric is also interested in providing opportunities for emerging professionals and he is wondering if there might be a way for WMLA to assist through a student board seat. Toni said that students can provide fresh perspectives and new energy. Simmons is working on a program for local BIPOC college students that would provide partial or full tuition to their program. Jan suggested that we may want to involve CWMARS in the training and Lynn suggested that we will also want to include the perspective of our hands-on experience. Misha suggested in person would be preferable. It was suggested that this training might be provided in the context of best practices like confidentiality as well as the practical aspects of what working in a library is like and an orientation to the various departments so that students can learn about the field before they leave school. Mike expressed interest in providing a board opportunity to a student which had general support. Involvement in professional associations is important and is financially supported by Simmons for library school students. Toni said that we will work on our proposal and get back to Eric.

5. Treasurer's Report:
 - Florence Bank Balance on 4/12/2021 - \$6,779.75
 - Last Statement date - 3/31/2021
 - Beginning balance: \$6,672.53
 - Deposits: \$72.22 via Square
 - Withdrawals: \$0
 - Ending balance: \$ 6,744.75

Wendy said filing the taxes was quick and easy and is done for the year.

6. Membership Report:

1 new individual

1 new Friends/Library group renewal

Toni mentioned the lost membership reminder opportunity at the legislative breakfast. She feels that it is time to begin thinking about a membership drive. Nora described Natane's process about corresponding with existing members. She suggested that we do a social media campaign about the value and importance of joining. Toni also asked about sending memberships out through member libraries. Toni asked everyone on the board to think about this so that we can have a follow up conversation next month. Toni will reach out to CMLA to find out what they are doing in regard to membership.

7. New Board Members - No report this month

8. MLA Legislative Breakfast - Toni thanked everyone for making the legislative breakfast a success and commented how well it turned out. Toni thanked Alex and Wendy for all of their efforts. Later in the meeting Mike, Mary and Toni were all commended for their efforts. Mike commented that the event was attended by more legislators than when we do in person events. Mike suggested that we might want to consider a virtual event again in the future. Jan suggested a fall western delegation event to discuss funding priorities. Toni commented how friendly and well developed the relationships felt with the legislators. Jan shared information about what libraries have been doing during Covid-19 with nearly 20 western MA legislators as a follow up to the breakfast and received a good response.

9. MLA Legislative Committee - Mike said that the meeting was held right after the breakfast and he was able to report that it was a success. The Legislative Day events were also successful including the Engage training afterwards and the swag bags that CMLA coordinated for their delegation. Mike thanked the board and especially Jan for making sure that each of the reps were contacted and we had the biggest turnout of legislators of all 4 events including more from Hampden County than we usually get.

10. Summer Reading Program - Constitution Museum will provide a digital pass; Big E is not able to give us passes; Eric Carle, Basketball Hall of Fame, Yankee Candle, and Urban Air Adventure Park will provide passes. Misha said that Leverett will receive, house and be a distribution point for the passes this year. Jan said that we can get going earlier this year with distribution.

11. MBLC - no report this month

12. Maintenance of WMLA email list in MailChimp - Misha agreed to take over sending email to our members through MailChimp as well as adding in new members email addresses which she will coordinate with Natane.

13. Next meeting - May 10 at 2 PM

14. Adjournment - Toni adjourned us at 3:05 PM.