

Western Massachusetts Library Advocates

Meeting Minutes

December 19, 2019

Present

Nora Blake, Lisa Downing, Wendy Pearson, Andrea Puglisi, Joe Rodio, Mike Moran, Lynn Coakley, Katherine Hand, Antonia Golinski-Foisy, Andrea Bernard

Call to Order by Nora Blake at 9:37

Introductions

WMLA Board Members introduced themselves as it is our second meeting with new officers and members.

Minutes

Board members reviewed meeting minutes from November 14, 2020. Suggested corrections included adding last names for board members and a closing to the minutes for increased clarity and formality. Andrea Bernard agreed to make those changes. Board members voted to accept the corrected minutes.

Financial Report

Joe Rodio reviewed financial statements for the past several years. Three years ago the WMLA had a balance of \$10,000. The current balance is \$6,173.89. Joe Rodio pointed out that fundraising has decreased by 40% in the past three years. At the current rate of spending the WMLA could experience financial difficulties in approximately three years. Board members had a general discussion about curtailing expenses and fundraising. Fewer new members are joining WMLA. A membership and/or fundraising drive should be considered. The WMLA could return to a former practice of asking for donations in the range of \$35.00 - \$50.00 for legislative breakfasts. Toni Golinski-Foisy will ask for a donation from her friends group towards the 2020 legislative breakfasts. Katherine Hand will ask for donations to WMLA from trustees.

Katherine Hand made a motion for a donation of \$200.00 to the 2020 Berkshire Legislative Breakfast. WMLA also donated \$200.00 to the 2019 Berkshire Legislative Breakfast. The motion was moved, seconded, and approved. Joe Rodio will make the donation.

Membership Report

Katherine Hand provided the membership report. Four librarians joined WMLA. Katherine Hand sent forty-one renewal reminders to current members. The WMLA Board discussed meeting attendance by non-executive members. Non-executive members are invited to attend meetings which could increase member participation. The website will be updated to better reflect the invitation to non-executive members.

MLA Legislative Committee Report

Mike Moran provided the MLA Legislative Committee Report. The WMLA discussed a contribution to Library Legislative Day 2020 on April 2. Lisa Downing made a motion that WMLA contribute \$400.00 to MLA to support Library Legislative Day on April 2, 2020. Joe Rodio seconded the motion. The WMLA Board voted to approve the motion.

Library Legislative Breakfast and Related Events

Nora Blake reported that Jennifer Harris is hosting a legislative evening in Plymouth and will share information about her experience. At present, an evening event may be too expensive for WMLA.

Mary Rose Quinn, MBLC asked if the WMLA will be sending a representative to National Library Legislative Day, May 4-5, 2020 in Washington, DC. Mary Rose Quinn is willing to schedule meetings with legislators for attendees. The registration fee for the event is \$175.00 and includes some amenities but there are additional expenses. Katherine Hand made a motion to provide \$1000.00 to cover registration, flight, hotel, and expenses for the event. Toni Golinski-Foisy seconded the motion. The WMLA Board voted to approve the motion. Board members will consider if they want to go and decide in January.

The WMLA board members discussed making a contribution by WMLA to the Library Legislative Breakfast in Monson (co-hosted by CMLA) as Senator Gobi's district overlaps with Monson and Palmer. There is no set date for this breakfast.

Holyoke will host a Library Legislative Breakfast for the office of former Senator Humason. There is no no set date at this time. Leverett will hold a Library Legislative Breakfast for Senator Comerford on February 7, 2020. East Forrest Park Library will host a Library Legislative Breakfast for Senators Welch and Lesser. January 17, 2020 at 8:30 AM is a tentative date/time. Alex Reczkowski invited WMLA to provide a speaker at the Berkshire Legislative Breakfast in Monterey on January 31, 2020. Lynn Coakley will be there and will be the speaker.

State Aid is primary for the MBLC Legislative Agenda: Strong Libraries/Strong Communities or State Aid is Local Aid as a focus of the events.

The WMLA needs to reserve the bus now for Library Legislative Day on April 2 and begin publicizing its availability. Previously, WMLA charged fees of \$25.00 for staff and \$15.00 for retirees/students. Lynn Coakley will call the bus company and make the reservation, planning for 30-40 people to attend. MLA is requiring a sign-up this year. People must sign up for the bus and MLA separately!

Logo

Katherine Hand has had no response from her graphic designer.

Nora Blake and Joe Rodio each brought proposals forward. WMLA reviewed both options and discussed a process for working with potential graphic designers. The full board will provide input while one board member meets with the graphic designer to streamline the process. Katherine Hand made a motion to accept the proposal from Cider House if the agency is willing to negotiate a price of up to and not more than \$800.00 and if not to move forward with Melissa LeFever Graphic Design. Mike Moran seconds the motion. The board members vote to approve the motion.

MBLC

Jan Resnick requests that the group think about potential candidates to replace MBLC Commissioners who are reaching their term limits. Nora Blake will invite Jan Resnick to talk

about the selection and appointment process at the next meeting. Jan Resnick highlighted the importance of having representatives who are connected to libraries and our region.

Toni Golinski-Foisy will update calendar to reflect W. Springfield as host for March meeting.

Idea Share Breakfast

Lisa Downing and Andrea Puglisi will form a subcommittee to organize the Idea Share Breakfast. They will contact the Bluebonnet Diner and request a reservation for April 30, 2020. A standard buffet breakfast will be provided from 9:30 to 11:30 and the reservation will be booked from 9-12 as the event tends to run over.

New Business

Nora Blake reported that she is on the Census 2020 Statewide Subcommittee and was present for a recent telephone conference call. MBLC also has good resources to provide to libraries. Andrea Bernard and Joe Rodio will create text for emails about the importance of completing the census. Wendy Pearson will distribute the email messages. Every person counted could provide \$2300 - \$2800 in funding for their municipality.

The MLS has new board members and elected officials: Mathew Berube (Board President), Joe Rodio (Clerk) Becky Plimpton (Sturbridge), Priya Rathnam (Shrewsbury), Anna Bognolo (Eagle Brook), and Tom Rafensberger (Westfield State University) The MLS Board wants to focus on small libraries and mentioned restarting the circuit rider program. Job postings from MLS are moving forward as staffing is consolidated and reorganized. A new position will focus on membership and increasing diversity

Andrea Puglisi is a representative for the Library Freedom Project. The project is accepting applications for the next cohort. The application deadline is February 10. More information is available at <<https://libraryfreedom.org/index.php/lfi/>>.

April Mazza, MLS is forming a digital privacy task force, strengthening the library's ability to confront challenges around privacy. A presentation from the task force could be part of the Idea Share Breakfast.

Lisa Downing, Nora Blake, and Andrea Bernard have been invited to join the Library Ecosystem Study Committee.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrea Bernard, MSLIS
WMLA Clerk