

Western Massachusetts Library Advocates (WMLA)
December 13, 2021 via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

Welcome: Lisa called the meeting to order at 2:03pm.

Roll Call: Lisa Downing, Sharon Sharry, Adam Novitt, Jan Resnick, Wendy Pearson, Mike Moran, Lynn Blair, Rebecca Schmidt, Anna Lawrence, Bev Bullock (arrived 2:10).

Approval of Minutes: Mike made the motion to approve the minutes. Wendy seconded.

Treasurer's Report as submitted by Wendy

Florence Bank Balance as of 12/13/2021: \$6,866.61

External deposit via Square: \$23.97 on 12/6/2021

Last Statement Date 11/30/2021:

-Beginning Balance: \$7,030.64

-Deposits: \$0

-Withdrawals: \$188.00

-Ending Balance: \$6,842.64

Wendy states there was one donation. The past month was very quiet.

Membership Report: No report was made.

Board Members Update: Lisa reads Antonia (Toni) Golinski-Foisy's holiday regards. Toni asked to put in a moment of silence for the loss of Gayle Ball. A moment of silence is held by the group. Toni suggested sending a card in her memory. Lisa asks the board for suggestions to remember Gayle. Wendy will send a card. Lisa states she had a patron working with the food bank asking about bus routes. Lisa connected the patron with Rebecca. Wendy updated the Berkshire contingent will be having a virtual breakfast on January 28.

MLA Legislative Committee: Mike reports the MBLC report from James Lonergan contained info regarding the legislative agenda for FY 2023. There are increases- an additional million being requested in line 9401. 3 million increase in 9501- State Aid to Public Libraries. Mike confirmed dates of the MLA annual conference- May 23 & 24 in Hyannis. Mike thanks the group for the quick turnaround for submitting a testimony regarding the bill on pricing of ebooks for libraries. The next MLA Legislative Committee Meeting will be the 16th at which time there may be an update.

Legislative Breakfast: Lisa opens a discussion on the legislative breakfasts. Wendy states her opinion is that a virtual breakfast makes the most sense. Sharon agrees. Mike adds the meeting last year worked well in the virtual format and suggests a date in February and on a Friday morning which may work best for legislators. Jan suggests getting in touch with Eric Lesser and

Jo Comerford to find a common day/time. Lisa will reach out to Comerford, Mike to Lesser. Lisa and Adam recently attended in person events. With the difficulty with recognition with masks and acoustical issues, in person events at this time do not always lend to a good experience. Having a virtual program would fall in line with how other organizations are holding their meetings/events. Lisa adds last year we had a lot of technical support from Alex in Pittsfield. Lisa asks if we feel comfortable going forward on our own. Wendy adds if a library has a Zoom with large audience capabilities, we should be fine. Wendy feels good using Flipster to get patron testimony. Wendy adds last year we offered to get a breakfast sent to the legislators who were set to attend. Lisa adds it was a positive response- she got gift cards so they could purchase their own breakfast. Lisa will add to the agenda for January at which time we should have a date.

MBLC: Lisa reached out to Vicky Biancolo and Karen Traub, newest MBLC members, to join us for a meeting. We hope to have them join a WMLA meeting soon. Jan reports that there has been no update regarding H4120 supporting fair access/pricing for ebooks. Libraries are beginning to utilize the hotspots that were distributed thanks to funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Additionally with ARPA, 5-7 training opportunities will be available in the spring of 2022. The Small Library Forum on November 16th and 17th went very well. There was a 4 million dollar distribution for state aid. The MBLC has approved appointments to a procurement committee for the next statewide electronic content contract. The Commissioners voted a bylaws revision to eliminate procedural items and make the bylaws gender neutral. The January meeting is expected to be in person.

Membership Renewal Drive: Lisa opens an activity in Padlet to discuss “Reasons to Join WMLA.” Lisa demonstrates how to use Padlet. Members of the board add their comments. Lisa will use the results to work with Natane to reframe and put together a renewal letter that clearly shows our mission and purpose.

Summer Reading Prizes: Misha Storm agreed to step up to handle the summer reading prizes. Jan is putting materials together for the end of the year thank you to the sponsors. Rebecca is willing to help as well.

New WMLA Logo: Lisa reached out to Anna regarding the firm that was working on the logo, Anna has not heard back, but has looked locally and contacted a lead.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule: Lisa had sent out a Doodle poll last month. There was no ideal time for everyone. Lisa will check in with Misha regarding her schedule. Our next meeting will be January 10, unless we decide to change. Lisa will let the group know.

Miscellaneous: Sharon brings the discussion around to the Simmons student position being prioritized for a BIPOC student. Lisa heard from Eric Poulin and they will discuss this going forward.

Adjournment: Lisa makes a motion to adjourn, Mike seconds. Lisa calls the meeting to close at 3:00pm.