

Western Massachusetts Library Advocates (WMLA)
April 13, 2022 via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

Welcome: Lisa begins the meeting at 3:02pm.

Roll Call: Lisa Downing, Natane Halasz, Wendy Pearson, Antonia (Toni) Golinski-Foisy, Karen Traub, Adam Novitt, Mike Moran, Anna Lawrence, Lynn Blair, Beverly Bullock, Misha Storm, Rebecca Schmidt.

Approval of minutes from March 14, 2022: Mike makes a motion to accept, Wendy seconds, Adam abstains, approved.

Treasurer's Report- as reported by Wendy-

WMLA March 2022 Treasurer's Report
Florence Bank Balance on 4/13/2022 - \$7,044.73
04/06/2022 Deposit via Square \$23.97
Last Statement date - 3/31/2022
Beginning balance: \$6,823.96
Deposits: \$125.00(check)
 \$96.80(via Square)
Withdrawals: \$25.00
Ending balance: \$7020.76

Membership Report- as reported by Natane- No new memberships or renewals in March.

Board Member Updates- Molly Moss from Forbes is going to the MLA Conference and can bring the basket. Lisa wants to offer a hybrid meeting for May. If we meet in person, people can bring items. Lisa will set up the May meeting as a hybrid using Forbes' OWL. Anna is leaving her post at Wendell and will be moving. The Board wishes her the best of luck. Misha is working on summer reading prizes- we still haven't heard back from the Big E. Misha added Mike's Maze in Sunderland and Magic Wings. Wendy offers to contact museums in the Berkshires for prizes, too.

MLA Legislative Committee- MLS/MSLA Legislative Day Recap- Mike suggests the Clark Institute in Williamstown for summer reading prize requests. An emergency connectivity fund- a federal program- provides funding for broadband connection. Another grant opportunity coming up this month. Mike sent out the info for the program. Mike brings up municipal PT employees who are paid below the minimum was discussed and there was interest in doing more but the consensus was that the best approach for now is to keep working on a local basis. Last week was legislative day- Western MA's session went very well. The next meeting of the MLA committee is a week from tomorrow- expecting to have word from the House that their budget will be put together before then. Lisa adds that it is important for our legislators to hear from us

otherwise, they may assume we are doing ok. We need to make our voices heard on our needs. Lisa asks about any follow up we should be thinking about.

MBLC- Karen thanks the group for legislative day and the legislative breakfast. April 1, Karen attended the MBLC PR Committee's workshop that was part of their diversity series. The Small Library Construction grant was awarded to the town of Shutesbury. Maryanne Antonellis, Shutesbury's director, is throwing a party for anyone interested. James Lonergan announced that the IMLS named the finalists for the national medal and the Perkins Library is among those being nominated.

WMLA Logo- Natane was exploring grant options for funding- nothing has been found that is a perfect fit for us yet. The Massachusetts Cultural Council has approved some grants that may be similar to what we are trying to do. Mike suggests that the MCC bears some follow up and also suggests the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts. Lisa met with Seth (designer) about a branding project for Forbes- a branding identity project can strengthen or guide the way we want people to think about our organization. Lisa shares a screen of a draft of the project goals: increase awareness and engagement from library community, seek an identity that will be clear and convey relevant and professional information, we want a logo that will make our communication immediately recognizable, we want the logo to work with and amplify our tagline "a voice for libraries in western Massachusetts", we want to work with a professional designer. Mike adds that he likes our tagline- but maybe it can be sharpened. Adam asks if there's a way to put this out into the broader library community- maybe library students or staff- to get the message out there to see if they are interested in submitting a logo idea. Rebecca adds her thoughts- having a monetary prize for someone who does the project since there may be multiple people submitting ideas, but hiring a student may be a successful idea. Adam says he's had success with interns and can give them a chance to build their resume. Anna states when she was at Simmons there was a design course offered- if it still is offered maybe we can connect. Lynn adds that this might be a great internship opportunity for students. Misha adds that often library workers come from other careers so there may be some people with a design background.

MLS Collaboration- *Reminder about what we will be discussing: Lisa was invited to attend their board meeting in September to talk about current and potential partnerships between WMLA and MLS. Lisa has looked into the history: WMLA had reached out many years ago and Sarah attended a listening session with our concerns- main concern was MLS's impact in Western MA. There's been some listening back and forth, nothing concrete. Lisa suggests at next month's meeting we can brainstorm on ways we can collaborate and our requests. Lisa tables this discussion until next month.*

Miscellaneous- Lisa brings up that there's been lots of attention on book banning. United for Libraries has united against book banning as their campaign. Lisa asks if there's interest from the group in discussing the topic and WMLA's potential involvement. Karen attended a workshop. There was discussion on having clear policies and having them handy for backup and support. Anna agrees that the idea falls under the scope of the group- maybe there's something we can hand to libraries who don't have firm policies around this yet. We will continue the

discussion. Adam states that he has the opposite issue- patrons are wondering why they don't have certain items- so this issue can go both ways. Lisa will continue looking into this and we will continue the discussion.

Adjournment- Lisa ends the meeting at 4:05pm.

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 11 at 3 PM