

**WESTERN MASS LIBRARY ADVOCATES
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 20, 2023 MEETING**

Present: Abigail Baines, Mary Biddle, Lynn Blair, Nicole Daviau, Lisa Downing, Mike Moran, Wendy Pearson, Katya Schapiro, Misha Storm, Karen Traub, Barbara Wurtzel

Meeting called to order at 3:02 p.m.

Agenda:

- Approval of November minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Membership Report
- Board Member Updates
- Legislative Breakfast Subcommittee
- Time changes for breakfast
- Breakfast attendance by WMLA
- Membership letter
- Winter Newsletter
- Summer Reading Prizes
- MLA Legislative Committee Updates
- MBLC Updates
- New business
- Adjournment

Approval of November minutes

There was a short discussion of the location of November minutes. Lisa was thanked for taking minutes in Wendy's absence.

VOTED: Minutes approved. Motion Mike, second Misha.

Treasurer's report

Florence Bank Balance on 12/20/23 - \$3,813.19

Last Statement date 10/31/2023

Beginning balance: \$4039.19

Deposits: \$0

Withdrawals: \$226

Ending balance: \$3813.19

Katya will inquire at Easthampton Post Office about a free or reduced rate for the WMLA post office box based on our non-profit status.

Membership Report

There were no renewals in November.

Legislative Breakfasts

January 18 Greenfield: WMLA liaison Misha Storm

January 27 Williamstown: WMLA liaison Wendy Pearson

February 16 Agawam: WMLA liaison Lynn Blair

February 23 Springfield: WMLA liaison Lisa Downing

Misha will send out an invite to all of the breakfasts on behalf of WMLA via MailChimp.

Breakfast details can be found on the MLA Legislative Breakfast spreadsheet:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1D4JObeaJfpqsM4YY4qw1OF9sUzLUDvM6bIIgi6jDEpE/edit?usp=sharing>

All agree to keep the amount of WMLA support for legislative breakfast host libraries at \$200 for 2023.

Renewal Letters & Newsletter

Lisa reported that paper membership letters will go out with a printed version of the winter newsletter.

Nicole made a call for photos from last year's WMLA events for use in the winter newsletter.

Nicole will use photos from WMLA's Facebook page. There was broad approval for the look and content of the e-newsletter.

Summer Reading Prizes

Misha will continue to solicit prizes for summer reading.

Abby will help with fulfillment of prizes

Nicole will provide a contact for MassMoCA, Barbara will provide a contact for Six Flags.

Legislative Updates

Mike discussed the discontinuation of Library Legislative Day at the State House.

Legislators have said that there is not much of a collective presence at the State House post-Covid. It was suggested that local breakfasts are now the place for one to one contact with legislators. Many feel losing the in-person component of LLD will decrease awareness of the importance of libraries for our elected officials.

Misha asked Mike for advocacy suggestions to replace the in-person visit to the State House.

Barbara mentioned the effectiveness of letter writing and suggested a letter-writing campaign day to foster contact with our representatives and to keep patrons involved in advocacy.

MBLC Updates

Karen took advantage of opportunities to meet Representative Saunders at library office hours in both Pelham and Shutesbury. She is excited about recent bills supporting libraries, including the e-book bill and bills aimed at the prevention of book banning. Karen announced that 85% of MA libraries are fine free. Eligibility announcements for state aid awards are going out. Karen will be the new liaison to the Mass Center for the Book.

New Business:

Lisa & Lynn have been alternating weeks posting on Facebook. Misha will take over for Lisa on bi-weekly posts.

Next meeting: January 17, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.

Adjourned at 4:01 p.m.