

**WESTERN MASS LIBRARY ADVOCATES
MINUTES OF MAY 15, 2024 MEETING**

Present: Abby Baines, Lynn Blair, Mary Biddle, Deena Caswell, Nicole Daviau, Lisa Downing, Mike Moran, Wendy Pearson, Katya Schapiro, Misha Storm, Karen Traub, Barbara Wurtzel.
Jason Sullivan-Flynn

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

Agenda:

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Approval of April minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Membership Report
- Board Member Updates
 - Misha Summer Reading prize update
 - MLA Conference Review from Lisa
 - State House advocacy for Construction Bond

- MLA Legislative Committee Updates
- MBLC Updates
- Miscellaneous
 - Wheeler Memorial Library update
 - Summer newsletter will be released in June - Please send in any updates or photos.

Approval of April minutes: Vote: Motion Misha, Second Deena

Treasurer's report: Katya reported that the balance hovers around \$4,000. \$100.00 to pay taxes. Ending balance \$4,075.

Membership Report: Lisa reported a championship-level membership from Tim Cherubini of MBLC. Otherwise a quiet month.

Board Member Updates:

- Misha Summer Reading prize update - A call has gone out to the CWMARS ListSers
- MLA Conference Review from Lisa - The CMLA table share was beneficial(roughly 12 western Mass. people), much praise was heard for Nicole's advocacy work. Library trading cards may come back with Mary's help assisted by Nicole. Our basket was well-received at the conference!

- State House advocacy for Construction Bond - Nicole spoke on behalf of the bill. Mike sent out an advocacy letter in support of the bill that we can use as a template to contact our senators.

MLA Updates: Mike reported that letters to lobby senators to support amendments for increased library support should be sent this week.

MBLC Updates: Karen reported that the library construction program has more than one chance to be approved; Recreation & Tourism and Ways & Means committee. Karen spoke at the Deerfield Library groundbreaking. Comerford and Blais were in attendance. Tim Cherubini spoke to Karen about support for library trading cards. Karen suggested inviting Rob Favini to our meetings. Nicole will add Rob to our email list. Karen reported that many of the vacant MBLC positions have been filled.

Orange Library: Jason Sullivan-Flynn attended the meeting to solicit help and suggestions for the proposed defunding of the Orange Library in the coming fiscal year. Misha suggested that Jason focus efforts on the Select Board and Finance Committee as many voters accept recommendations by these two authorities. Town meeting is on June 2 in Orange. Abby suggested getting the word out to voters in Orange about the benefits of the library and Lynn suggested highlighting the consequences of being de-certified. Nicole suggested working with the school system to get the word out to parents. Barbara suggested providing ILL data to show ROI. Loss of access to eResources would occur if the library is decertified including BPL. Reminding people about children's services. Taking away services can create an impact that will get voters to speak up. Carefully elucidate the losses and impact. Get in touch with legislators. Lynn suggested strong **local** advocacy before problems arise. Icole will create a shared folder Advocacy Toolkit.

Next meeting: June 12, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.

Adjourned at 4:20 p.m.