



EAST LONGMEADOW PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
Meeting Minutes for February 16, 2022

The East Longmeadow Board of Library Trustees held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at the East Longmeadow Public Library.

Trustees present were Chair David Boucher, Vice Chair Cynthia MacNaught, trustees Nancy O'Connor, Amy Johnson, and Amy Pawle, as well as the board's Student Trustee member Julia Boucher. Layla Johnston, Library Director, was also present. Don Maki, Executive Director at ELCAT for the Town of East Longmeadow, was present to video-record the meeting. Secretary Christina Cooper was absent.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair David Boucher called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

This meeting was audio and videotaped for future broadcast on ELCAT.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

III. MEETING MINUTES

Minutes for the January 19, 2022 meeting needed approval. Cynthia McNaught motioned to accept the minutes with a correction to the spelling of Amy Pawle's name, Amy Pawle seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Public Services:

The library's Family Winter Reading Challenge, Read for a Better World, had 154 participants read 102,155 minutes over the month of January, and prizes were awarded in the Children's, Tweens, Teens, and Adults category.

Cradles to Crayons/Boston Bruins PJ Drive: During the month of March, the library will collect donations of new pajamas for children ages birth through 18. The pajamas will be donated to families in western Massachusetts in transition and in need through the offices of the Department of Children and Family Services. Children's Librarian Michele Lemire contacted the Springfield Thunderbirds, who graciously donated tickets to support the pajama drive. The Thunderbirds donated 2 sets of Family Four packs of tickets for upcoming hockey games. One set will be awarded at the end of the program and will be offered as an incentive to anyone who donated. The other set will be awarded to an attending family at the library's Pajama Story Time to be held on March 9.

Adult Program: Trustee Christina Cooper will present *How to Get Your Book Published* on Wednesday, February 23 at 6:30 pm, via Zoom. Author Christina Uss will reveal the ins and outs of getting your book published by a major publishing house. With five book contracts in five years from HarperCollins, Holiday House, and Penguin Random House, she's willing to share her tips with other writers looking for a publisher.

Book Challenges and Collection Development Policy:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/30/books/book-ban-us-schools.html>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/texas-books-race-sexuality-schools-r-cna13886>

These are two recent news articles on the latest in political developments, censorship, and attempts at book bans that are impacting libraries nationwide. Libraries and schools are seeing a record number of attempts at censorship and book challenges across the country. In Massachusetts, during the last week of January, it was reported by Library Director Cate Merlin of Peabody Institute Library that 6 libraries in NOBLE (the library consortia serving the northeastern part of the state) received challenges to the book *Amazing Women of the Middle East* by Tarnowska Wafa.

The freedom to read is essential to democracy and an informed populace. Some of you may be familiar with the oft-cited quote, a great library collection contains something that will offend everyone. In order to be prepared for any challenges to books or other items in our lending collection that may come our way, I would like us to review the Collection Development Policy together.

Trustee Information

Cindy MacNaught's term will expire in April 2022.

Town Information

The Annual Report written on behalf of the Board of Library Trustees was submitted to the Town Manager on February 10.

Please see the Library Director's Report of February 16, 2022 for more information.

V. OLD BUSINESS

None.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Collection Development Policy: the Trustees reviewed and had a lively discussion about the ELPL's current Collection Development Policy, particularly considering the possibility of challenges to books being on the library's shelves. The Board chose to make no changes to policy.

VII. STUDENT TRUSTEE REPORT

Julia Boucher reported that on Wednesday, February 9 the Teen Advisory Board had an online meeting.

Teen Book Club met Wednesday Feb 16 on Zoom to discussed *The Kingdom of Back*, by Marie Lu. They talked about having more than one book club if there is interest in different topics, like fantasy, dystopian, or classics, and about rotating between these genre choices. They set a max 500-page limit and discussed the age range for books suiting the teen advisory board member who are in grades 7 to 12.

Other Stuff:

- Putting together take-home craft projects for teens.
- Asking teens to share art they've made to display on a library bulletin board.
- Making a book review form teens can fill out to get an entry into a gift card drawing every few months. These reviews will be posted on the bulletin board as a place teens can get and give book recommendations.
- Restarting the creative writing club.

The next Teen Advisory Board meeting will be March 9, 2022 from 3-4 pm.

VIII. FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT

The Friends of the East Longmeadow Library meeting was held Monday, February 7 at 7 pm in the library's Community Room which was set up with the new flip-top tables and stacking chairs.

Adult Services Director Maura Mara shared that the library continues its practice doing programs virtually.

The DPW will be removing the white-erase board in the Community Room and painting the walls. Maura was asked to get three quotes on options and costs to upgrade the room's audio/visual system to present to the Friends. The audio/visual system was the last item on the staff's wish-list from last year.

A Children's Department wish-list was distributed which detailed five winter programs that will cover the period from now until the end of April. (April 30th is the last day of the Friends' fiscal year). The balance in our Children's Department budget will cover the total cost of the programs with a little financial room to spare.

Two art prints and an abstract oil painting created by two local artists were donated to the Friends for the purpose of raising funds for the library. The Friends are in the process of creating a "strategic plan" to use these items as focal points in a fundraiser.

The Friends' "Spring time Extravaganza" baskets will be on display from Wednesday, April 6th to Wednesday, May 4th.

In another discussion to renew events of community interest was that of having local authors' book-signing events eventually.

Both the Republican and The Reminder published notices regarding the two scholarships the Friends will be awarding this spring. Maura said requests for the applications have been made at the library. Applications are to be submitted by the close of business on March 15th.

All members of the Friends received our January newsletter.

There are 238 members.

The next FOELPL meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 7, 2022 in the Community Room.

IX. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board of Library Trustees will be held on Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at 6 pm at the library.

X. ADJOURN

Cynthia McNaught made a motion to adjourn. Nancy O'Connor seconded, and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Cooper, Secretary

www.eastlongmeadowlibrary.org
60 Center Square, Suite 2
East Longmeadow, MA 01028
413-525-5400 ext. 1500