

EAST LONGMEADOW PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
Meeting Minutes for March 17, 2021

The East Longmeadow Board of Library Trustees held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 17, 2021 via Zoom video conferencing. Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, § 19, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting was conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible.

Trustees present were: Michael Gray, Cynthia MacNaught, Melanie Mannheim and Christina Cooper. David Boucher was absent. Layla Johnston, Library Director, was also present. Don Maki, Director at ELCAT for the Town of East Longmeadow, was also present to host the Zoom meeting.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson, Michael Gray called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

This meeting was audio and videotaped via Zoom for future broadcast on ELCAT as well as provided live streaming to Facebook.

II. MEETING MINUTES

Minutes for the February 17, 2021 meeting needed approval. Christina Cooper motioned to accept the minutes. Cynthia MacNaught seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

III. GUESTS' OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Narrative:

* Library Director, Layla Johnston, reported the carpets in the conference room and on the second floor were replaced. The installation will be completed latest on April 3, 2021. The Library Director thanked the Friends of the East Longmeadow Public Library for funding the carpet replacement project.

* Curbside pickup was suspended March 8-12 in order for the carpet installation to be completed.

* The Library will be closed for curbside pickup on April 2nd due to the Friday before the Easter holiday.

* Starting March 1, 2021, the library will partner with the Boston Bruins Annual We're Jammin' / Cradles To Crayons Pajama Drive to collect donations of new pajamas for children experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. Donations of pajamas will be for children ages birth through 18 years old through the month of March. Donations will be placed in a marked box at the curbside pickup location.

* The Library will host the Foreign Policy Association's "Great Decisions" discussion group via zoom on Tuesday, March 30th at 6:30 pm, April 13th and April 27th. Please register in advance for this program.

* The Trustees will reorganize the Board in April. Usually the reorganization takes place in the month of May, however, due to term expirations we will need to determine a slate of officers a month earlier.

* Earlier this month, Jennifer Kerr sent all Trustees an updated Boards and Committees Handbook. The Handbook was included in the Trustees packets.

* On Friday, March 5, the MBLC announced the final approvals for State Aid in the FY 2021 grant cycle.

For additional details, see the Director's Report of March 17, 2021

Cynthia MacNaught motioned to accept the Director's Report. Christina Cooper seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. The Giving Wall – Christina Cooper and Cynthia MacNaught informed the Trustees that they spoke with the Library Director and now the Giving Wall will be re-organized and handled by the Library Director.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

a. MOU discussion – Melanie Mannheim, liaison, addressed the Board with information about the last meeting she attended with the Friends sub-committee. The Friends appreciated all the positive feedback they received from the Board and Library Director. She explained to the Trustees and Library Director that the document was created using the ALTAFF sample as its base. The Friends expressed they are happy with the way things are working today and were pleased the Library Director felt the same. However, the document would be pursued not for today's players but for those individuals who will be future players on the Friends Board, Trustees Board and Library. Currently, the United for Library's sample MOU is being reviewed by the MBLC's advisory staff. The Board agreed to table the document for future discussion once the Friends hear back from the MBLC.

The Library Director discussed the use of the sample "Roles and Responsibilities Guidelines" information sheet that was included in the Trustee packets. Chairperson, Michael Gray, inquired about some confusing language in the document. One example noted was "the Trustees recruit and employ a qualified library director, maintain an ongoing performance appraisal process for the director in accordance with town charter". Michael stated that this reads that we do something but the town charter tells us that we cannot. The Library Director explained that this document has language that is correct and the Trustees could not alter.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a. Telescope Policy – Melanie provided the Trustees and the Library Director with a draft Telescope Policy prior to the meeting. The Library Director included the draft in the Trustee packets. The Board researched about six different Massachusetts libraries that currently have a Telescope Policy in place. The Library Director and the Board made edits to accurately reflect library specifications in the draft. After some discussion, the Board decided to vote to approve the policy with appropriate edits.

Cynthia MacNaught motioned to accept the draft Telescope Policy with edits. Christina Cooper seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Board discussed the benefits of the library possibly hosting a virtual telescope/astronomy family program. The Library Director will look into a program for next year.

b. Town of East Longmeadow Boards and Committees Handbook – Layla mentioned that this document includes procedures, posting guidelines and timelines. She further explained that the Trustees and Library Director will re-visit this document at a future meeting once the Board has new officers in place.

VIII. FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT

* The Friends held their monthly meeting on Monday, March 1st at 7pm via Zoom.

* The Friends invited guest speaker, Aimee Petrosky, Director of Public Health in East Longmeadow, to their meeting. Aimee provided the Friends Board members with the most recent Town statistics and offered guidance and ample information for scheduling a Covid-19 vaccine appointment online. Aimee Petrosky commended her staff for the outstanding work they have performed during this crisis.

*Liaison, Melanie Mannheim, emphasized information about efforts by the libraries to advocate for Library Workers so that they may receive a vaccine in Phase 2 of the vaccine roll-out. She also provided background information about the Library Telescope and how many public libraries in Massachusetts are a part of the Telescope Program. Erica Petrosky added information about the library having a long waitlist. The Friends discussed the possibility of purchasing another telescope to help shorten the length of wait time if the library would be receptive of that idea.

*Erica Petrosky spoke about some interesting updates on how the "Sidewalk Stroll" is quite popular. She also explained that the library staff received some unexpected Valentine's Day cards, gifts, goodies and face masks from patrons who recognize their work and their additional efforts making life seem "normal" to patrons during the pandemic.

*Laura Palmer read a letter of appreciation from Evan Delano, who is currently pursuing a master's degree at Simmons College. The Friends provided a scholarship for continuing education and a very thoughtful and informative letter was received to acknowledge the Friends support.

* The next Friends monthly meeting is on Monday, April 5, 2021 at 7pm via zoom.

Michael Gray questioned if the Library Director had made any decision whether or not to consider adding another telescope into circulation. The Library Director explained that due to space constraints, it would not be beneficial for the library. The Library Director thanked the Friends for the generous offer.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

*Melanie thanked the Library Director for organizing the Library's Annual Town Report last month.

*Melanie attended the MBLC meeting on March 16th entitled "Trustee Deep Dives: Recruiting New Board Members." The meeting was very informative and discussion was about various ways to recruit new Board members.

*Melanie reminded Board members that the next four policies that are up for review are: Meeting Room Policy, Food and Drink Policy, Display and Exhibit Policy and Chromebook Use Policy. The library currently has sixteen policies and the Library Director will be advising the Trustees what policies need revisions.

* Michael Gray explained that since the Trustees will soon have three open seats on the Board. Michael announced that the Nomination of Officers sub-committee for the re-organization of the Board will include Cindy, Christina and David. Michael appointed Cindy MacNaught to be chair for the sub-committee.

* Michael noted that on Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at 10am there will be a one-hour virtual meeting session for the annual Library Legislative Days 2021. Michael encourages all Trustees to register and attend.

* Michael also noted that the Library Director has copies of the Handy Trustees Pocket Guide book and copies of the Boards and Commissions Handbook for all Trustees to arrange with the library to receive a copy at curbside pickup.

X. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board of Library Trustees will be held on Wednesday, April 21, 2021 at 6 pm.

XI. ADJOURN

Michael Gray requested a motion to adjourn. Cynthia MacNaught made the motion, Christina Cooper seconded and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Mannheim,

Secretary

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