

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

The East Longmeadow Board of Library Trustees held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, February 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, David Boucher, Cynthia MacNaught, Melanie Mannheim and Christina Cooper. 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 6:03 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 January 27, 2021 meeting needed approval. David Boucher 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 that a shelving bracket was replaced and reinforced in the circulation workspace.

\* CW/MARS reported over one million ebook and audiobook checkouts through OverDrive in 2020. CW/MARS also saw an increase of 34% in checkouts on digital content in 2020 over 2019.

\* The Library continues to collect donations of non-perishable foods and toiletries during the month of February. This collection will be for the East Longmeadow Food Pantry hosted by the Council of Aging. Any donations may be dropped off at the library in the box labeled "Food For Thought".

\* 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. Donations will be placed in a marked box at the curbside pickup area.

\* The Library will again host the Foreign Policy Association's "Great Decisions" discussion group via zoom on Tuesday, March 2 at 6:30pm, March 16 and also on March 30. Please register in advance for this program and a Zoom link will be e-mailed to you.

\* Winter Reading Challenge - The Library's Books Like Us Reading Challenge was a great success and included 72 active participants for a total of 273 books and 92,783 minutes read. Thank you to The Friends Of The East Longmeadow Public Library for sponsoring these prizes.

\* Layla Johnston thanked all the Trustees who contacted their state legislatures regarding the lack of library workers being included in the state's vaccination plan.

The Library Director provided the Trustees with a letter sent to Governor Baker by the Massachusetts Library Association as a writing and advocacy sample. The letter outlines the important factors to consider for possibly including library staff in the next phase for vaccinations. This letter may be used as an excellent example of how the Trustees could articulate to advocate for the library workers getting vaccinated.

The Library Director will also forward the Trustees all contact information for Health and Human Resources Secretary Marylou Sudders. This contact information can also be used for the Trustees to advocate on behalf of library workers being included in Phase 2 of the Massachusetts Vaccination Plan.

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

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

## **V. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a. Gift and Donation Policy – Committee members, Christina Cooper and Cynthia MacNaught, provided the Trustees with the draft policy which was included in the Trustee packets. The Board reviewed and edited the document. There were two minor corrections noted. Chairperson, Michael Gray, inquired about library patrons donating books and asked what the library does with any extra books and materials that the library won't accept. The Board initiated in light discussion. Christina Cooper stated that the Longmeadow Public Library has a small list of places where library books and other library materials may be accepted. That reference list includes Goodwill, Savers, and others to name a few. Christina Cooper will provide the Library Director with the reference list in order for the ELPL to use and hand out to library patrons for more ideas on where extra items may be donated. The Library Director further explained that the library will accept one box of donations at a time.

Michael Gray inquired if the committee was still working on The Giving Wall Project and how it would be organized and displayed on the wall. Cindy MacNaught explained that she spoke to Layla about eliminating the words "In Memory Of" on the wall. Cindy provided some background history as to when The Giving Wall was first displayed. The Giving Wall was assembled to help with the building fund donations and the donor names were included on this wall as part of the building project. The Board and Library Director discussed how the DPW would assist in removing the plaque "In Memory Of" and also removing the other decorative design. The committee discussed adding an expansion board.

Melanie Mannheim motioned to accept the edited Gift and Donation Policy. Christina Cooper seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

None

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

a. MOU Discussion –

Melanie Mannheim, liaison, addressed the Board with information about the draft document. The Friends Of The East Longmeadow Public Library sub-committee provided the Trustees with a draft which was included in the Trustee packets. Melanie spoke about how the Friends and Trustees work together towards a better library. She provided the Board with MBLC, ALTAFF and ALA research and Trustee information. The Board initiated in some discussion about how the Friends and the Library cooperatively work together towards the same goals. The document reflects how the two entities, the Friends and the Library, work together and collaborate just as we do now. The draft displays good business practice and it's an understanding for present players as well as for the future players.

Christina Cooper noted that she was appreciative with how clear the language was in the draft and how at first, she didn't really understand how the Friends worked with the Library and how it all intertwined. Christina Cooper recommended that the beginning of the library's fiscal year (in July) would be a good time to share the libraries strategic initiatives with the Friends to set plans and needs for the year.

Cindy MacNaught inquired about the Friends asking the library to provide staff support. Melanie further explained that Friends monthly Board meetings take place at the Library and the staff schedules the meetings to block the time for the

Library's conference room. Another example would be to also block off the date and time for the Friends annual Chocolate Sampling date which is held annually in the Library's community room.

Cindy wasn't sure the Trustees and Friends would have the authority to ask the staff to assist in these ways.

Michael Gray inquired if these points would be acceptable to the Library Director and to the Town Manager. Library Director, Layla Johnston, does have concerns since the staff is comprised of two unions, one union is for clerical staff and one union is for librarian staff. Layla's concerns remain the same and she did speak to the town manager. Layla Johnston explained that in the way this document is currently written, it's not something that the library and the library administration would sign and agree to since it would have to be reviewed. For example, the preamble would need to be reviewed and edited. The Board discussed how every library is different.

Michael Gray explained he didn't think there should be a sub-committee at this time. Michael asked Melanie to explain to the Friends at their next monthly meeting that there are some things that need to be taken into consideration. Michael would like to see this document clear and more concise as to a roles and responsibilities outline. Another communication line would be to have a meeting with the Friends President, the Trustee liaison and with the Library Director to perhaps open further discussion.

Layla explained that the Friends exist to fundraise and support the library. Cindy added that good communication is important. Layla said there are multiple ways in which the library communicates with the Friends, for example, via liaisons.

Melanie will communicate this information to the Friends.

#### **VIII. FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT**

- \* After the January's Friends monthly meeting, the Friends voted via email in favor of paying for the installation of the new rugs in the Library's conference room and the remainder of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor beyond the Teen area.
- \* The Friends held their monthly meeting on Monday, February 1, 2021 at 7pm via Zoom.
- \* The Friends guest for the evening was Town Manager, Mary McNally, who addressed the Board to express her appreciation for financing the completion of the Library's "carpet project". The work of Dimauro Rug & Tile is to take place sometime near the end of February or the beginning of March.
- \* Erica Petrosky informed the Friends that it is tax season and the IRS and Massachusetts income tax forms are available at the curbside pickup location.
- \* There are approximately 80 curbside appointments each day at the Library.
- \* Melanie, Trustee liaison, welcomed both Therese Moriarty and Sue Metzidakis as new members to the Friends Board.
- \* The Friends voted to accept the latest edited draft of the Friends By-Laws as the final document.
- \* The MOU sub-committee met with Melanie, Trustee liaison, to discuss research and review a draft MOU. Prior to the meeting, related documents were attained from the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations (ALTAFF), numerous public Libraries and Friends, along with guidance from the MBLC. A revised draft was prepared to the members on the sub-committee and a draft was provided to the Trustees for discussion at the next monthly meeting.
- \*The Friends are considering having scholarships for high school students and had a short discussion about the do's and don'ts of non-profit organizations and setting up a scholarship fund.
- \* The Friends Newsletter was emailed to all its members on January 14, 2021. If you did not receive it and you paid membership dues, the reason may be that your email address is not in the Friends database. If you would like to receive a newsletter, please contact the Friends at [FOELPL@gmail.com](mailto:FOELPL@gmail.com)
- \* The Friends thanks everyone who submitted an article for the Friends Newsletter and also expressed a sincere appreciation to Laura Palmer, Friends editor, for putting it all together.
- \* Currently the Friends have 259 members.
- \* The next Friends monthly meeting is on Monday, March 1, 2021 at 7pm via zoom.

#### **IX. OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairperson, Michael Gray discussed that due to Kendra Levesque's resignation in February, there is currently a vacant seat on the Board of Library Trustees. The Town has already posted the Trustee's vacant seat opening on the Town's website. Don Maki, ELCAT Director, also added that he posted the vacant seat opening information on the ELCAT channel on local television. Michael Gray informed the Board that there will be two Trustees whose terms will end in May and the Town will also need to fill two additional vacant seats on the Board. The Board discussed possible avenues

to advertise the Boards' vacant seats. Michael asked Melanie to inform the Friends that the Trustees have a vacant seat and inquire if anyone would be willing to join the Trustees Board. The Library Director will ask the Town Manager to advertise in The Reminder publication. The Library Director agreed to post information about the Board's vacant seat on the Library's social media platforms to let others know of this information.

Melanie Mannheim addressed the Board and suggested that the Trustees create a new policy, a Telescope Policy. Currently, the East Longmeadow Public Library owns a Telescope that is currently in circulation, however, there is no Telescope Policy in place for library patrons and staff to refer. The Board discussed how the library currently has a Chromebook Use Policy and perhaps the telescope policy would be beneficial as well. Chairperson, Michael Gray and the Library Director both recommended that Melanie send all Board members a few examples of Public Library Telescope Policies for discussion at the next Trustees meeting.

#### **X. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Board of Library Trustees will be held on Wednesday, March 17, 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 7:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Mannheim,

Secretary

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