

**EAST LONGMEADOW PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES**  
Meeting Minutes for April 15, 2020

The East Longmeadow Board of Library Trustees held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, April 15, 2020 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: Diane Tiago, David Boucher, Cynthia MacNaught, Melanie Mannheim, Michael Gray and Kendra Levesque. Layla Johnston, Library Director, was also present. Ryan Quimby, IT Director for the Town of East Longmeadow, was also present to host the Zoom meeting.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson, Diane Tiago 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 February 19, 2020 meeting needed approval. Cindy MacNaught motioned to accept the minutes. David Boucher seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**III. GUESTS' OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**

None

**IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

A. Narrative:

\*Director Layla Johnston reported that the new payroll software was discontinued due to performance problems.

\*Early voting for the presidential primaries in the community room was very successful, with Town Clerk Jeanne Quaglietti reporting 744 ballots cast.

\*Coronavirus/Covid-19 monitoring and preparations are being coordinated for all Town departments. Sanitizing kits were distributed to buildings that deliver public services and custodians are following deep cleaning and sanitizing protocols.

\*Effective March 12, 2020, the library closed to the public in order to slow the spread of Covid-19 and Library staff are working remotely.

\*Building Maintenance – The Library's elevator inspection was completed by Baystate Elevator on March 3, and by the State of Massachusetts on March 5. The elevator passed all required inspections.

\*The DPW will be cleaning all library carpets during the building closure.

\*Financial Information - The Town Manager's draft FY21 Budget will be submitted to Town Council for review in the future. All Town Departments were instructed to reduce their FY21 budget requests by 5 - 10%. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) has revised standards for State Aid to Public Services for FY20 and FY21. Revised requirements from the MBLC can be reviewed at the website provided here, under the Emergency Preamble to the State Aid to Public Libraries Policies section: <https://mblc.state.ma.us/programs-and-support/state-aid-and-arais/policies.php>

\*Public Services - In addition to local building closures, CWMars meetings, MLS continuing education and professional development workshops, MBLC sponsored events and meetings, and Library Legislative Day are all cancelled until further notice. Library building closures and reduced public service hours will not impact State Aid requirements.

\*All library materials have had their due dates extended through a CWMars Users Council vote. Due dates are now July 1, 2020, with additional extensions possible. Any items that are not returned during the building closure will not accrue fines.

\*Borrowers Policy Updates - Auto-renewal, fines review and holds pick-up clarification.

Layla suggested amending the wording to the Borrowers Policy for auto-renewal and patron holds practices. The Library Director does not have access to the draft document of the Borrowers Policy that includes the updated language, but she will forward it to all Trustees when she is able to enter the building. Fine review will need further discussion and recommendations from the Trustees. Fine revenue has decreased consistently prior to auto-renewal. Fines collected in FY19 were 22% less than fines collected in FY18, most likely in part due to a switch in patron reading habits from physical books to digital titles available through OverDrive, which does not have overdue fines or fees attached. Auto-renewal was introduced on July 1, 2019. In comparison to the last fiscal year, by March 2019 the library had collected \$5,847.22 in overdue fines. As of March 1, 2020, the library has collected \$3,861.28 in overdue fines, a drop of nearly 35% compared to the past fiscal year. Layla included a copy of The New York Times article from February 2020 regarding the elimination of fines in the Trustees packet to assist with discussion and review of this topic.

\*The Library staff is working diligently on creating a Virtual Summer Reading Program.

\*The Library now has a temporary library card available to allow East Longmeadow residents who may not have a card to access our online resources. Please visit <https://eastlongmeadowlibrary.org/get-a-temporary-card/>

The Board discussed the opportunity for all library patrons to now log into his/her library accounts online and see the new extended due dates on current borrowed materials. Also, the book drop box located outside the library building has now been locked. Due dates are extended and no fines will occur. Layla Johnston encourages the public to visit the library's website often to access information.

For additional details, see the Director's Report of April 15, 2020.

Michael Gray motioned to accept the Directors Report. Cindy MacNaught seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **V. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

\*Diane reminded the Trustees that the nomination for a new slate of officers will occur at the next Trustee meeting in May. Diane would like to set up a nomination committee at this time and Michael Gray and David Boucher have volunteered to be on the committee.

\*Melanie also reported she contacted the Town Manager, Mary McNally regarding the Trustee Bylaws. Ms. McNally will keep the Trustees posted and up to date as to the progress of Town Council addressing the amended Trustee Bylaws document for review and approval.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

None – However, Melanie Mannheim, the Board's Secretary, would like to note that we did not meet in the month of March due to the closure of Town Buildings caused by COVID-19 pandemic.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Borrowers Policy - The Board discussed how Libraries are slowly eliminating the fees in the United States and more specifically, in the state of Massachusetts. Diane provided the Trustees with detailed color-coded maps of the United States, Massachusetts, and the Pioneer Valley indicating which public Libraries are already demonstrating fine free procedures and which ones are now partially fine free. Layla added that when a library eliminates late fees, research shows that library materials are being returned more often. This creates a positive impact and removes those economic barriers. Monetary fines present an economic barrier which creates an avoidance to access not only library materials but also seek library services. Going fine free will therefore encourage more library patrons to visit the library and return outstanding materials.

Layla reminded the Board that the removal of fines does not apply when a patron misplaces a book. That patron will still be responsible for payment for the replacement cost of that book.

After some discussion, the Board voted and all were all in favor of having a fine free public library.

Layla offered to update the Borrower's Policy with the necessary language and will E-mail the revised policy to all Trustees. The Trustees will vote for approval of the amended policy at the next meeting.

B. FY21 Budget - Members of several Boards have decided to waive their stipends due to the circumstances during these difficult monetary times. All Boards in Town are being asked to consider waiving their stipends, too. This act will help retain staff. Layla will E-mail and ask the Trustees for their answers this week.

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

All Friends meetings are currently on hold, however, the last meeting of their fiscal year is held in June.

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

Layla Johnston encourages everyone to follow the Library on the Library's website and also on Facebook. Anyone can E-mail the Library at [ELpubliclibrary@gmail.com](mailto:ELpubliclibrary@gmail.com) if anyone has any questions. Also, the staff works continuously on providing information on Instagram. Lastly, the staff is working on virtual book clubs and those will be coming up soon.

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

The next meeting of the Board of Library Trustees will be held on Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at 6 pm.

#### **XI. ADJOURN**

Diane Tiago requested a motion to adjourn. Cindy MacNaught made the motion and Kendra Levesque seconded and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Mannheim,

Secretary

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