

EAST LONGMEADOW PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
Meeting Minutes for September 15, 2021

The East Longmeadow Board of Library Trustees held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, September 15, 2021 at the East Longmeadow Public Library.

Trustees present were Chair David Boucher, Vice Chair Cynthia MacNaught, Secretary Christina Cooper, 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.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson David Boucher called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

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

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

III. MEETING MINUTES

Minutes for the August 18, 2021 meeting needed approval. Cindy MacNaught motioned to accept the minutes, Nancy O'Connor seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Personnel: The new Technology Coordinator, Melanie Convery, started her employment at the ELPL on September 13.

Public Services: Library hours were restored to pre-pandemic service levels the week of September 7. Regular service hours are Monday through Wednesday 9:30 am – 8:00 pm, Thursday, and Friday 9:30 am – 5:00 pm, and Saturday 9:30 am to 4 pm.

Hampden County is currently a high-transmission area for the coronavirus. A mask mandate for the Town of East Longmeadow went into effect on August 28, 2021. All visitors and employees must wear a mask when inside the library, regardless of vaccination status, with the exception of children under 5.

Town Information: Amendments to the Charter were approved at the June 8 annual town election, and the amended version is on the Town's website under the Government link on the home page.

Summer Reading Participation: results from the online reading program tracker Beanstack showed that 743 people participated in the ELPL's summer reading program this year, reading 830,516 minutes and 7,300 books. Most participants were from East Longmeadow, but over 200 were from surrounding communities, and all age groups were represented. (Layla thanked the staff for their hard work planning programs and serving patrons, and to the Friends of the ELPL for supplying a variety of incentives.)

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners: The State Aid to Public Libraries and Compliance form for FY22 is completed and ready for signature. In order to qualify for certification annually, the library is required to meet service standards. The standards are in statute as part of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 78, and are as follows: to make no charge for normal library services, to be open to all residents of Massachusetts, be kept open a minimum number of hours per week, employ trained library personnel, expend a reasonable portion of the library's total budget on materials for public use, lend materials to other libraries in Massachusetts, and meet a required municipal funding amount. (Cindy MacNaught asked about changed from pandemic requirements; Layla explained that two of these standards were suspended during the pandemic: the open hours and spending on materials for public use. 15% of the total budget is normally the amount recommended to be spent on materials for public use.)

Fall 2021 Virtual Trustee Orientation Program: This virtual program is designed for all trustees. MBLC staff will cover library funding and State aid, states laws with relevance to libraries, how to be an effective board member, and tools for advocacy at all levels. There will be time for questions and answers, and interactive breakout sessions.

Interested trustees may register for a Zoom session at a link provided on either 9/29 from 6-8 pm, 10/13 from 10-noon, or 11/16 from 6-8. (Christina Cooper asked if other trustees had done these trainings, and Cindy McNaught and David Boucher said they believed they had.)

For additional details, see the Director's Report of September 15, 2021.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

VI. OLD BUSINESS

None

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Student Trustee Roles and Responsibilities: Julia Boucher and Director Layla Johnston discussed what Julia hoped this position could be, and came up with a draft of roles and responsibilities that was given to the trustees to read and discuss at the meeting. The draft follows below with discussion about changes or clarification in parentheses.

Purpose and Role: The goal of appointing a Student Trustee is to provide Trustees with a teen perspective and advice on library issues. Student Trustees will fulfill community service requirements for East Longmeadow High School students by participating in Teen Advisory Board and Board of Library Trustee meetings and activities.

Summary of Responsibilities: Rising high school juniors (the Trustees agreed to add high school seniors as well) with active CWMARS library cards are invited to apply to be a Student Trustee Advisor to the East Longmeadow Public Library Board of Trustees. The Student Trustee Advisor is appointed by (the Trustees agreed that the candidate should be voted on by the Board of Trustees) and services in an advisory capacity. Applicants should have an interest in public libraries, literacy, and community events.

Student Trustees are expected to attend monthly meetings of the Board of Library Trustees and provide a brief report of any items of interest regarding teens, community issues, and the East Longmeadow Public Library. Student Trustees participate in discussion of regular, open meetings of the Board; however, the student representative may not make any motions or vote on agenda items. Board meetings are held on the third Wednesday of every month at 6 pm in the Library Conference Room.

Student Trustees are considered to be representative of their community as well as the East Longmeadow Public Library. The East Longmeadow Public Library Board of Trustees reserves the right to discontinue the service of the Student Trustee due to chronic absence, defined as missing 3 consecutive meetings, or conduct unbecoming a Student Trustee.

(The Board of Trustees agreed that Student Trustees must be residents of the Town of East Longmeadow, would serve a term of one year with the option to renew for another year, and would not participate in Trustee Executive Session meetings. We discussed that the reason for limiting applicants to the level of junior and senior high school students came from looking at other libraries' examples of Student Trustee positions and Teen Advisory Boards, since these students are more likely to have the best level of maturity to participate in these roles. Our Teen Advisory Board will be put together soon, and we can publicize through the ELHS Career Center newsletter. We want to make sure it is open to other EL residents who do not attend the EL high school.)

Layla Johnston will write up a formal Student Trustee Roles and Responsibilities document for our next meeting and we will vote on whether to accept it.

VIII. FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY REPORT

Cindy McNaught was unable to attend the Friends' meeting on Monday September 13th. Friends' president Diane Tiago provided these minutes to the Trustees:

The Friends last meeting was held on Monday, September 13, 2021 at 7PM in the library's Community Room. It was the first in-person meeting since March 2, 2020. All 11 attendees abided by the Town's mask mandate, and the arrangement of 4 tables in the shape of a diamond allowed plenty of space between each person so that they were approximately 4 - 6 feet apart from one another.

Maura Mara is the Friends library liaison. She reported that the summer reading program was successful with approximately 13,000 hours read by the participants. The Community Read was popular and enjoyed. She shared a list of programs that will take place in the fall.

The Springfield Museums halted their "pass program" to organizations located in cities and towns beyond the Springfield boundaries a couple of years ago. Maura stated the Springfield Museums is now offering new passes of which the library can participate at a cost of \$175 for this year. Although the cost is slightly higher than in the past,

Board members felt there was no need to take a vote on the expenditure since the Friends have paid for the Springfield Museum passes in the past, and the passes have always been popular.

Review: Upon the request for a wish-list by the Friends last spring, the Friends received a letter from Layla Johnston, Library Director, stating that she and the staff were in agreement that the Community Room needed improvements to furnishings, fixtures, and equipment. At our May 3rd meeting, Maura provided photocopies from a catalog of replacement stacking chairs and tables which included their costs that the staff was considering. Having September's meeting in the Community Room gave Board members an opportunity to see first-hand the condition of the chairs and the weight and immobility of the tables. One important request made by a member was the possibility of having a few chairs with armrests for those guests who may need the stability, safety and support of armrests due to physical limitations. This subject will be continued at next month's meeting. Maura distributed a copy of the Children's Wish List for the Fall. The list consisted of 2 Pre-school aged programs, 1 Elementary school aged program and 1 Tween aged (10-14) program at a total cost of \$1,375. The Friends will vote on the request at next month's meeting.

The Friends have created a scholarship. The name is: Bernard and Norma Vinick Memorial Scholarship Award in honor of their support and financial generosity. At this time, the scholarship language is being reviewed and suggestions and edits are being made. There are 244 members.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 4th in the Community Room. Trustees are always welcome to attend. Diane Tiago, President

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

No formal business was discussed.

X. NEXT MEETING

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

XI. ADJOURN

Cynthia MacNaught made a motion to adjourn. Amy Johnson seconded, and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Cooper,

Secretary

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