

**Friends of WMRLS Board Meeting
November 21, 2008**

Minutes

Present: Dick Floyd, Mary King, Toni Golinski-Foisy (president), Lisa Downing, Linda Wentworth, Deborah Doulette, Louise Kanus

Absent: Lisa Wenner, Sue Crowther, Lynn Coakley, John Ramsay, Sara Woodbury, Faith White

Call to order and Minutes. Toni called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. New members Deborah Doulette and Linda Wentworth were welcomed. Faith White, the new liaison from the WMRLS Executive Board, was unable to be present. The minutes of the August 22, 2008 meeting were read and approved. It was noted that the minutes of recent meetings have not been appearing on our website. Mary suggested that we email them to Janet Eckert, who will see to it that they are mounted on the site. She asked that we write the word FRIENDS (in caps) in the subject line in order to get Janet's attention.

Regional Administrator's Report. In John's absence, Mary gave an update on regional affairs. The experiment with using vegetable oil to help fuel the vehicles seems to be working. For the old Gloucester bookmobile recently purchased, the oil will be combined with the diesel fuel. Diesel is still pretty expensive, but the vegetable oil is not, so the combination of the two should help lower the overall fuel costs.

The supervisory staff is holding "What if . . . ?" meetings to prepare for potential budget cuts as the state continues to suffer economic woes.

The Friends board needs to update its address list. Too many letters are coming back to WMRLS headquarters, plus there are a number of duplications. Lisa D. explained how the Friends mail is currently handled. We agreed that changes need to be made. Mary suggested she could open the mail to determine what categories letters fit into (i.e., membership, fundraising, legislative, etc.) and Dick volunteered to come to WMRLS headquarters regularly to collect checks, donations, etc. and sort and send the rest to the appropriate board members for further attention. This will go into effect immediately.

President's Report. Toni gave a brief report on the annual meeting, which was held at the Wendell Free Library on October 3, 2008. The accomplishments of the past year were reviewed and plans for the coming year, especially legislative and advocacy plans, were outlined. The treasurer's report noted that \$10,000 had been donated to WMRLS this past year by Friends of WMRLS, thanks to memberships, donations and the Honor Someone Special bookmobile project. A calendar (Jan.-Dec. 2009) for this year was approved, and a slate of new officers elected.

Toni asked for a review of how the annual appeal letter process is handled. This 2009 letter is for renewal of memberships and is to be mailed in early January. We agreed that the use of a pre-addressed envelope included in the letter is a good idea for bringing in returns. Board members will work together on this mailing following our January meeting. Two reminders (post cards) are mailed during the year, one in May and one later. Ways to solicit new members were reviewed: notices in Wrapper, ads in newspapers and on radio, the legislative breakfasts, and cards in book pockets. Linda suggested making more use of Wrapper and volunteered to work on this. She would like to target library professionals and the general public, the former for

memberships and the latter for donations. She expressed an idea whereby the public is invited to make a donation to show appreciation of a library staff member and write a personalized comment on a card, which would then be forwarded to the library.

In further discussion of fundraising, Mary noted that the bookmobile now serves only 53 libraries, and is “always on the table” when the subject of budget cuts comes up. (Keeping WMRLS on Wheels and Going Green are ideas to capitalize on.) But in setting a focus for our fundraising this year, we might also consider Delivery and/or Continuing Education as targets for our efforts.

During this discussion, the chairmanship of the Fundraising Committee passed effortlessly from Louise to Linda. Deborah also agreed to participate on this committee, which now consists of Linda, Louise, Lisa W., Deborah and Mary.

Treasurer’s Report. Dick reported a healthy balance of \$13,761.70. There are sufficient funds to cover next year’s legislative bus and some new projects. Dick and Louise will meet in January to go over the final figures for the Honor Someone Special bookmobile project. Mary noted that she has quite a few bookplates ready to be placed in honor books, but not enough funds left to purchase the books. The board promptly voted to donate \$3000 to WMRLS for the books, and the check was presented to Mary by Toni before the meeting was concluded.

The question of whether we should invest some of our balance in short-term CDs arose. The consensus seemed to be that rather than tie up funds in CDs for a small amount of interest, it would be better to give it to WMRLS to use. Mary noted that there is a strong demand for books on compact discs and she would like to buy a subscription to purchase these for the supplementary collection. They would then be available both through the bookmobile and through ILL and placing holds/requests.

Finally, Dick noted how changes in depositing checks will be made, i.e., rather than just receiving deposit slips from the president, he will receive the checks and make the deposits himself.

One more thing: Dick described the Florence Savings Bank’s annual awards given to nonprofits in the area. People who bank at FSB may name and vote for their favorite nonprofit organization. Dick suggested that we make ourselves more visible so that next year, we may be one of the ones selected for an award. Our bank account is in FSB.

Deborah, who is on the membership committee with Chair Sue Crowther, was persuaded to become our new Assistant Treasurer.

2009 Legislative Breakfasts. Although Lynn was not present, she has been very busy planning the breakfasts, which will be held in February this year. The following are the sites, with the state senators’ names:

- Wilbraham PL – Sen. Gale Candaras
- Agawam PL – Sen. Stephen Buoniconti
- Monson PL – Sen. Stephen Brewer
- Berkshire Athenaeum – Sen. Benjamin Downing
- Montgomery PL – Sen. Michael Knapik
- Leverett Library – Sen. Stanley Rosenberg

Library Legislative Day will be held on April 1, 2009. More on this at a later meeting.

The board discussed whether a Breakfast on Breakfasts should be held again this year. The consensus was “yes.” Toni, Mary and Linda will look at a January date. Linda suggested a theme: How libraries shine in hard times; how libraries help. Mary reminded us, too, that the MBLC’s legislative agenda for 2010 is the primary theme. Toni then distributed copies of the MBLC’s 2010 Legislative Agenda.

Fundraising Committee: Louise announced that the committee has now expanded to 5 people, and the chairmanship is now in the hands of Linda. The Honor Someone Special project has pretty much petered out and will not be revived for the holidays. Louise did not have the exact figure with her as to the total amount collected, but it exceeded \$5200.

Positions. Toni reviewed the current and new jobs and positions:

- Asst. Treasurer – Deborah
- Vice President and Membership Chair – Sue
- Advocacy Chair – Lynn
- Fundraising – Linda (a 3-year director)

Old Business. Toni thanked Lisa Downing, a founding member of Friends of WMRLS, for her 5 years of dedicated service to the organization. Lisa, who is leaving the board, graciously accepted the appreciation and talked about the pleasure she took in doing the work of the Friends and working with so many enjoyable and enthusiastic people. She agreed to be available to us for advice and counsel as we continue on. Sara Woodbury, also a founding member and now a past president, was also thanked for her good work and long-term participation.

Mary reported that the Springfield Falcons, a hockey team, approached Wilbraham PL, and through them, WMRLS to do something together as a fundraiser. John will be meeting with a representative of the team soon to explore the possibilities. Possibly there is a role for Friends of WMRLS?

Next meeting is scheduled for January 16 , WMRLS Headquarters, 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Louise A. Kanus,
Secretary/Clerk