

**Friends of WMRLS Board Meeting
January 16, 2009
WMRLS Headquarters, Whately**

MINUTES

Present: Toni Golinski-Foisy, Faith White, John Ramsay, Dick Floyd, Deborah Doulette Linda Wentworth, Louise Kanus, Lynn Coakley, Mary King

Absent: Lisa Wenner, Sue Crowther

Call to order: Toni called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Minutes: The minutes were read and approved. John commented on the use of the vegetable oil plus diesel as fuel for the delivery vehicles. This has proven not to work so well in this cold weather, so we are back to diesel for now. The new truck is working well.

Administrator's Report: John noted that in the Governor's State of the State speech yesterday (Jan. 15) it seemed likely that cuts in Local Aid will be coming, both this year and next. The regional systems are bracing themselves, since their funding comes under Local Aid. He reported that on March 2, a statewide planning effort conducted by the Board of Library Commissioners will begin. Included are the regional systems, networks, consortia and others who will be affected by the economic crisis. The planning group will examine the most essential needs, consider possible consolidation of entities, streamline administration in order to reduce duplication, perhaps pose new structures, etc.

As for WMRLS in particular, John said he did not yet know what the impact will be on staff and services. He noted that Delivery is now 28% of WMRLS service, a task that the current trucks are finding it difficult to handle. In re-thinking current structures, it may be necessary to centralize some services, such as ILL. Regional Reference Centers, too, which are not that much used now (although mandated by law) need to be looked at, too.

Linda remarked how crucial WMRLS' services are to her library (Leverett): delivery, training, support, etc. Toni added that we need to say this kind of thing publicly, put it into our outgoing letter to members, for example.

John distributed a sheet listing who from WMRLS staff and who from the MBLC will be coming to each of the upcoming legislative breakfasts.

Finally, John announced that WMRLS has arranged with the Springfield Falcons, a hockey team, a fundraiser that will net WMRLS \$3 for each \$10 ticket sold by the region. The game is on January 24 at 7:00 p.m. at Mass. Mutual Center. Also, regarding fundraising, he noted that Eric Poulin, the WMRLS Executive Board president, has suggested a possible running event.

President's Report: Toni said she would forego a report for this, her first meeting as president.

Treasurer's Report: Dick reported that Friends of WMRLS' treasury is in good condition, with a current balance of \$11,846.40. He said that \$1000 has been set aside to cover the cost of the bus for Legislative Day (April 2). He felt that a minimum balance of at least \$3000 should always be kept on hand. So far, a total of \$5000 has been turned over to WMRLS from the Honor Someone Special monies collected. This includes a check for \$3000 donated to WMRLS on November 21, 2008 and one for \$2000 donated earlier on 1-11-08. There followed a brief discussion as to how incoming checks for Friends of WMRLS are routed.

Membership Committee: A letter is being prepared to send out to members for renewal of membership. The question was raised as to the advisability of asking for money for membership, the legislative bus and the legislative breakfasts all around the same time. A check of the bylaws revealed the somewhat surprising fact that our membership year is, in fact, October 1 to September 30, and not the calendar year, as we had been supposing. The Board decided, therefore, that it will offer an extended membership year (without extra charge) if members can send in their dues now rather than waiting until next October. Toni will re-draft the letter and email it to the Board members for their perusal. The Friends of WMRLS newsletter published in the fall will be sure to include the annual membership appeal.

Legislative Breakfasts: Lynn reported that she has sent information packets out to the host libraries. Toni complimented Lynn on her planning and organization of the Legislative Breakfast program. The letter to the host library directors was distributed; emails have gone out as well. Linda asked if we know how legislators are affected by these breakfasts; Toni noted that her legislator explained how important it is for them to hear from the libraries and their patrons. Lynn said it's been suggested there be a wrap-up session this year for the hosts following the breakfasts.

Legislative Bus: Legislative Day at the State House in Boston is scheduled for April 2. A 57-passenger bus will be hired from TravelKuz (located in Gill) for \$902 and will make its first stop at WMRLS Headquarters. Early in March a letter will go out to regional members urging them to sign up for the bus, and listing the pick-up stops and times. Prices will be the same as last year: \$20 for Friends of WMRLS members, and \$25 for non-members.

Fundraising: Louise reported that some additional donations have been received for the Honor Someone Special bookmobile project, bringing the total collected now to \$5405.

Other business:

Archives: Louise noted that the listing of minutes of our meetings on the Friends of WMRLS website is now up to date, i.e., all of our 2008 meetings, including the Annual Meeting, are available on our website.

Financial: The purchase of \$100 in postage stamps was approved. Dick will send books of stamps to people in advance of their mailings. He suggested further that the Board should be proactive about its financial situation, i.e., find ways to keep money coming in and not just reacting to cuts. We need to find ways to present ourselves to accomplish this, he added.

Speakers: Lynn would like Board members to volunteer to speak briefly at the legislative breakfasts. She will prepare a paragraph or two as a sample of what needs to be covered.

Next meetings: Toni led us in determining the dates for our next our meetings. They are all on **Fridays: March 13, May 1, June 12, and July 24.** The hosts for the legislative breakfasts may be invited to the March meeting.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise A. Kanus, secretary