

Trustee Meeting Minutes
November 14, 2011

The November meeting of the Leominster Public Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 5:10 p.m. on Monday, November 14, 2011.

In attendance were: Gilbert Tremblay, Chairman; Mark Bodanza; Susan Chalifoux Zephir; Nancy Hicks; Carol Millette; Robert Salvatore; Assistant Director Meredith Foley; and Director Susan Theriault Shelton. Head of Adult Services Edward Bergman attended the first portion of the meeting.

The minutes of the September meeting were approved as submitted. (MB/CM)
(Note: October 14, 2011 meeting – cancelled)

As Mr. Bergman was in attendance, Mrs. Shelton asked that the discussion of the VITA program and the collaboration with MWCC be moved up on the agenda. The Board agreed.

Mrs. Shelton and Mr. Bergman told the Board that they were contacted by a SPEC Tax Consultant from the IRS to see if the library would be interested in partnering with IC Federal Credit Union to provide tax preparation assistance to low and moderate income individuals through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. For many years, the library has provided space for AARP volunteer preparers to assist low income individuals and senior citizens with tax preparation on designated Saturdays during tax season. The library schedules the AARP appointments, which fill up quickly. Since the existing AARP program is unable to meet the demand, the library no longer advertises this program. Frequently, it is necessary for the library to refer individuals to other programs in the area.

The IRS provides volunteer training, the necessary software, and oversees both the VITA and AARP preparers.

This VITA program, with preparers who are credit union employees, would enable the library to offer tax preparation assistance to people with low and moderate income (up to \$50,000) week days and evenings. It would complement the existing AARP program. Current VITA sites include MOC and the Spanish American Center, where we regularly refer people once the AARP program is full. As of this year, the Leominster Campus of Mt. Wachusett Community College is no longer a VITA site. IC Federal Credit Union has also brought Leominster Credit Union and Workers' Credit Union into the partnership. Each institution will provide four employees as volunteer tax preparers. Also, Leominster Credit Union has offered its computer lab for the purposes of volunteer training. Additionally the Community Foundation of North Central MA will be involved in marketing the project.

Mrs. Shelton and Mr. Bergman indicated that this type of service brings new people into the library, many of whom are delighted to learn of what other programs and services it offers to the community.

The tax preparers for the AARP program provide their own laptops and printer. However, the VITA program would require 3-4 laptop computers and a wireless printer. Since both programs use electronic filing, access to the Internet via the library's wireless network is required. The credit unions indicated that they are unable to provide this equipment in time for the tax season. A grant application Mrs. Shelton submitted to the Hannaford Foundation, with the assistance of the City's Grant Administrator Wendy Wiiks, was not funded. Mrs. Shelton

asked the Board to consider the purchase of 3-4 laptop computers, a wireless printer, software, and an upgrade to the library's 1st floor wireless router. She indicated that these laptops could be used throughout the year to enable the library to provide some basic computer training for the public. The laptops would need to have anti-virus and security software, as well as Windows Office. Mrs. Shelton asked the Board if they would consider funding the project using some remaining private money that had been designated for equipment and furnishings. It was then suggested that this project be funded from trust funds instead, as there are several large projects yet to be completed. After a brief discussion, **a motion was made to expend up to \$6,000 from unrestricted trust funds, to be designated by Mrs. Shelton, to purchase 3-4 laptops, a wireless printer, a new wireless router and associated software to enable the library to participate in the VITA Tax Assistance partnership.** (MB/SCZ) The motion was approved 5-0 with Robert Salvatore abstaining.

Mrs. Shelton noted that the Board had requested a follow-up to last December's meeting with the librarians from Mt. Wachusett Community College. At this meeting, the Board approved allowing students from MWCC and other college libraries within the C/WMARS network to use their academic library card as their "home" library card for the purposes of borrowing. This enabled MWCC students residing in Fitchburg, which was decertified by the MA Board of Library Commissions, to borrow from our library. Mrs. Shelton and Mr. Bergman met last week with Heidi McCann, the new Dean of Library Services at MWCC and Ellen Pratt, MWCC's Reference & Instructional Services Librarian. The Leominster Public Library has not experienced any problems with this arrangement, and has developed a strong working relationship with the Mount through the dialog that began over this issue. Members of the Leominster reference staff visited the Mount library this fall, and the Mount librarians are scheduled to visit here in January. This relationship has improved the staff's ability to serve the many MWCC students who use the Leominster Public Library for reference and study purposes. It was determined that there was no need for the librarians from MWCC to attend an upcoming Trustees' meeting.

Mrs. Shelton indicated that she had received an email from Fitchburg Public Library Director Sharon Bernard notifying her that the Fitchburg Public Library has received supplemental funding enabling the library to expand its hours of service to 48 hours per week beginning November 28, 2011. Mrs. Bernard requested that area libraries extend reciprocal borrowing privileges to Fitchburg residents as soon as the hours of service have been expanded rather than wait until the library is re-certified by either the MBLC or through special state legislation. After some discussion focusing on the sustainability of additional funding, the continuance of expanded hours, and funding for library materials, the Board asked Mrs. Shelton to write to Mrs. Bernard stating their concerns and seeking information from her regarding the aforementioned. Additionally, they asked that Mayor Wong be copied on the letter.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mrs. Shelton suggested that she send a monthly Director's report, with updates of projects, programs, building issues, etc., to Trustees with the monthly meeting agenda and minutes. The Board members could then review this report and ask questions during the meeting. The Board agreed to the suggestion, and it will start with the December meeting.

The Director's report will be sent to the Mayor and City Council along with approved meeting minutes, and past reports will be filed with other Trustee documents.

Mrs. Shelton wanted to convey special thanks to Ray Racine of the Department of Public Works for his efforts in providing the library with a "blueprint" copy of the list of Leominster's Departed Veterans. This copy has been framed, and will hang in the library. The original is in the library's archives.

Four remaining art works are to be hung tomorrow, including one to be accepted by the Board this evening. These include the Departed Veterans' List, the photograph donated by Mary Mann of Leominster's Sons of Italy/Daughters of Isabel/Colonial Band, the self-portrait of John Vaillant donated by Jeanne Zephir, and a photograph of two girls taken in Madagascar by Michael Gotthelf.

Mrs. Shelton requested that the Board accept the photograph donated by the photographer Dr. Michael Gotthelf entitled "Young Girls", which was included as part of his exhibit at the library earlier this year. **A motion was made and unanimously approved to accept Dr. Gotthelf's donation of the photograph "Young Girls".** (CM/RS)

The art identification project should be completed by Tuesday, November 15th. Identifying information will include name of piece, artist, medium, and provenance. Mrs. Shelton thanked Nancy Hicks, Carol Millette, and Jeanne Zephir for all they have done to hang, identify, and document all of the library's art work.

Mrs. Shelton informed the Board of the following special programs that will take place in November and December. These are in addition to ongoing weekly and monthly programs.

Children's Room: Animal Adventures – November 19th; Rose, Thorn, and Fiddle and the Celtic Chorus – December 1st; Drop-in Crafts – every day during Christmas school vacation.

Adult Department: Illusionist Peter Boie – Sunday, November 20th; Three Swingin' Tenors Holiday Show – Sunday, December 18th.

There have been a number of building issues during the past couple of months:

Power Outage - Library was without power from the evening of Saturday, October 29th through the evening of Sunday, October 30th. Therefore, the library could not open on that Sunday. We were able to get back-up and open by Monday, October 31st at 9:00 a.m. The Library served as a City Warming Station during the remainder of the week, while a portion of the community remained without power. The library was filled, especially on Monday and Tuesday, with people getting warm, connecting with other people, charging cell phones, and utilizing either the library's wireless network or public computers.

Diane Sanabria put the fact that we were open and available for the above on the Cormier Center's Facebook page, which got picked up and posted on the Police Department's Facebook page. This gave the fact that the library was open lots of visibility, and people were incredibly appreciative.

Brown Out – The library experienced a brown-out about 3:15 p.m. on Friday, November 4th, which caused havoc with the library's network. It took over three hours to get the library's network back to normal, enabling us to open on time Saturday morning.

Carpet/Furniture Cleaning- On October 10, 2011 the following carpets and upholstery were cleaned:

- Children's Room carpet
- Meeting Room carpet
- Circulation Workroom carpet
- Young Adult Center carpet
- Upholstered furniture – 1st floor historic room
- Upholstered chairs – café area 1st floor
- Upholstered chairs, couch, and computer chairs – Children's Room
- Upholstered chairs, couch, computer chairs, pillows – Young Adult Room

Landscaping – All shrubs and ornamental trees were hand pruned, and broken branches due to Hurricane Irene were removed from one of the October Glory maple trees in front of building on Friday, October 21st and Monday, October 24, 2011.

There was severe damage to the October Glory maples located on the front lawn of the library during the storm on Saturday, October 29th, necessitating their removal. These will need to be replaced in the spring. Heavy pruning and shaping was done to other storm damaged October Glory maples and flowering pear trees on Friday, November 11th.

Security Cameras & DVR (Digital Video Recorder) – 4 PZT security cameras that were not operating properly and short circuiting the head-end equipment were sent out for repair and reinstalled on Thursday, October 20, 2011. During installation of repaired cameras, it was discovered there was a problem with the power supply for one of the DVRs. This was repaired and reinstalled on Friday, October 21, 2011.

Roof – Repairs to roof membrane on new addition causing minor leaking were addressed by Rockwell Roofing. They located and repaired fifteen (15) small holes that were not covered under the roof's warranty. Rockwell Roofing will be requested when the library contacts Sarnafil to honor warranty issues in the future rather than the project's filed sub-bidder Capeway Roofing, who has been extremely unresponsive to repeated calls.

Mrs. Shelton reported on the status of the library's FY12 State Aid. The Library must file for a waiver for its FY12 state aid, as it is currently \$9,952 short of meeting Municipal Appropriation Requirement for receipt of certification and state aid. A \$10,000 supplemental appropriation to meet the requirement without filing for a waiver has been requested, and will be voted on at this evening's City Council meeting. The \$10,000 supplemental appropriation request, if approved, will be put toward the library's materials collection for the purchase of e-books.

Waiver documentation was due Saturday, November 12th, but due to the storm and resulting power outages, the MA Board of Library Commissioners said they would entertain requests for an extension to this deadline. On behalf of the library, Mrs. Shelton requested an extension until Wednesday, November 16th, which was granted.

If the supplemental appropriation request is approved this evening, Mrs. Shelton will obtain confirmation documentation from the City Clerk to send to the MBLC to withdraw the library's petition of waiver submitted with its state financial report and compliance documentation on October 14th.

If the supplemental appropriation request is not approved this evening, Mrs. Shelton will work with the City Comptroller to submit the required waiver documentation by Wednesday for review by the MBLC Commissioners at their February 2012 meeting.

FY12 public library state aid is anticipated to be \$44,710, as reported on the 2012 Cherry Sheet from the MA Department of Revenue.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mrs. Foley reported that the Friends of the Library netted \$2,400 from their recent Decadent Dessert Social.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 12, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. in the library's historic conference room.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Meredith A. Foley
Recording Secretary