

MINUTES
MarLA Special Board Meeting
March 15, 2021
(via Zoom)
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Beth Honetschlager, Jim Maher, Christine Maefsky, Elaine Larson, Jan Hunton, Lynn Bjorkman, Max Smitten, Annie Minnich, Juanita Ikuta, Debra Smith, Mary Burke, Laurie Schmidt

Members Absent:

Also in attendance: Lorelee di Lorenzo, Ruth Ann Willius, Anne Reich, Mary Hooley

1. Welcome and Call to Order – Jim

- New Board member Laurie Schmidt introduced herself

2. Secretary's Report – Christine

- Review and Accept Draft Minutes from 2/15/21 Meeting
- February Minutes unanimously approved

3. Library Operations update – Plan for Reopening

- Mary Burke presented the draft work in progress so Library can open 2 additional days – Tuesdays 4-7:00 and Fridays 4-7:00 for single persons or family units to browse and check out books.
- Jan Hunton, Lorelee, Sue Logan and Mary Burke worked on the plans
- The draft presented can be looked at as 90% done.
- Mary Burke will be at the initial opening this coming Friday to assess and make any changes needed
- Gmail account is probably the newest system for people to get understand and use
- Volunteers will need to become familiar with the new layout

- Juanita – how many volunteers have indicated they are willing to work? Lorelee responded about 20 have so far indicated their willingness.
- There will be no quarantining of books returned or browsed
- Elaine will work on updating the website to reflect the new plans
- After Board approval of the plan, Sign Up Genius will be used to solicit volunteers
- Washington County will reinstate the indoor pickup option for their books.
- Jim will contact Mary Divine with news about the opening
- Elaine will send an email to the Mail Chimp list about this Friday's opening; there are about 1,000 people on this list.
- The reopening plan presented was unanimously approved by the Board.

4. Land Acknowledgement Statement

- Mary Hooley, Anne Reich, Jim, Lynne Bjorkman, Laurie Schmidt, and Phil Anderson met and developed the background document sent with today's meeting materials
- The background document is included with these minutes
- Mary Burke stated the importance of the "Why" of the statement
- Jim thinks the statement itself will generate awareness and thinking about the why; it will begin the conversation
- Anne thinks the importance of the document is sparking the thinking and the conversation
- Laurie – the statement is part of our welcoming; acknowledging who we are and who came before us
- It is an opportunity to establish positive relationships with the Native people who are currently part of our community
- Question was asked, "Was this shared with Diane Wilson?" Mary Hooley: Yes; she was very positive and she provided some suggested wording from the standpoint of a Native person which is now included in the latest version.
- Lorelee – something she has heard – it would be important for the collections committee to know what we are doing and that our collection includes books to let people know more about both the history and literature

of the Native people of the St. Croix River Valley; these should be available in the library for people to check out.

- The document is reflective of the first person, primary sources of the Native community: Input was received from Diane Wilson (Dakota), Staci Drouillard (Anishinaabe), and Rita Walaszek Arndt (Anishinaabe, Native American Initiatives, MN Historical Society).
- We will continue to look for support and clarification from members of the Native community.
- What kind of support is there for a statement such as this from Native people? Mary Hooley and Anne have found that those who have reservations about the statement are mainly those who believe such a statement is only giving lip service
- Anne has found though that Native people, even those who question statements as being mere "lip service", generally believe that it is better that we do something vs doing nothing.
- It was generally felt that the library is the perfect place to learn and give voice to stories about people and the land — past, present and future.
- Lynne suggested that in addition to the Land Acknowledgement Statement, the Library also make a monetary and programmatic commitment – with books, with speakers, with website acknowledgement;
- Question was raised - Should this be put it as a line item in our budget
- The Library can look to promote Native arts and crafts, Native foods.
- **Resolution was made by Jim and seconded to adopt the Land Acknowledgement Statement as a statement the Library will begin using before all programs, post on our website, post in the Library, and create a group that will keep us accountable to moving forward with the spirit of the statement.**
- The resolution passed unanimously.
- Further discussion ensued:
 - i. Laurie asked what the structure will be that will bring us beyond simply delivering the statement but into taking actions to implement its intention, meaning and the Library's commitment to the conversation

- ii. Jan – should be make a more Kid friendly version for children’s programs?
 - iii. Ruth and Christine will research and work on a version in youth language
 - iv. Anne has corresponded with the Native American Cultural Liaison (who is Anishinaabe) for White Bear Schools, and she starts every one of her presentations with a Land Acknowledgement. Ruth and Christine can reach out to her about a youth friendly version
 - v. Jim suggested that the monetary commitment for supporting the Native American Land Acknowledgement should be discussed by the Collections Committee, the Adult Programming Committee and the Children’s Programming Committee about what they would like to have for 2020 – 2021.
 - vi. The Board will consider their requests at our next meeting
- Discussion of a seed library – heirloom native plants, vegetables (White Bear Lake Library does this). This idea grew out of the desire for the Library to demonstrate its commitment to the Land.

5. Summer Children’s Programs – Ruth

- Will it take a Board vote to determine whether or not we will proceed with children’s summer programming?
- Reading Incentive Program begins June 6th. Children read and post their book reports online
- We already have a number of presenters who have agreed to present art and/or science activities for the summer camp
- Most activities are outside and if inside, the hall is large enough to keep people separated.
- 2 years ago we had everyone registered by February 1st; this year we need to put out the word in early April if we are going ahead with the camp.
- Our website rather than Brown Paper Tickets will be used for registering
- Kickoff will be June 12th; camps will be one week each, morning only; one week for K-3 students, one week for 4th – 6th grade students; weeks of June 14th and June 21st
- Will have weekly story times; and blanket bingo once each month.

- We should have an exit strategy in case, due to COVID, we do need to cancel any of these events
- Juanita and Elaine will work on how to offer refunds if necessary.
- Right now the Board feels we should move ahead with offering the children's summer programs.
- Ruth and Elaine will work on developing the registration process for online

6. Oscar Night Fundraiser

- **Part One** - People will be able to purchase tickets for access to Oscar Night films online
- This event can be open and available to many people
- Magnolia will provide us a portal
- We will use the portal for Live Action Short Films; the cost will be around \$12 ; the Library will get around \$5.00 of that amount. The \$12 is the cost mandated by Magnolia; we don't have a choice.
- There will be a window of time when people can watch; do not need to all watch at the same time.
- We can actually offer through our portal all three categories of the Oscar nominated short films; Animated Shorts and Short Documentaries as well as Live Action Shorts.
- **Part Two** would be to do a live virtual event the night before the Oscars via ZOOM; maybe get a guest to speak about the films; and/or we may send out a ballot by email to vote
- We could ask for donations; encourage people to tell their friends wherever they are, to go through the Library's portal to get access to view these films. We would get the money for any accessed through our portal.
- While Oscar Night won't be a big fundraiser this year, but it will keep us connected; the money raised will go toward Documentary Nights.

7. Other Business

- Doc Nights will hopefully happen starting this fall; the first one might be outside.
- The Big Read – *The Late Homecomer* this year; in the past we've gotten maybe a dozen copies of the book; that should do for this year also.

- Jim will be doing a presentation to the Lions on March 25th.

8. Next Board Meeting – April 19, 2021

9. Meeting adjourned – 8:48 p.m.

ATTACHMENT:

**Land Acknowledgement Statement
For Marine Community Library
Presented 3/15/2021**

What is a land acknowledgement statement?

It is a short and firm declaration that:

- recognizes and honors the Native peoples who lived here before us
- expands our understanding of our shared history
- examines ways of thinking and being in relationship with Native communities today
- strives to build better relationships with each other and the land we all call home.

What is the history that is driving this effort?

People lived in what is now known at the St. Croix River valley for generations before what is usually referenced as the “start” of our history in this area in 1839. The Treaties of 1837 ceded this land to the U.S. government, though the Dakota and Ojibwe/Anishinaabe Tribes that signed the treaties did not have a clear understanding of the intentions of the government or those who would move in to ultimately exploit the resources of the land for financial gain. Further, the rights that were negotiated, such as the ability of the Ojibwe to maintain hunting and fishing access, were often ignored. Significant racial inequities and even genocide of Native peoples occurred in the years that followed. In the meantime, white settlers profited from the land and laid the foundation for what serves as our home today. This history is an important but often overlooked part of our community’s cultural heritage.

What work has gone into creating a land acknowledgement statement?

The initial effort, spearheaded by Mary Hooley and Anne Reich of the adult programs committee, began more than a year ago. The onset of the pandemic put a pause in the effort, but it re-started in earnest in the summer. They researched history and how similar statements were developed by other entities. In addition, Native individuals and the Minnesota Historical Society were consulted directly for their input. They helped to fine tune our proposed statement and made suggestions on the wording.

Why should the library pursue a land acknowledgement statement?

In our research to develop a statement, it became clear to us that what is really needed is to interrupt the legacy of ignorance, neglect and harm so that we can begin the process of healing our relationship with history, with the Native peoples of our area and with our land.

The library seems to be an appropriate entity to lead this effort. The intent of offering a land acknowledgement statement fits well with our mission to educate and broaden the knowledge of our patrons. First and foremost, we are helping to generate awareness and a greater appreciation of the history that precedes that of the “founding” of Marine, Scandia, etc. In addition, we’re in a strong position

to build on this acknowledgement in a variety of ways.

Why do this now?

There is a growing interest among our residents to gain a deeper understanding of the fuller history of our region. A good example is a recent library-hosted presentation about Indigenous people who lived here hundreds of years ago by an archaeologist from the Science Museum of Minnesota. It was by far our best-attended Zoom event. Marine also has recently established a community celebration of its “founding,” providing an additional opportunity to share stories of even earlier residents. Our effort coincides with an informed and growing awareness of social justice happening now in churches, schools, governments and cultural institutions across the state and nation. The library is positioned to help our community join in that effort. Land acknowledgement statements have been adopted by, among others, the cities of Northfield and Eden Prairie and UMD. Such statements have been utilized in Canada for years and started in Australia four decades ago.

How will the library use the statement?

The land acknowledgement statement itself would be read as part of the introduction to programs, and could be posted on the website and in the library. We anticipate that it will be a living document, and as such is subject to periodic revision over time.

The statement is also designed to inspire action. In our role as a place for learning, listening and storytelling, we should consider not only the statement, but a deeper commitment to further education efforts. Activities could include programming that addresses issues related to our history pre-1837, cultural events, and adding more Native-focused and created materials to our library collection. There is significant value to be gained in a commitment by the library to recognize those who preceded EuroAmerican settlers on this land and to expand our community’s awareness and understanding of this history.

Marine Community Library’s proposed Land Acknowledgement Statement

Marine Community Library and the communities it serves are located on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary homelands of the Dakota and Anishinaabe peoples. This land was ceded to the United States in the Treaties of 1837, resulting in the colonization, genocide, and forced removal of the Dakota and Anishinaabe. The settlers who followed, and residents since, have benefited as a result. Marine Community Library acknowledges this legacy and is committed to examining the roots of racial inequity and building better relationships with the land and one another.