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WLN 2024

The Westmoreland Library Network (WLN) Board of Directors met on January 24, and as is usual for Boards at the first meeting of the new year, it elected officers. But, in this instance, there was even more of significance concerning operational changes. First, about the 2024 Board structure itself.

The 2024 officers are:

President: Pamela Hysong (representing New Florence Community Library)

VP: Lynn Wackenhuth (representing Sewickley Township Public Library)

Treasurer: William Scheeren (appointee of County Commissioners)

Secretary: Mary Stubbs (appointee of County Commissioners)

The three other Board Directors represent Mt. Pleasant Public Library, Peoples Library of New Kensington, and Murrysville Community Library. WLN Bylaws call for member Libraries to hold five of the seven seats, voted upon by WLN members at annual meetings, each holding its seat for a three-year term. Appointees of the County Commissioners are not term limited.

Typically, one to two member Libraries are elected per annual meeting, which occurs at the September Board meeting; however, seating takes effect at the following first Board meeting of the new year. Other rules apply to give every Library an opportunity for representation over time, and each Library appoints its particular WLN Director to the WLN Board from among its own willing Board Trustees.

The WLN Board also unanimously ratified its prior e-mail vote to hire as Executive Director Naomi Cross, beginning on February 12. She had previously been Library Director at Rostraver Public Library. Pamela Hysong has thus officially ended her overlapping duties as Interim Executive Director, a post that she so ably held during the search process.

In other business, two consolidations of service areas are now going forward. Penn Area Public Library is taking Manor Public Library under its state-aided umbrella as an extension of service area. Manor Public Library will not act as a branch of Penn Area Library, but will be within Penn Area's service area from the point of view of Office of Commonwealth Library funding. On the other hand, Penn Area Library is absorbing Trafford Community Public Library into its service area officially as a branch Library.

From a patron point of view, all of this is a difference without distinction; service should look just the same. How the Libraries function operationally simply follows from the state-based requirement that every community in Pennsylvania, whether home to its own public Library or not, must enjoy the benefits due all in the context of mutually agreed-upon Library service areas.

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Those communities with their own public Libraries were originally assigned service areas, for which they received commensurate state funding. Libraries thereafter have been free to merge areas or not according to intricate codes. Whatever the case, you the patron can expect the same service from your home or service area Library as you have always enjoyed, including the opportunity to receive books, materials, and technology from all WLN Libraries countywide.

So, do continue to enjoy the service!

Charles B. Greenberg
Board Director, Murrysville Community Library Foundation