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## **Two Boards: A Year-end Perspective**

The Westmoreland Library Network Board of Directors met on November 18, for the final time in 2020. The Board meets every other month each year, beginning in January, normally at the WLN Green Forge Headquarters in Greensburg, but since March only virtually. It is likely to continue to meet virtually for some time to come, and that is even, for some of us, coming to feel more and more comfortable, and advantageous in some ways.

The Murrysville Community Library Board met the following evening, on November 19, and will again on December 17. It normally meets once per month at the library, but, since March, has also met only virtually. This is a good time to sum up the year for both Boards.

Library Boards have four primary responsibilities: (1) fiduciary responsibility to maintain a healthy balance sheet year over year first of all; (2) setting and oversight of policies; (3) hiring of the Library Director and performance review of that person; (4) assurance of future growth and viability of the organization. Like for-profits, Boards are often keen about #1, but effectively much less sure or even attentive about #4, even though survival requires it. No. 4 is hard.

Both Boards, even in this time of COVID-19, have handled fiduciary matters well; they have responsibly benefited from loans afforded them from the CARES Act Paycheck Protection Program. They will each end the year, it is projected, with essentially balanced income/expense sheets, and, at least in the case of the WLN, its existing four-year Plan 2020-23 will not have to be uprooted and repotted. It will be updated in January.

For both Boards, COVID-19 has forced many policy changes and additions, in order to continue to serve the public. Depending on the moment in time relative to the three COVID-19 spikes so far, they have been either guided (sometimes even mandated) by the PA Department of Education's Office of Commonwealth Libraries, or left to local judgements. At this writing, the latter is the case. You may not be aware of all this in a granular way, but you have had to comply along with us. You have mostly been kindly understanding, and, for that, we thank you.

Just before COVID-19 came along, the MCL Board hired a new Library Director. She is Amy Riegner. What a time to start a new job! It has not been easy, but Amy has proved to be up to it. I hope in the near future you will meet her, if you have not already had a chance to do so. It has also been hard to meet other relatively new staff face-to-face, because all staff members have been at times working virtually from home. Tough adjustment overall, but effective for the most part.

Also, because of COVID-19, the WLN's van delivery of books across the county has at times been disrupted, at times slowed. For one thing, books are being quarantined for

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72 hours after return, by policy order of the WLN Board. Thank you for being patient about that too.

And lastly, about future viability and growth, there are the several successes and growth projects in the making that I have mentioned heretofore: (1) WLN Infrastructure Upgrade Project, including installing fiber-based broadband and extended Wi-Fi; (2) Storytime STEM-packs™; (3) Teen Power Library; (4) on-line virtual programming; and (5) TechNook 365.

Adversity tends to force change that people otherwise tend to resist in good times, and I suspect that you will see some surprising additions to this list that will come out of the apparent calamity of COVID-19. Good, and I'll write about them too.

Charles B. Greenberg,  
WLN Board President