
Minutes of the Board of Library Trustees

The Board of Library Trustees met on March 26, 2019, 3:30 PM
in the meeting room of the Main Library

Present: Diana Henry, Vice-Chair
Carl J. Cruz
Elsie R. Fraga
Helen Rogers
Lee Blake
Ann R. O’Leary
Olivia Melo, Director
Carmen Brodeur, Account Clerk

Excused: Very Rev. Constantine S. Bebis
Father Kevin Harrington
Kimberly S. Ferreira

Guest: Kristine Arsenault, representing Mayor Jon Mitchell
Hank Riley
Janice Hodson, Art Curator
Jodi Goodman, Head of Special Collections Department

Called to order: Ms. Henry called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the minutes of the February Trustees’ meeting; it was seconded by Mrs. Fraga, and unanimously approved.

FRIENDS REPORT

Ms. Melo said a report from the Friends had not been received but she could report that the Friends approved funding of \$2,000 total to be spent on summer reading programs across all five branches this year. Their next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 2nd at 6pm.

Ms. Henry welcomed the new member of the Board, Ms. Ann R. O’Leary who has been appointed to fill the vacancy left by Jill Horton-Simms as Trustee.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the staff reports; it was seconded by Ms. Blake.

Mr. Cruz recognized the excellent work done by the Reference department with the displays on the 2nd floor of the Main library, stating they were well presented, beautifully done, and very inviting as you stepped out of the elevator and all around the building.

Ms. Melo noted that the statistics reported in January for the Howland-Green branch was correct. The high circulation count was due to the automatic renewal feature as the majority of materials checked out at this location is DVD's with a lesser loan period than books.

Ms. Blake noted the inclusion of Skip Finley's program, Whaling Captain's of Color – America's First Meritocracy, at the Main Library with 37 attendees, under visitors in the Art Room report. This program was held on a Saturday when the Art Room was open and Janice Hodson, Art Curator, counted the program attendance. It should also be noted that the Historical Society, in partnership with the library, also hosted Mr. Tim Walker with the program, African Americans and the Maritime Trades with 40 attendees. Ms. Blake added, on behalf of the Historical Society, that more Saturday programs would be of interest to patrons.

The staff's reports were unanimously approved.

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the Director's report; it was seconded by Ms. Rogers.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Melo reported the following –

- Completed & submitted the FY20 revenue estimates & personnel budget to the CFO's office on March 8th.
- The NB library has been selected once again to participate in the Book Rich Environment initiative through HUD, National Book Foundation and Urban Libraries Council. The NB library will be receiving 6,495 books to give away this summer with the New Bedford Housing Authority.
- A graffiti incident at the Howland-Green branch on February 14th resulted in the expedited installation of digital exterior cameras at this branch.
- Coordinated an exhibit with the Center for Portuguese Studies and Casa da Saudade for a loan from the Gulbenkian Foundation.
- The Main library table project has been completed by the city carpenters. The Standard Times newspaper wrote an article featuring this project.

Ms. Fraga made a motion to have Ms. Melo send a thank you letter on behalf of the Board of Trustees to the city facilities department thanking them for the beautiful new tables with a special thanks to Mr. William Shurtleff. Seconded by Mr. Cruz; unanimously approved.

Ms. Fraga asked for clarification on the use of the quiet study rooms at the Main library. Ms. Melo explained to the Trustees that businesses, attorneys & private tutors are using the rooms for long periods of time thereby making the rooms unavailable for drop in use by students or people needing a free quiet space to study. The policy clearly states that the use of the study rooms is for 2 hours only. The reference department staff has met as a group with the Director and a concise message, based on existing policy, is now conveyed appropriately to people seeking the use of the room beyond the 2 hour limit. Ms. Blake suggested handing out an informational flyer of other places located throughout downtown that offer individuals work space.

Ms. Blake asked for more detail on the IdeaLab LSTA grant. Ms. Melo gave a brief description of the grant is to expand the microfilm area into a family history digital lab with the working title

of *our history is your history*. The lab would offer 3d scanners and audio recorders for preserving family memories and will include new computers with the latest software and digital content to correspond with the library Ancestry program. The final document will be submitted to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners on April 5th.

The Director's report was unanimously approved.

Before moving to committee reports, Ms. Henry presented a farewell gift to Ms. Janice Hodson, Art Curator, on behalf of the Board of Trustees. Ms. Goodman was also in attendance at the meeting in order to answer questions the Board may have regarding the Art Room during the vacancy. Members of the Board took turns in wishing Ms. Hodson lots of success and happiness in her new venture as Exhibitions Manager at the JFK Memorial Library.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1. Art:** Nothing to report.
- 2. Building:** Mr. Cruz invited Mr. Riley to speak. Mr. Riley suggested installing sound reinforcement such as acoustic paneling to the meeting room at the Main library. Mr. Riley reported that he attended one of the programs in the 3rd floor meeting room and had a difficult time hearing the speaker due to the high ceilings. The Trustees and Director thanked Mr. Riley for his recommendation but currently there is no funding available to cover the expense of making this modification to the lecture room.
- 3. Finance:** Ms. Fraga, Chair – Ms. Fraga reported that the Barnet certificate of deposit will be maturing in May. Ms. Fraga asked Ms. Brodeur to contact Mark Fuller, City Treasurer to find out how much interest has accumulated from this certificate of deposit to be used towards potential scholarship awards.
- 4. Gifts:** Father Harrington, Chair –Nothing to report.
- 5. Personnel:** Ms. Rogers, Chair – Ms. Rogers reported the Personnel Committee met to interview three candidates and after consideration, agreed to support Ms. Melo's recommendation to hire Chelsea Hester as manager for the Howland-Green Branch; seconded by Ms. Blake, and unanimously approved.
- 6. Policy:** Ms. Blake, Chair – Committee will meet in near future to revise Trustee By-Laws and standing committee assignments.
- 7. Scholarships:** Mr. Cruz, Chair – Mr. Cruz reported that the Clement L Yeager Scholarship this year is for a total of \$2,500.00 and available for distribution to qualifying recipients for the 2019-2020 academic year. Mr. Cruz asked Ms. Melo to share the information with the library staff and letters of interest outlining their program of study should be submitted to the Scholarship Committee by April 8th for consideration.

- 8. Security:** Mr. Cruz noted the need for additional installation of exterior cameras at the Casa da Saudade/Sister Avelar building is necessary and asked Ms. Melo if the Facilities department is aware of it. Ms. Melo stated that DFFM is aware of the need for more exterior cameras at this building. Ms. Arsenault will follow up with Mark Champagne, Director of Facilities Department on the status of this project.

Some discussion was held regarding the current committee assignments. Ms. Henry suggested replacing the names of the outgoing Trustees, Jill Horton-Simms and Dr. John Fletcher, with the new Trustees, Ann O'Leary and Kimberly Ferreira until review of standing committees can be done by the Policy Committee. The Trustee Policy Manual lists five Standing Committees – Art, Building, Finance, Gift, Personnel, Policy and Scholarship. Currently, there is a Bookmobile and Security Committee which do not appear in the Policy Manual. A revision of all the committees, including assignments, will be conducted by the Policy Committee with Lee Blake, Chair, Father Harrington, Helen Rogers and Diana Henry, Vice-Chair.

Ms. Blake made a motion to accept the Committee reports; seconded by Mr. Cruz, and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

As noted in the Director's report, the exterior security cameras at the Howland-Green branch were installed and the table project at Main is complete.

Ms. Melo submitted two budget enhancement requests for FY20. One of the enhancement requests was to upgrade the Pre-Professional Librarian position to Librarian II now that the individual has completed the course work and has received a Master's in Library & Information Science. The second enhancement is an increase to the variable time employees from 15 to 17 hours/week to avoid a deficit at the end of the fiscal year due to staffing shortages.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Melo reported that the Department of Facilities has received a quote of \$24,000 for the flooring removal and installation of new tile and carpet at the Lawler branch. At this time DFFM does not have the funds for this project.

The Viva Portugal event is to be held outside of the Zeiterion Theatre will be held on the first Saturday in May. The Casa da Saudade branch will once again have a presence at the event with an informational table and an activity table for children attending the festivities. Ms. Melo asked the Board for permission to close the Casa branch on May 4th so all of the Casa staff could participate/work at the event. Ms. Blake made a motion to approve the request; seconded by Ms. Fraga; unanimously approved.

NEXT MEETING:

Regular meeting: Tuesday, April 30, 2019 at 3:30pm at the Casa da Saudade Library.
Meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Clerk,
Lee Blake