
Minutes of the Board of Library Trustees

The Board of Library Trustees met on May 28, 2019, 3:30 PM
in the meeting room of the Howland-Green Branch Library

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

Excused: Very Rev. Constantine S. Bebis
Kimberly S. Ferreira

Guest: Chelsea Hester, Howland-Green Branch Manager

Called to order: Ms. Henry called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the minutes of the April Trustees’ meeting; it was seconded by Ms. Blake, and unanimously approved.

FRIENDS REPORT

Ms. Melo was not in receipt of a report and explained that Bethany Coito, Youth Services Librarian, attended the Friends meeting on May 7th as the library representative. Ms. Melo invited the Trustees to attend the upcoming Friends meeting on Tuesday, June 3rd at 6pm.

STAFF REPORTS

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

Mr. Cruz commended Ms. Melo for her decision to rework the bookmobile schedule to accommodate schools and neighborhoods not within walking distance of a branch library as it is important to do outreach to the underserved areas of the city. Also, the “pop-up” library initiative is a great way for the library to be out in the community as it brings library services outside of the brick & mortar buildings.

Ms. Blake made a suggestion to invite school Superintendent, Thomas Anderson, to the July meeting instead of September, as that is the time when schools are in full “back-to-school” mode. The Board and Director agreed with Ms. Blake’s suggestion.

Ms. Henry asked Ms. Hester about the need to open up the boarded up windows as noted on her report. Ms. Hester explained that the windows that need to be un-boarded are in the

children's room and when the outside security cameras were installed it became obvious this is a blind corner. It's precisely where people like to congregate and often engage in illegal activities. Ms. Hester believes that by un-boarding these windows it would stop the congregating as it allows the library staff to see them at all times. Ms. Hester added that the windows just need the paneling removed by unscrewing it from the wall and the problem will be solved. Mr. Cruz asked Ms. Melo to follow up on this with DFFM.

Mr. Cruz asked Ms. Hester why the public restrooms are locked and not accessible to the public for use. Ms. Hester explained that the custodian had brought to her attention that when he cleans them he has found signs of possible drug use in the garbage. It has been reported to the patrolling Police Officer and this is being looked into by NBPD.

Mr. Cruz recognized Ms. Hester's initiative and changes made at the branch, including reshelving the large print collection to higher traffic area, lightning up the manager's office with removal of thick 1960's era drapes and moving furniture for better visible seating areas.

The staff 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 –

- A review of the security alarm panels with Clear Sound Technologies for the Art & Archive rooms.
- Meeting with New Bedford Housing Authority representative, Esperanza Alejandro-Berube to plan the 2019 Book Rich Environment events. The NB library received over 6,000 books to give away this summer.
- Met with United Way for potential partnership and/or grant to the New Bedford Library to manage the city's Laundromat/Early Literacy Program.
- Library Watchman received spring and winter jackets with city logo to wear outdoors. The black jacket, with white city logo, provides a visual reference of security on the premises when he monitors outdoors.
- Purchased an exterior "library open" feather flag sign for the Howland Green library. If there are no issues with this mobile open sign, the next flag sign will be for the Casa branch. Managers can put it outdoors when the branch opens and bring it in when the library closes, to highlight the building as a library.
- The full return of tiles to Maria Bicudo, courtesy of SATA airlines, was on April 30th.

The Director's report was unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Art:** City Council President, Linda Morad, has signed a one year loan agreement for the eight pieces on loan and displayed in City Council Chambers. The items listed on the loan agreement were verified by Jodi Goodman, Head of Special Collections, Dennis Farias, City Clerk and the Library Director.

- 2. Building:** Ms. O’Leary, Chair – The Main library’s fire alarm and sprinklers were tested on April 3rd prior to business hours. Ms. Melo added that the fire and sprinkler alarms were previously tested during open library hours and that this had caused confusion with patrons when they were asked to leave the building. Some of the patrons felt since this was a test they did not need to exit the building. The reluctance of the people to leave their computers prompted the request for early morning fire alarm testing.

Ms. O’Leary reported that she had visited the Lawler branch to take a look at the linoleum floors as reported in the Lawler reports. Currently the floors are taped to prevent tripping and they appear safe to walk on, but will need to be replaced at some point.

- 3. Finance:** Ms. Fraga, Chair – Ms. Fraga said the Finance Committee met on May 6th to review the Donations and Trust Fund accounts. Ms. Fraga asked the Board for a motion to accept the Committee’s recommendation to withdraw \$10,000 from the donation account managed by the City. It will be invested in a certificate of deposit to be known as the Bookmobile Fund. Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the Finance Committee’s recommendation to withdraw \$10,000 from the donation account and place in a certificate of deposit; it was seconded by Ms. Blake and unanimously approved.

Ms. Fraga also asked for a motion to continue with the current banking institution for the financial management of the library Trust Funds. Ms. O’Leary made a motion to accept the recommendations of the Finance Committee to accept the banks lower fee proposal and continue with them; it was seconded by Ms. Rogers, and unanimously approved.

- 4. Gifts:** Father Harrington, Chair – Ms. Blake donated a young adult book to the New Bedford Library: *How High the Moon* by actress and part-time Westport resident *Karyn Parsons*. Ms. Blake added the author is best known for her role as Will Smith’s cousin Hilary Banks on “The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air” sitcom. Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the gift; it was seconded by Ms. Rogers, and unanimously approved.
- 5. Personnel:** Ms. Rogers, Chair – Ms. Melo reported she is in receipt of 30 potential applicants for the Art Curator vacancy. She is working with Ms. Jodi Goodman, Head of Special Collections on pre-selection for phone interviews as some of these candidates are from out of state. The advertisement for this position will be removed from New England Museum Association and the city’s website after June 1st. Interviews to be conducted in June with possible recommendation to the Board by July meeting
- 6. Policy:** Ms. Blake, Chair –A meeting will be scheduled soon.
- 7. Scholarships:** Mr. Cruz, Chair – Mr. Cruz said the Scholarship Committee has sent both Ms. Melissa Sears and Ms. Janet Barbosa the award letters for their acceptance of recommendations by the Scholarship Committee.
- 8. Security:** A review of the alarm panels for the Art & Archive rooms with Clear Sound Technologies. Please see above.

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

OLD BUSINESS

The Viva Portugal event was well attended all day with engaged and happy crowds despite the bad weather. There was a lot of great feedback about the Casa branch and the service it provides to the Portuguese speaking community, both in the city and throughout the state.

Ms. Melo informed the Board that after review of staffing across all branches for the month of July & August, the need to limit branch hours for Saturday is no longer necessary.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Melo has requested a transfer of funds from the library Salaries & Wages account lines in the amount of \$8,000 to Capital Outlay. This is due to the projected surplus of \$19,000 in Salary & Wages due to the retirements and vacancies. This surplus will support the cost of replacing the interior video surveillance security cameras at the Howland-Green Branch. This request was submitted as an enhancement with the FY19 budget but not approved. The Howland Green exterior cameras have already been installed through funding in the current budget due to line item efficiencies. This request of \$8,000 will provide the funds needed to finish the project of replacing analog cameras with digital cameras and installation by a professional company.

COMMUNICATION

The reappointment request of Ms. Henry, Ms. Blake and Fr. Harrington were submitted to the Office of the Mayor. The terms expired in April 2019.

Ms. Melo extended an invitation to the Board to attend the upcoming City Council budget hearing meeting on June 5th at 7pm. Ms. Henry encouraged the rest of the Board to attend in support of Ms. Melo's presentation if possible.

NEXT MEETING:

Regular meeting: Tuesday, June 25, 2019 at 3:30 pm at the Lawler Library.

Meeting adjourned at 4:59 pm.

Clerk,
Lee Blake