



Board of Library Trustees

November 26, 2013 – 3:30 p.m. – **Minutes**

The Board of Library Trustees met on November 26, 2013, 3:30 PM,
in the Trustees Room of the Main Library.

Present: Carl Cruz, Vice-Chair
The Very Reverend Father Constantine Bebis
Lee Blake
Elsie R. Fraga
Helen Rogers
Dr. John Fletcher
Dr. Joseph S. Silva, Jr.

Geoffrey Dickinson, Acting Director
Karen Stefanik, Acting Head of Branch Services

Excused: Mayor Jon Mitchell

Guests: Joan Halter, President of the Friends

Mr. Cruz asked for a motion to invite Joan Halter, President of the Friends, to give her report. Dr. Fletcher made the motion, *** seconded, and it was approved unanimously.

Ms. Halter discussed the recent Friend's event on Thursday, November 21 which introduced the Men of New Bedford calendar fundraiser. These calendars are available for sale at all New Bedford libraries for \$10. Last month's Friends meeting planned upcoming events, such as a Jazz Afternoon on January 26 at the Main Library from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., a Classical program on February 23, and a Blue program on March 23.

Destination Soups will create a signature soup for Jazz Afternoon, possibly "Alphabet Soup." These events are not intended to be fundraisers, but rather to increase visibility of the Friends group. They will possibly hold an author's event in April, but their last author event had a disappointing turnout, so they might not do that. The Friends group has five new members, and has no meeting planned for December. Calendars, mugs and note cards are available for sale.

Ms. Halter stated that although she thought the Friends had been turned down for the grant [in the summer], they just received \$3000, earmarked for teen programming. Mr. Cruz asked if there was any reason why the Friends had been turned down, but Ms. Halter said there had been no word, and the check just came in the mail. Mr. Cruz asked if there were any changes in the officers of the Friends group. Ms. Halter said she was the president, secretary and treasurer. Mr. Cruz asked how many active members there were, but Ms. Halter couldn't say for certain. He asked how many members there were on the board, and Ms. Halter replied that there were six members on the board. She is hoping that the upcoming events and push for membership will bring in new board members. Mr. Cruz suggested that the Friends reach out to Mayor Lang's wife, perhaps asking her to speak at a program. Ms. Halter agreed that this was a good idea. Ms. Halter said that the Friends' hope to piggyback on the return of the Bierstadt paintings for their May program; if not, a program could center

on a maritime theme, focusing on the *Morgan*. Ms. Halter will work with Janice Hodson on art-related Friends' programs. Mr. Cruz thanked the Friends for their work, and encouraged the Board to support their efforts.

Dr. Silva made a motion to accept the Friends' report, Mrs. Fraga seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Call to order: Reverend Bebis made a motion to continue with the regular meeting, it was seconded by Dr. Silva, and passed unanimously.

There were corrections to be made to the October minutes. Mr. Cruz will discuss these with Geoff separately. Dr. Fletcher made a motion to waive the accepting of the October minutes until next meeting when these corrections could be made, and Dr. Silva seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Rev. Bebis made a motion to accept the staff reports, seconded by Dr. Silva, and it was passed unanimously. Mrs. Rogers was concerned about the current vacancies. Mr. Dickinson said that the open Teen Assistant position was in the process of being filled – the hiring recommendation was sent to the Mayor for approval. Requisitions have been sent to Personnel for the other open positions and are waiting for Personnel's signature before they can be posted. Mrs. Rogers inquired about the stolen wallet at the Casa da Saudade Library, and Mr. Cruz said that staff have requested for locks to be rekeyed in the staff room, the office, and a closet at Casa. Mr. Dickinson has sent a list of facilities issues to Ken Blanchard, who is working with John Perry to get this items fixed. Mr. Cruz has requested to meet with the Mayor about various issues. Concerned with the safety of the peeling paint in the Main Library's Children's Room, Mr. Cruz stated that if necessary, the Library would close that room until the painting is done. Mrs. Rogers asked about the cameras at the branches, though there is not currently funding for that. Dr. Silva mentioned the possibility of getting an inexpensive camera system.

Mr. Cruz was disturbed by the recent reports of two overdoses in the bathrooms at the Main Library. In both cases, the police were called. Staff has started closing the bathrooms a few minutes earlier, to try to prevent this from happening in the future. Rev. Bebis wondered if the library is required by law to provide bathrooms to the public. Mrs. Fraga suggested that the bathrooms could be locked, and only opened by staff members upon request, but Mr Cruz said this would be difficult for the staff. Mr. Cruz asked Mr. Dickinson if the custodians can check the bathrooms on a regular basis, and initial a sheet in the bathroom; if the public knew that a staff member was checking the bathrooms on regularly, they might be less inclined to go into the bathroom. Mr. Dickinson stated that the sign-in sheets are already in the bathrooms, though custodians do not always initial them on a regular basis. Mr. Dickinson will remind the custodians to do so, and make sure the sign-in sheets are checked weekly, rather than monthly.

Mr. Cruz noted the loss of materials at the Branches, often due to a transient population taking out material, then moving without returning the material. This adds up to thousands of dollars in materials every month. People coming from the homeless shelter bring a letter from the shelter to prove their address, but once they have a card, there are no borrowing limitations placed on that card. Ms. Stefanik and Mr. Dickinson will see how other libraries handle this issue, and can check with SAILS as well. Mr. Cruz will discuss the issue with the city solicitor to see if the library can limit borrowing on certain patrons. Ms. Blake suggested that the library develop a relationship with the homeless shelters to get any books left behind by their residents. Mr. Cruz asked Ms. Blake's policy group to look into this issue.

Mr. Cruz asked that the report for the Special Collections Department have more detail about its activities.

Mrs. Rogers inquired about the new computers. Mr. Dickinson replied that the some branches are getting their older computers fixed, while others are getting some of the new computers. Howland-Green, for example, is getting new computers, since when the Library got the last Gates grant, they only received leftover computers from the other branches.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1. Art:** Dr. Fletcher, Chair – Dr. Fletcher reported that there were no new requests for art. Mr. Cruz mentioned the Audubon exhibit at the Art Gallery.
- 2. Bookmobile:** Mrs. Rogers, Chair – Mrs. Rogers noted that the change of Bookmobile staff hours was approved. Ms. Stefanik said that she told the staff, and that the new hours will take effect in January, when the winter schedule comes out.
- 3. Building:** Ms. Blake, Chair – Nothing to report. Mr. Dickinson reports that there was no new information about the elevator project at Casa da Saudade.
- 4. Gifts:** Nothing to report. Mr. Cruz noted that Janice Hodson knew of a local artist who wanted to donate a painting. Mr. Cruz said that the Trustees should approve all gifts.
- 5. Personnel:** Mrs. Rogers, Chair – The library has been receiving applications for the open director, and the Trustees have been reviewing them. The Personnel Committee will be meeting to narrow down the list of candidates to interview. There are local and out-of-state candidates.
- 6. Scholarship:** Mrs. Fraga, Chair – Mrs. Fraga reported that some of the certificates have come due, and been reinvested. The CDs are invested by the city, and the Trustees cannot move them to another bank. She also noted that some of the book funds are earmarked for specific types of materials, and wanted the Trustees to get a regular report of what was being bought with those funds. Ms. Stefanik wondered if the Yaeger scholarship had been awarded to anyone, as at least one former staff member had applied for it. Mrs. Fraga was unsure about the Yaeger fund. Mr. Cruz will follow up on this.
- 7. Security:** Dr. Silva, Chair – Nothing to report.
- 8. Director's Report:** Mr. Dickinson reported that after interviewing several candidates, one person has been chosen to fill the open Teen Coordinator Assistant position. The person selected has experience with the target population, and crafts, and has ideas how to get more teens into the library. She will assist Dale Easton, who is the Teen Coordinator. The recommendation is waiting for the Mayor's signature. Once she has begun, Mr. Cruz requested that Mr. Easton and the new assistant put together a six-month plan and present it to the Trustees so they get a chance to meet her. Mr. Easton was having a hard time being able to talk to teachers and teens at the school. Dr. Fletcher will discuss this issue with Mr. Easton, and do what he can to facilitate Mr. Easton's access to schools.

New cameras have been installed at the Main Library. One extra camera was installed than the Library had licenses for, so the security company is working on adding one more license to the Library's account, and it will be resolved who will pay for that license – the Library or the security company.

Maria at MIS would be going to the Main Library to start installing and testing the new computers. New software has to be installed on all computers, and MIS would be testing the software at Main before installing the new computers and software at the other libraries.

Mr. Dickinson spoke to Officer Sean, who said that he had requested a "No Trespass" order against one of the people who had overdosed in the Main Library's bathrooms, as it was not their first incident. The

City Solicitor would not sign off on the order, and Officer Sean was not sure why. Mr. Cruz requested that Mr. Dickinson ask Officer Sean who he spoke to, to see if the Library could get a reason as to why the “No Trespass” order was not signed.

Mr. Dickinson received reports from SAILS regarding patrons who owed at least \$500. There are about 15-17 names on the list. Mr. Dickinson mentioned that some libraries turn these names over to collections, and Mr. Cruz asked him to look into this option. Mr. Dickinson also noted that there is also a problem with patrons ordering books through interlibrary loan, and not returning the books. The Library is then responsible for paying the lending library for those books. The Library bills the patron, but there is no guarantee that the patron will ever pay that.

Ms. Stefanik mentioned the recent theft of her wallet from the office at Wilks.

Rev. Bebis made a motion to accept the Director’s Report, Dr. Fletcher seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

9. **Old Business:** Mr. Cruz had found an old check to the Friends. Ms. Blake checked with the former president of the Friends, and found out that the check had been resubmitted and taken care of. Ms. Blake sent all the paperwork to Joan Halter for her records. Ms. Blake noted that Ms. Downey had not put in for the Cultural Council Grant, for \$530, and if it was not done within the 12-month grant period, that money cannot be reimbursed. Mr. Cruz noted that the large donation of books by Dr. Vermets was still in boxes on the second floor of the Casa da Saudade Library. Once the elevator work is done at Casa, those books should be displayed properly. Mrs. Fraga asked about the Friends of Casa da Saudade Library, and Ms. Stefanik is still going through the paperwork of Casa to see what the status of the Friends group is. Ms. Stefanik reported that the staff at Casa has started moving books in preparation of the elevator work, which should begin in January.

All staff members now have badges. Mr. Cruz expressed concerns that smokers are hanging out right outside the doors of the Main Library.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 17 at 3:30pm in the Trustees Room at the Main Library

Dr. Silva made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and it was seconded by Ms. Blake, and the motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45pm.