



Board of Library Trustees

May 27, 2014 – 3:30 p.m. – **Minutes**

New Bedford Main Public Library, 613 Pleasant Street

The Board of Library Trustees met on May 27, 2014, 3:30 PM,
in the Trustees Room of the Main Library.

Present: Carl Cruz, Vice-Chair
Elsie R. Fraga
The Very Reverend Father Constantine Bebis
Helen Rogers
Dr. John Fletcher
Diana Henry
Rev. Kevin Harrington
Lee Blake
Geoffrey Dickinson, Acting Director
Karen Stefanik, Acting Branch Head

Excused: Mayor Jon Mitchell

Called to order: Mr. Cruz called the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

Joan Halter, President of the Friends of the New Bedford Free Public Library, was invited to give her report first. The Friends received the grant to create Little Free Libraries. Two will be in the north end, and two in the south end at area fire or police stations.

There will be an event on August 8 to celebrate the Beirstadt paintings homecoming. Bank of America is partnering with the Friends on this event, as the Bank donated money for the restoration of the paintings. The Friends will look into getting local artists to donate items to auction off to benefit the library.

The Friends and Ms. Stefanik are working on a grant application for the United Way, which is due on May 30. This grant money would go toward children's programming.

Rev. Bebis made a motion to accept the Friends' report, it was seconded by Mrs. Fraga, and unanimously approved.

Angela Natho from the Personnel Department gave the Trustees an explanation on the Mayor's request for a salary increase for the Library Director position. The Director's salary range has not been updated since the 1980s, and some applicants for the position have withdrawn from consideration due to the salary. New Bedford's salary is lower than Directors' salaries in comparable cities. She recommended that the Trustees reach out to their city councilors to stress the importance of this salary increase.

Dr. Fletcher made a motion to accept the April Trustees' minutes, it was seconded by Ms. Blake, and unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS

Dr. Fletcher made a motion to accept the staff reports, Ms. Blake seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Rogers inquired about the 12-hour Library Assistant position at Lawler, but that position has to be created, as it was not in the FY2014 budget. She was disappointed in the lack of teens at some of the programs; Mr. Cruz mentioned that he has seen teens with mentors at Lawler on Saturdays.

Mr. Cruz commented that the teen issues at Howland-Green seem to have quieted down. He said that the Trustees should email City Councilor Joe Lopes about the speed bump at Howland-Green.

Mr. Cruz suggested that Teen Coordinator Dale Easton and the Assistant Teen Coordinator Jessica Rivera look into ways of getting teens and the teen council at each Teen Room more active. There might be local conferences on teen services that Mr. Easton and Ms. Rivera can attend, and they might want to see what other libraries are doing. Fr. Harrington suggested that they reach out to the Boys & Girls Club and the Dennison Community Center for ideas. He also wanted to make sure that the teen programs related to the library in some way. The new Lawler manager, hopefully starting in early summer, might help things as well.

The staff reports were approved unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1. Art:** Dr. Fletcher, Chair – The Art Room is reopen after being painted.
- 2. Bookmobile:** Mrs. Rogers, Chair – Mrs. Rogers asked about the Bookmobile's back step, which was not fully retracting underneath the bus. Ms. Stefanik replied that staff found a workable solution in the short-term, but will take the Bookmobile to the garage in June to see if they can fix the step, or order a new one.
- 3. Building:** Ms. Blake, Chair – The trailer for the Immigrants Assistance Center is parked in the parking lot at Casa, and some of the IAC staff have moved there. Other staff will remain in their offices inside the building, and the architect had to figure out how to work around them.
- 4. Finance Committee:** Mrs. Fraga, Chair – Some items on the wish list have been ordered, such as the computer chair for Bookmobile. Larger items will have to wait until the new fiscal year, as the bill will not be able to be paid until after July 1. Even though the money is in the Trustees fund, it is still bound to the City's fiscal year time frame. Fr. Harrington said that he had heard complaints about the new microfilm machine. Mr. Cruz said that the machine is state-of-the-art, and staff should be trained how to use it. It should also be on a table that better suits its size. Mr. Dickinson might have a workstation in his office that might fit. Staff has been trained on the new machine, but he will look into getting someone from the machine's company to come and do formal training. Mrs. Rogers wondered if the MegLig money had been spent, and Mr. Dickinson said that it had – half pays for the bond (which will be paid off in 2019) and half pays for books and supplies.
- 5. Gifts:** Father Harrington, Chair – Fr. Harrington said that he did not see any of the bookmarks listing the hours at Casa. Lawler also needs more bookmarks. Ms. Blake said that the New Bedford Historical Society is donating DVDs to all the New Bedford libraries. The DVDs included *12 Years a Slave*, *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*, and other DVDs on African-Americans and abolitionists. Dr. Fletcher made a motion to accept these items, it was seconded by Mrs. Rogers, and unanimously approved. Mr. Dickinson will send a thank-you letter.
- 6. Personnel:** Mrs. Rogers, Chair – The Personnel Committee recommended Denise Plaskon for the manager of Lawler. Dr. Fletcher made a motion to recommend Mrs. Plaskon, it was seconded by Rev. Bebis, and unanimously approved. It is hoped that she would be able to start at the end of June or early July. The Library is still looking for a Library Director and a manager for Casa.
- 7. Policy:** Ms. Blake, Chair. Mr. Cruz noted that even though the trash can was removed outside the Main Library, there is still litter. The City will be putting up "No Loitering" signs. Mr. Dickinson requested security monitors for downtown, and Dr. Fletcher mentioned that they should be from a professional security company. Mrs. Blake pointed out that this might have an impact on the budget. The Trustees will wait to see if the monitor positions are approved, then go from there.

8. **Scholarships:** Ms. Henry, Chair. Mr. Dickinson will send information about the Yeager scholarship to Ms. Henry.
9. **Director's Report:** Mrs. Fraga made a motion to accept the Director's report, it was seconded by Ms. Henry.

With the end of the fiscal year approaching, book shipments are on hold until the new fiscal year. Councilor Lopes asked about the camera system at Howland-Green and Mr. Dickinson sent another email to DFFM to see when the electrician could install them. Mr. Dickinson contacted that City Solicitor to see what the process is for a "No Trespass" order. This order might come from the Trustees. Staff should have a legal writ in hand when they kick someone out. Officer Maguire had suggested that the Board of Trustees have a pre-approved document that staff can hand out, and that the patron could appeal the decision. Mr. Cruz asked that the Policy Committee contact the City Solicitor for a written opinion on this topic. Mr. Dickinson will be meeting with the Mayor and the Police Chief on the security problems the library is having. Mr. Cruz will try to attend that meeting as well. Does the Historical Commission need to approve the "No Loitering" signs? Mr. Henry replied that the commission does not need to approve them, but that they should follow any city ordinance about signage.

Based on suggestions from April's Trustees' meeting, Ms. Stefanik and staff had put together a sign for the Teen Rooms. The sign was a positive way of noting some rules of the library. Dr. Fletcher made a motion to approve the sign, it was seconded by Rev. Bebis and unanimously approved. Ms. Stefanik will try to make the text a little less busy.

The Director's Report was unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Marcia Faucher will be invited to attend the June meeting. Ms. Blake pointed out that Janet Freedman wanted to meet with the Trustees, and Mr. Cruz suggested that she might be able to come in July. The new custodian at the Main Library needs to clean the Trustees' Room; Mr. Cruz pointed out that the custodian does not have a key to the room and needs to be let in periodically by a staff member.

COMMUNICATION

Mr. Dickinson recommended that the Trustees create a policy on how fundraisers for the library, but not put on by the library or the Friends group, should be run. Whether the money is given to the Friends or to the library, there needs to be an accounting of an event's expenditures and revenue. Lorraine Telo would like the Bookmobile to be in the Cape Verdean parade in July. Mr. Cruz said that Ms. Telo should come to the June meeting to talk to the Trustees in person. Someone from the City Solicitor's office should also come to provide guidance on how to accept money from outside fundraising sources.

NEXT MEETING:

Regular meeting: Tuesday, June 24 at 3:30pm.

Rev. Bebis made a motion to adjourn, it was seconded by Ms. Henry and passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.