



## ***Board of Library Trustees***

June 24, 2014 – 3:30 p.m. – **Minutes**  
New Bedford Main Public Library, 613 Pleasant Street

The Board of Library Trustees met on June 24, 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  
Jill Horton-Simms  
Geoffrey Dickinson, Acting Director  
Karen Stefanik, Head of Branches

**Excused:** Mayor Jon Mitchell

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

Mrs. Fraga made a motion to hear the report from Joan Halter, the President of the Friends of the New Bedford Free Public Library, first. This motion was seconded by Ms. Blake.

Ms. Halter said that the Little Free Libraries project is moving forward. The Friends, with the assistance of Ms. Stefanik, also applied for a grant for up to \$3000 for books for the Bookmobile. The Friends' gala will be on August 8. Bank of America will not be a co-partner, and Ms. Halter might be able to get some suggestions for potential partners from Janice Hodson. There will be a piece of art donated by Janice McDonough(\*\*\*) to auction.

Ms. Halter showed the new book bags that the Friends are selling. Mr. Cruz inquired if the Friends would like to have the front doors of the library open for the event and Ms. Halter said yes.

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

Marcia Faucher, former principal of Carlos Pacheco, was invited to speak to the Trustees about getting children to come to the library. Ms. Faucher said that teachers should be reminded that the library is available for class visits. At Carlos Pacheco, Ms. Faucher started a mentor program, where one mentor was with the same child throughout elementary school to help with reading, math and other subjects. If more mentors could get into schools, this would create lasting connections and encourage reading with children.

Mr. Cruz said that they are looking for a director who will develop relationships with New Bedford's schools and principals. Dr. Fletcher suggested an ad-hoc committee to continue to discuss how the library can play a greater role in the schools, and invited Ms. Faucher to be on the committee, depending on her schedule. Library staff should reach out to teachers and principals.

Mayor Mitchell came to speak to the Trustees about security and safety issues. He is concerned about the safety of the libraries, not only for patrons but also for staff. Mayor Mitchell has spoken with the City Solicitor to see how to fairly and consistently enforce the rules of the library. Mr. Dickinson needs to be able to enforce the rules immediately, without waiting to get approval from the Trustees. For example, it would not be

efficient to hold off on a “No Trespass” order until a Trustees’ meeting. Mr. Cruz agreed completely, saying that those decisions are generally left up to the Director. A person receiving a “No Trespass” order should have the option to meet with the Trustees directly. If someone could not come during a regularly scheduled Trustees’ meeting, other arrangements can be made. Mayor Mitchell said that the City Solicitor will be able to clearly spell out the rules, process and recourse.

Dr. Fletcher pointed out that the front entrance has become a hangout and might make some patrons uncomfortable. Rev. Bebis said that some libraries in other cities have a police presence, though Mayor Mitchell pointed out that the police force in New Bedford is already stretched thin.

Mr. Cruz pointed out that it was difficult to get the police chief to the library to sit down and talk with Mr. Dickinson and the Trustees. Mr. Cruz said that the Trustees are delegating enforcement of the library’s rules to the Director.

Mr. Cruz thanked the Mayor for supporting a pay increase for the Library Director, and for supporting security monitors at the library. Mayor Mitchell said that the Trustees should reach out to the City Councilors to make sure they understood the importance of keeping these items in the budget.

Lorraine Telo was invited to speak to the Trustees about her fundraising for the Bookmobile to visit housing projects in the evenings during the school year. She said this year fundraising has been weak. Mr. Cruz pointed out that the library budget has been paying for the Bookmobile staff overtime. The Library was only able to do that this year due to staff vacancies.

Money raised by Ms. Telo is given to the Friends, who in turn, give it to the library. Ms. Telo said she had developed a working relationship with Jill Horton-Simms when Ms. Simms was on the board of the Friends, but once Ms. Horton-Simms left, Ms. Telo did not have any connections to the Friends. Mr. Cruz pointed out that Ms. Telo did not have to attend meetings, just email reports and accounting information to the Friends.

Ms. Henry suggested that Ms. Telo communicate with Joan Halter so that the Friends and Ms. Telo do not hold fundraisers on the same days, and so that each can promote the other’s event. Ms. Telo will send a calendar of future events to Ms. Horton-Simms, who will pass it along to the Friends. Ms. Blake said Ms. Telo should also send a schedule and flyers to let the Trustees know about events in advance.

Ms. Telo requested the Bookmobile to be at the Cape Verdean Parade on Saturday, July 5. The Bookmobile driver is unavailable for that day, and the Trustees did not feel comfortable letting someone unfamiliar with the Bookmobile drive it in a parade, so the Bookmobile will not be in the parade this year.

Dr. Fletcher made a motion to return to the regular agenda, it was seconded by Mrs. Fraga and unanimously approved.

Dr. Fletcher made a motion to accept the May minutes of the Trustees meeting, it was seconded by Rev. Bebis and unanimously approved.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

Ms. Henry made a motion to accept the staff reports and it was seconded by Ms. Blake.

Mr. Cruz asked when the new Lawler manager, Denise Plaskon, would start, and Mr. Dickinson answered June 30.

The staff reports were approved unanimously.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- 1. Art:** Dr. Fletcher, Chair – The unveiling of the portrait of Mary Barros is July 12.
- 2. Bookmobile:** Mrs. Rogers, Chair – Mr. Cruz passed out a spreadsheet that showed the number of people who visit the Bookmobile during its evening stops. While the Bookmobile could not be in the Cape Verdean Parade this year, Mrs. Fraga made a motion to consider it for next year, it was seconded

by Ms. Henry and unanimously passed.

3. **Building:** Ms. Blake, Chair – The elevator project is running about a week behind schedule, and the architect will be holding regular meetings with the contractor. Rev. Bebis inquired about the graffiti at Wilks, and Ms. Stefanik replied that it had been polished off the building by a new machine the city has. Mrs. Rogers asked about the status of the camera installation, and Mr. Dickinson said that the manager of Howland-Green, Kathleen Paroline Vernon, had already spoken to the city electrician about camera placement at that branch.
4. **Finance Committee:** Mrs. Fraga, Chair – Mrs. Fraga inquired about the \$30,000 cost of new carpeting at the Main Library; Mr. Cruz replied that this is a wish list item.
5. **Gifts:** Father Harrington, Chair – Fr. Harrington brought a donated painting for the Trustees to vote to accept or not accept. Also, a thimble belonging to Daniel Ricketson’s daughter had been found in Brooklawn Park and was being donated to the library. Dr. Fletcher made a motion to accept both gifts, it was seconded by Mrs. Fraga and unanimously approved. Fr. Harrington donated a book by John Stobart to the Art Room in honor of Paul Cyr. This donation was also unanimously approved.
6. **Personnel:** Mrs. Rogers, Chair – The pay increase for the Library Director position has been unofficially increased, but needs to be passed by the City Council. The personnel committee has not received many qualified applicants for the open Branch Manager position for Casa da Saudade. Fr. Harrington mentioned that it was important to find someone with at least a Portuguese background, even if the candidate was not fluent in Portuguese. Mr. Cruz replied that they would consider any strong candidates, even if they do not speak Portuguese. Fr. Harrington mentioned a Web site that was specifically for Portuguese-speaking jobs. Ms. Blake said that this information should be sent to Angela Natho in Personnel so that they could send the job announcement to that Web site.
7. **Policy:** Ms. Blake, Chair. Nothing to report.
8. **Scholarships:** Ms. Henry, Chair. Mr. Dickinson put information about scholarships in the Trustee packet for Ms. Henry.
9. **Security:** The Mayor put money in the budget for monitors at Main, but it remains to be seen if the City Council will pass it in the budget.
10. **Director’s Report:** The request for new carpet at the Main Library is a wish list item from the previous director; the carpet is held together by duct tape in some areas. Mrs. Fraga inquired if the floor underneath the carpet was usable; Mr. Cruz did not think it was, but asked Mr. Dickinson to double check. Mr. Dickinson said that whenever the carpet is replaced, the second floor would need to be closed and the shelving would need to be moved; this give the library the opportunity to change the set up of the rooms. Ms. Horton-Simms wondered if carpet squares might be a more frugal option. Mr. Cruz will work with Mr. Dickinson on this issue.

The Trustees agreed the give Mr. Dickinson and the other managers leeway to enforce the library’s rules.

Rev. Bebis made a motion to accept the Director’s Report, it was seconded by Mrs. Fraga and unanimously approved.

**NEXT MEETING:**

Regular meeting: Tuesday, July 29 at 3:30pm.

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

Meeting adjourned.