



Board of Library Trustees

July 28, 2015 – 3:30 p.m. – **Minutes**

New Bedford Main Public Library, 613 Pleasant Street

Present: Carl Cruz, Vice-Chair
The Very Reverend Father Constantine Bebis
Lee Blake
Diana Henry
Jill Horton-Simms
Helen Rogers
Olivia Melo, Director
Karen Stefanik, Head of Branches

Excused: Dr. John Fletcher
Elsie R. Fraga
Rev. Kevin Harrington

Guests: Kristine Arsenault, representing Mayor Jon Mitchell
Joan Halter, President of the Friends of the New Bedford Free Public Library

Called to order: Mr. Cruz called the meeting to order at 3:39pm.

Ms. Horton-Simms made a motion to accept the minutes of the June Trustees' meeting, it was seconded by Ms. Blake, and unanimously approved.

Ms. Halter presented the report of the Friends of the New Bedford Free Public Library. The Friends are still working with the Zeiterion Theatre on a fundraiser, and are planning to have a pre-party for a Sherlock Holmes play. She suggested that the library might do programming around that event, which will take place on March 20, 2016. The Friends had been looking into having adult education classes, but that will not happen at this time. The Little Free Libraries were mentioned in *The Standard-Times*. Father Bebis made a motion to accept the Friends' report, it was seconded by Ms. Henry and unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS

Father Bebis made a motion to accept the staff reports and it was seconded by Ms. Horton-Simms.

Mrs. Rogers asked if Lawler had a custodian yet. Ms. Melo replied that the library did not have one yet, and that Main was down a custodian as well. The custodians rotated to take care of Lawler, but no one was permanently assigned to Lawler yet. Mr. Cruz inquired of Ms. Arsenault to see if those positions would be filled, and Ms. Arsenault said she would be meeting with Ken Blanchard of DFFM and she would ask.

Ms. Cruz asked for more details about Casa's Books for Brava agreement to donate Portuguese books not needed by Casa to Brava, Cape Verde. Ms. Melo said that only items that were in poor condition and would otherwise be recycled here would be sent to Brava. There is a plaque placed in the library honoring Casa da Saudade as a partner in this venture. This item would be put under New Business to be discussed further.

The new Head of Special Collections, Jodi Goodman, wrote a special report of observations and recommendations. Ms. Melo will work with her on prioritizing these recommendations. One of her recommendations was to rename the "Genealogy Room" to the "History Room." This is in keeping with the broad scope of the room, and in how the "Art Room" is named. This name change will be discussed when the other Trustees are present. Ms. Horton-Simms wondered if there was a way to get Ms. Goodman assistance, and Ms. Melo replied that they are already working on a plan to use volunteers when possible.

The staff reports were approved unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Horton-Simms made a motion to accept the Director's report and it was seconded by Ms. Blake.

The new Head of Special Collections started in the beginning of July. There was a lot of rain that same day, which caused rain to come into the back room at the Main Library. The drains in the driveway have been cleaned since then, so hopefully that will prevent that problem from happening again.

The Bookmobile and library staff and volunteers marched in the Cape Verdean Recognition Parade and that went very well.

The van that is used to make deliveries between branches is having mechanical issues. Ms. Melo will look into getting an upgrade soon.

The portrait unveiling of Tom Lopes went well.

Ms. Melo is currently interviewing candidates for the open 12-hour Library Assistant positions. Ms. Melo will assign new hires to locations as needed. Ms. Vernon should speak to her patrons at Howland-Green to see if any of the Spanish-speakers might be interested in a 12-hour position there. Ms. Cruz also suggested translating the position descriptions into Spanish and Portuguese.

DFFM has been very responsive to Ms. Melo's requests for improving the Main Library's grounds and interior.

Ms. Melo is continuing to review the collections and services that the library received to see what is no longer being used or needed and can be discontinued. She has purchased e-books so now the library has its own collection of e-books for New Bedford patrons' use only.

Ms. Cruz inquired about rule #27 in the policy manual about patrons being asked to leave certain areas if they do not belong to that population (i.e., juvenile or teen rooms). Ms. Melo is asking staff to use common sense judgment and be observant – patrons "may" be asked to leave, not "will" be asked to leave. Mr. Cruz noted that the library had a policy of having no adults allowed in the teen rooms during after- school hours, but Ms. Melo noted that this phrase is not in the current policy.

The Main Library received a donation toward the Summer Reading Program in memory of Debra Doyle.

The Director's Report was unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1. Art:** Dr. Fletcher, Chair – Nothing to report.
- 2. Bookmobile:** Mrs. Rogers, Chair – Nothing to report.
- 3. Building:** Ms. Horton-Simms, Chair – The carpet for the Main Library is in progress. Ms. Horton-Simms asked if the library can get a regular maintenance schedule with DFFM, especially with the new carpet.
- 4. Finance:** Mrs. Fraga, Chair – Nothing to report.
- 5. Gifts:** Father Harrington, Chair – Nothing to report.
- 6. Personnel:** Mrs. Rogers, Chair – Nothing to report.
- 7. Policy:** Ms. Blake, Chair. Ms. Blake will plan to meet with Ms. Melo.
- 8. Scholarships:** Ms. Henry, Chair. The Library received some applications for the Yaeger scholarship and will discuss these in a committee meeting.
- 9. Security:** Father Bebis, Chair. Father Bebis will meet with Ms. Melo on security issues.

OLD BUSINESS

There will be no more cuts to the FY16 budget. Ms. Melo noticed an area at the Main Library that was not on the carpet bid, and will ask Debbie Travers about this. She is waiting for Marc Champagne (DFFM) to email a solution for the Main Library's bathroom. There has not been as much of an issue with people staying in the bathrooms lately as Ms. Melo has made it clear that it will not be tolerated. Ms. Arsenault noted that the Mayor has asked for the ash cans to be removed so that the public does not congregate around them to smoke. She also noted that DFFM will not paint the outside steps yellow, as the steps at City Hall are not painted either.

NEW BUSINESS

The security alarm was updated at Howland-Green, but will need to be updated at all other locations. Ms. Melo has a proposal from the alarm company and will be meeting with the CFO about capital improvement plans. She will also be going to each library to make a list of what needs to be done.

As mentioned under the Director's Report, the library's digital collection has been improved with a New Bedford-only collection of e-books.

Ms. Melo is working with Ms. Goodman on Special Collections policies and procedures. Only 10% of the items in that room are currently catalogued. There are many duplicate items, and Ms. Goodman is identifying those to make more space on the shelves.

Ms. Horton-Simms made a motion to approve the "Books for Brava" agreement, it was seconded by Ms. Henry and unanimously approved.

Ms. Horton-Simms wondered if there was a way to check volunteers beyond a standard CORI check, which is only Massachusetts, not nationwide. Ms. Melo will look into this.

COMMUNICATION

Ms. Melo sent a no trespass letter to the parents of a problem patron at Casa. No one came to the hearing. She is consulting with Eric Cohen of the Solicitor's Office and writing a follow-up letter informing them of a 3-month suspension.

NEXT MEETING:

Regular meeting: Tuesday, September 22 at 3:30pm (there is no meeting in August)

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

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.