



Board of Library Trustees

October 27, 2015 – 3:32 p.m. – **Minutes**
New Bedford Main Public Library, 613 Pleasant Street

Present: Carl Cruz, Vice-Chair
The Very Reverend Father Constantine Bebis
Jill Horton-Simms
Father Kevin Harrington
Lee Blake
Dr. John Fletcher
Elsie R. Fraga
Diana Henry
Helen Rogers
Olivia Melo, Director
Carmen Brodeur, Clerk

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 3:32pm.

Father Bebis made a motion to accept the minutes of the September Trustees' meeting, it was seconded by Mrs. Henry, and unanimously approved.

Ms. Halter gave the report of the Friends of the New Bedford Free Public Library. Ms. Halter passed around the invitation that is being sent out on the first week of December inviting members to the Friends Downton Abbey fundraising event on January 2nd, 2016. The ticket price is \$25 per person in order to encourage more attendance. It was decided that setting a higher priced ticket may net less attendance. There will be a viewing of last season's episode and discussion of characters which will lead into the new season premiering the following evening.

Refreshments will be provided by Cork catering. They are fully licensed and insured. The event is being held after library hours, therefore it will require a police officer to be at the entrance to allow only ticket holders to the event to enter the building.

The annual meeting was well attended and the cooking demo program was very well received. Three out of the four Little Free Libraries are doing very well. The books in the Brock Avenue Little Free Library are being taken, but none put back by users. Ms. Halter and Howland-Green Library manager Kathleen Vernon both replenish the books on a weekly basis.

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

STAFF REPORTS

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

Mr. Cruz noted the request by Casa's branch manager to have No Trespass and No Parking signs installed at the Sister Avelar Building. The request has been made to DFFM and it's on the punch list of items

to finish up at this building. Ms. Arsenault will follow up on this issue with DFFM and/or Solicitor's office. The security cameras at Casa have been installed and will be finalized once a television monitor is installed to accept the feed from the cameras. The plan was to have the security feed go into the computer at the desk, but the electricians are not able to make the connection. This would involve a software install which will have to be done by MIS. Mr. Cruz suggested holding the Trustee's meeting in December at Casa da Saudade so the Board could see some of the work done on the building by DFFM and the Branch Manager.

Mrs. Rogers asked about the use of Howland Green as a shelter. Ms. Melo clarified that the library was used as a temporary shelter during a fire evacuation in the neighborhood and that all city libraries are recorded with the Fire Department as being available for temporary shelter, during heat waves and/or emergency situations.

Father Bebis recognized that Wilks is the busiest branch in the system and wondered about the drop in circulation from August to September. Ms. Melo explained that the drop in numbers were across the board at all libraries due to the Summer Reading program coming to an end in August and school starting in September. Mr. Cruz pointed out the growth in activity at Howland Green and recognized this is due to the efforts of the branch manager, Kathleen Vernon and her outreach in her community via school visits.

The staff reports were approved unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Fletcher made a motion to accept the Director's report and it was seconded by Father Bebis.

Mayor Mitchell requested a strategic plan from the library. Ms. Melo submitted the document with short-term goals and objectives with an explanation of it being an immediate plan of action. One of the goals in this short-term plan was to start the process on the library's strategic five-year long range plan which will commence in January of 2016. The goals on this short-term plan will appear on the long plan but will incorporate more future oriented objectives and strategies. It will also include more performance driven measures than what the existing outdated plan has. Members of the Board will be provided with a copy of the document that was sent to Mayor Mitchell. It includes six goals addressing public awareness, facilities, technology and collections. These were the priority areas Ms. Melo established soon after starting the job.

The other priority this past month was to complete the State's compliance and financial form. Ms. Melo was aware that New Bedford would have to apply for a waiver of the Municipal Requirement Appropriation as soon as she became aware of the cuts to the library's budget. In total, the library was cut 4.2% for FY16 and this requires a waiver. The library met the hours open and materials expenditure requirements for FY15. The plan is to meet these requirements in FY16 given that the budget was cut the 4.2%. The request for a waiver has been submitted and the waiver packet is being prepared in conjunction with the Auditor's and CFO's office. This information is due to the Board of Library Commissioners by November 13th. The budget request going forward will be to restore the funding to the level required by the state. We will be notified of the waiver approval in January or February.

Ms. Melo met with Captain Cordeiro of Station 1 to discuss a plan of action on individuals that are requiring escort out of the building by police. Also discussed was safety training for all staff at the Main library. Police reports are being provided to Ms. Melo on incidents occurring in and around the library and these are being sent to Solicitor's office for due process on No Trespass orders to the patrons.

The Director's Report was unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1. Art:** Dr. Fletcher, Chair – The committee met to review the Art Loan Policy as approved by the Policy committee and it was approved. Ms. Horton-Simms pointed out she requested an inclusion of number of

catalogs to be donated to the library. Father Bebis asked if art work from the library was out on loan. There are portraits at the Art Museum in the City Gallery, City Hall, Whaling Museum and St. Luke's hospital.

2. **Bookmobile:** Mrs. Rogers, Chair – Nothing to report.
3. **Building:** Ms. Horton-Simms, Chair – See below under “Old Business.”
4. **Finance:** Mrs. Fraga, Chair – Nothing to report.
5. **Gifts:** Father Harrington, Chair – Nothing to report.
6. **Personnel:** Mrs. Rogers, Chair – Clarification was made on the ever occurring part-time vacancies.
7. **Policy:** Ms. Blake, Chair. The Policy Committee will work on the Memorandum of Understanding with the Art Museum now that the Art Policy has been formally accepted. The committee will start looking at other policies requiring updating.
8. **Scholarships:** Ms. Henry, Chair. The students have reported to the Director that the scholarship funds have been received by Simmons College and applied to their tuition.
9. **Security:** Father Bebis, Chair. Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS

Rug Project – This project has been put on hold until it can be rebid with new specs. The budget for this project is \$85,000 and the Board wants to keep the project within the budget. Ms. Horton-Simms has done further research on a rug that would meet library foot traffic standards, provide the design element for a historic library such as New Bedford and is priced differently. The broadloom rug sample and pricing was shared with the Board. The Board voted to accept the pattern presented. The estimate came in at \$89,700 and requires the crew from DFFM to help with moving of free standing library fixtures and furniture. Due to some water issues on the 1st floor Market Street entrance, the specs will have to be written with this in mind. Ms. Melo asked that before any decision be made with moving forward on a bid, that a Building Committee meeting be held and to have Ken Blanchard and Mark Champagne of DFFM attend to provide their expertise on the water issue and because some of the project involves their crew. The project may have to be conducted in stages, beginning with the Main floor and stacks area and leaving the lower flower on Market St. side for the end allowing DFFM time to address the water issue in those areas. Mr. Cruz asked that all chairmen of committees respect the Director's role and that any and all communication to City Hall regarding building issues should go through the Director.

Bathrooms – the plan is to begin work on the bathrooms in the late winter. An architectural drawing will have to be developed and the work will be done by the city carpenters. DFFM will discuss finances for this project with the Board. The city crew is short by two members due to recent resignations, so the work at other buildings has been impacted. This sets the timeframe for the library a few weeks back. Due to the crew who will be doing the work, also be a snow removal/plow crew, Ms. Melo has made a suggestion to DFFM that work on the bathrooms begin in the Spring when chances of snow are slimmer. The goal is to not have a construction zone at the front area/desk for very long.

Art Loan Policy – an art committee meeting needs to be held to review the art on loan.

Scholarship recipients, Taylor Silva and Brian Guillotte, MLS students at Simmons College will be invited to the next Trustee's meeting on November 24th for a photo op.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Melo discussed the issues with water coming into the 1st floor on Market Street side during heavy rainfall. This is due to elevation and poor drainage due to pitch of ground. DFFM is familiar with the issue and will be investigating options for repair.

Mr. Cruz appointed members of the Board, Diana Henry and Lee Blake to form a committee to work on the Long Range Plan with the Director beginning in January.

Ms. Melo met with Ken Blanchard of Facilities Department, along with other members of the organizations utilizing space at the Sister Avelar building at 58 Crapo St. DFFM is working on a lease/rental agreement for the non-profit organizations using the Sister Avelar building along with the Casa da Saudade branch library. The agreement will designate which space is being used and assigned to each entity. There is a common space, which is the meeting room, and that is currently being utilized mostly by the IAC. This was a preliminary meeting and at the next meeting a draft agreement will be presented to the stakeholders.

There have been four applicants for the open vacancy of Head of Information Services. They have been notified of receipt of applications and consideration for interview in the near future. The Personnel committee will be provided with the resumes prior to the interviews.

Ms. Henry asked for Trustee packets to be mailed earlier. The packets have arrived the day of or sometimes morning of the meeting. Ms. Melo said that is certainly doable as the material is ready a few days earlier but only mailed out on Friday as it was thought this was a preference of the Board. Going forward, the packet will be mailed out on Wednesdays to insure everyone receives it by the weekend prior to the meeting on Tuesday.

The Board will be hosting a "Thank You" reception to acknowledge all of the volunteers and friends who contribute their time and expertise to the library. A reception will be held on November 24th from 5:00 – 6:00 pm in the 3rd floor meeting room immediately following the Board of Trustees monthly meeting. All Branch Managers and Department Heads who have volunteers in their department are required to attend.

COMMUNICATION

The Library received a letter from the Portuguese Ambassador in Washington DC recognizing the existence of Casa da Saudade as a valuable organization to the Portuguese emigrant and indicating a future visit.

A thank you card was received from Janice Pina recognizing the gesture of the Board in sending a "get-well" edible arrangement to her home while she is out on medical leave.

NEXT MEETING:

Regular meeting: November 24 at 3:30pm

Mrs. Fraga made a motion to adjourn, it was seconded by Father Beis and passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 5:03 pm.

Clerk,
Diana Henry