
Minutes of the Board of Library Trustees

The Board of Library Trustees met on February 27, 2018, 3:30 PM,
in the meeting room of the Main Library.

Present: Carl Cruz
Elsie R. Fraga
Helen Rogers
Lee Blake
Dr. John Fletcher
Olivia Melo, Director
Carmen Brodeur, Account Clerk

Excused: Diana Henry
Very Rev. Constantine S. Bebis
Father Kevin Harrington

Guest: Kristine Arsenault, representing Mayor Jon Mitchell
Hank Riley

Called to order: Mr. Cruz called the meeting to order at 3:36 pm.

Dr. Fletcher made a motion to accept the minutes of the December Trustees' meeting; it was seconded by Mrs. Fraga, and unanimously approved.

Mr. Cruz asked for a moment of silence to honor former long term library volunteer, Natalie Phillips, who passed away on December 4th. Ms. Phillips' grandfather was the architect responsible for the renovation of the Main Library in 1903 and Ms. Phillips was very proud of her familial connection to this institution and was proud to be a volunteer at the library.

STAFF REPORTS

Ms. Fraga made a motion to accept the December staff reports; seconded by Ms. Blake.

Mr. Cruz was pleased to read that Hayden-McFadden School was using the bookmobile.

Mr. Cruz commended George Ripley, Howland Green Branch Manager, on his December monthly report under the heading of Developments. Mr. Ripley taped into the ideas of his patrons and has developed programming using their suggestions. Mr. Cruz asked about the wish list under area of concerns and Mr. Ripley's request for the opening up of the boarded windows facing the garden and replacing the doors into the teen room with glass doors. Ms. Melo explained that the work requests had been submitted to DFFM and they were on the queue. The lack of visibility from the building into the garden is an issue listed in the Capital Improvement Plan that Facilities is compiling and it's also on the Security Camera installation proposal being submitted as an enhancement in the FY19 budget.

Ms. Melo had Ms. Coito, Youth Services Coordinator, create a five month comparison chart indicating the increase in programming so it could be submitted as documentation with the FY19 budget indicating the investment in the position was worthwhile. She has also developed a libraries map and menu of services to assist teachers become familiar with how the NBFPL can assist them. Mr. Cruz commended Ms. Coito for her accomplishments in such a short time.

The Staff reports were unanimously approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Blake made a motion to accept the December Director's report and it was seconded by Dr. Fletcher.

Ms. Melo said the Book Rich Environment Book give-a-way at the City's Tree Lighting, held on Saturday, December 12th resulted in the last remaining batch of books to be handed out in less than 20 minutes. The NBFPL will once again be part of the BRE, an initiative through the Urban Libraries Council, National Book Foundation and Dept. of Housing and Development to receive 3,000 + books again this year to distribute between July and December.

Deb Hoadley of Hoadley Consulting has conducted the two customer service training sessions at the Lawler Branch for all staff member. This training was made possible through the LSTA grant acquired by Ms. Denise Plaskon, Lawler Branch Manager from the Board of Library Commissioners. The next training for staff will be a digital sandbox where they can learn about different mobile devices and online resources to assist patrons with their tech questions.

Ms. Melo said the first half of the State Aid grant award of \$77,722.59 was received in December with the other half of the award due in March for a total of \$160,000 from the State.

Dr. Fletcher commended Ms. Melo for her wonderful work as a Library Director. Dr. Fletcher said as he himself was a former teacher, he recognized that Ms. Melo has done a lot for the children that come in to the library and it's wonderful to see this happening. Former directors have not done enough in that area. Dr. Fletcher is very pleased to have Ms. Melo as the Library Director and the rest of the Board and Ms. Arsenault strongly agreed with Dr. Fletcher.

The Director's report was unanimously approved.

FRIENDS REPORT

Dr. Fletcher made a motion to accept the Friend's report; seconded by Ms. Blake.

Ms. Melo gave a brief report for the Friends of the New Bedford Free Public Library. They have approved funding the Summer Reading Program again this year up to \$2,000 and will also contribute towards the renovation/preservation of Audubon's the Raven. The Trustees expressed their thanks to the Friends for their monetary support of these programs.

STAFF REPORTS

Dr. Fletcher made a motion to accept the January staff reports; seconded by Ms. Fraga.

Mr. Cruz said to the Library Director that he was pleased to see more detail in the Lawler January monthly report written by Ms. Plaskon and that Ms. Plaskon received another grant.

Ms. Melo informed the Board that Ms. Daniela Ferreira, Casa da Saudade Branch Manager, is listed this year as a partner in the Viva Portugal! event to be held outside of the Zeiterion Theatre on May 5th. This street festival is dedicated to the Portuguese culture and Ms. Ferreira will have a table promoting Casa's collection and programs and she will offer a bilingual story hour and craft for children at the event. Ms. Melo asked the Board for permission to close the Casa branch on May 5th so all of the Casa staff could participate/work at the event which will be held from 11:00 am to 7:00 pm. Casa patrons will be directed to the event or to the Howland-Green branch on that day. Mr. Cruz made a motion to approve the request and it was seconded by Dr. Fletcher.

JANUARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The art in City Council Chambers was removed and taken to the conservator's lab for restoration. Detail of the process is included in the Special Collections report. The Fishing Heritage Center has donated a book *Rime of Ancient Mariner* to the Special Collections department since the center does not have the climate controlled environment to store the print volume. It will be sent to the Gift Committee for acceptance once the Special Collections department evaluates it for acceptance into the Special Collection.

Ms. Melo, Ms. Jodi Goodman and Ms. Lee Blake were interviewed by Steven Urbon and Jack Spillane of the Standard Times for an article on the James B. Congdon papers and the grant award received from the National Park Service for the processing of this collection. There was a nice two page article published in the Sunday, January 14th Standard Times newspaper.

A Day of Portugal event is being planned for June 1st at the Main Library in partnership with the Consul General of Portugal, Shelley Pires, tentatively titled "*Serenade by the Moonlight*" "*Serenadas a Lua*" which would be an evening fado performance on the marble stairs with the front bronze doors open. Portuguese Chanel 20 would televise it and it will also be on the program presented to the President of Portugal who will be visiting the area in June.

The FY19 Budget kickoff meeting was held in January and the budget is to be level funded as in prior years. Ms. Melo will submit only one enhancement this year.

Ben and Deborah Baker once again donated additional shelving from their State Road building and with the assistance of Amy Ferguson, Joseph Fernandes, George Ripley, and Bill White, Ms. Melo was able to acquire 6 more shelves for the branches and 3 for the Main Library.

Ms. Melo informed the Board that the library will be host a training for staff on dealing with patrons with mental health issues in March led by the Southeast Team of Licensed Social Workers in the Department of Mental Health. These trainings are free and part of the work done by the Massachusetts Library System in coordinating with DMH to assist public library staff recognize and become familiar with the resources available to assist patrons. Mr. Cruz was pleased to hear this due to the recent news regarding the Winchester Public Library where a patron stabbed someone sitting in the library studying. Ms. Fraga and Mr. Cruz asked if police

officers were walking through the library more now that this incident happened. Ms. Melo said that two police officers who have the library as part of their patrolling had been in the building for a walk through and we also now have Ramon (Ray) Bernudez, Watchman who is working 35 hours a week, walking through the library and monitoring the security cameras as well.

Ramon (Ray) Bernudez, Watchman was assigned for an afternoon at the Howland Green library to assist with coverage.

Ms. Melo reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan with the Board and the library's portion of \$775,000 being requested for the Library to repair rotted window sills, water infiltration, security upgrades and water infiltration on the 1st floor of the Main Library.

The first Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) to the City Auditors office. Ms. Melo said this is the first CAFR City Auditor's office developed for the city was asked to submit statistics which reflect library assets such as print volumes and special collections. Mr. Cruz asked Ms. Melo why the City Auditors need this information. Ms. Melo answered for bond rating proposes. Ms. Rogers asked Ms. Melo how come the Auditors acquire on book volumes instead of library buildings and vehicles instead. Ms. Melo answered she will ask the City Auditors and will inform Trustees on the next meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1. Art:** Dr. Fletcher, Chair –An Art Committee meeting will be scheduled to discuss the conservation of the portraits damaged in City Council Chambers and future loans. Dr. Fletcher agreed with the suggestion of Janice Hodson, Art Curator to move the portraits in the children's activity room to the room across the hall to avoid future damage now that the room is being actively used by young children.
- 2. Bookmobile:** Ms. Rogers, Chair –Ms. Melo said there was an odor smell on the bookmobile which was taken care of by DFFM and the back step was replaced and the alternator fixed by the City Garage team.
- 3. Building:** Nothing to report.
- 4. Finance:** Ms. Fraga, Chair – Ms. Fraga said two library certificates of deposits matured and 90% of the interest was withdrawn and 10% rolled over. The Trahan CD for 12 month and the Bebis CD for 2 years. The committee also discussed the Capital Improvement Plan, the FY19 Budget request and the Wilks fund account. The Wilks fund has revenue which can be used and Ms. Melo asked the committee what amount should be allocated at this time. The Finance Committee recommended allocating \$50,000 to be divided equally amongst the branches. Branch Managers should submit a proposal to the Finance Committee with their wish list items so a final allocation vote could be taken at the next Finance Committee meeting to be held in March. Dr. Fletcher made a motion to accept the Finance Committee recommendation to allocate the generated revenue of \$50,000 from the Wilks fund to the branches and Main library; seconded by Ms. Blake.

5. Gifts: Father Harrington, Chair – Nothing to report.
6. Personnel: Ms. Rogers, Chair –Ms. Rogers said a Personnel Committee meeting will be scheduled to meet with the Library Director to discuss the renewal of the three year contract due by April 6, 2018.
7. Policy: Ms. Blake, Chair – Nothing to report.
8. Scholarships: Ms. Henry, Chair – Nothing to report.
9. Security: Very Rev. Fr. Bebis, Chair – Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS

Technology plan is under development. Consultant, Jennifer Koerber has developed a survey for staff to take to determine technology levels and she will be using this data to develop Tech trainings for staff as part of the LSTA grant workshops as well as the plan to present to the Mayor. Mr. Koerber and Ms. Arsenault have discussed the plan under development.

Mr. Cruz said an Art Committee meeting will be scheduled to discuss the next step of the portraits in City Council Chambers.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Melo said the Capital Improvement Plan presented by DFFM to City Council includes a portion in the following amount \$775,000 for repairs and renovations at the Main Library the library, including compact shelving, security system, fire alarms, water infiltration repair and window/ door replacement. City Council Finance Committee has it under review.

COMMUNICATION

Ms. Melo said she met with Deborah Baker of former Baker Books and discussed programming funding. Mrs. Baker has awarded \$1,000 to the New Bedford Library to be used for programs through the Enable Hope Foundation grant. Ms. Melo said this award will be used to pay for the Women & Jazz program to be held in March. Ms. Melo commended the Bakers for continuing to be very generous to the NB libraries. Mr. Cruz was pleased and asked Ms. Melo to send a recognition thank you card to Mrs. Baker.

NEXT MEETING:

Regular meeting: Tuesday, March 27, 2018 at 3:30pm at the Main Library.

Meeting adjourned at 4:41 pm.

Clerk,
Lee Blake

