

---

## **Minutes of the Board of Library Trustees**

---

The Board of Library Trustees met on July 28, 3:30 PM  
Remotely via Zoom

**Present:** Diana Henry, Vice-Chair  
Carl J. Cruz  
Kimberly S. Ferreira  
Elsie R. Fraga  
Father Kevin Harrington  
Ann R. OLeary  
Helen Rogers  
Olivia Melo, Director  
Carmen Brodeur, Account Clerk

**Excused:** Very Rev. Constantine S. Bebis  
Lee Blake

**Called to order:** Ms. Henry called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the minutes of the June Trustees' meeting; it was seconded by Ms. Ferreira; unanimously approved.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the staff reports; it was seconded by Fr. Harrington.

Ms. Henry asked for more detail regarding the small fire incident at the Howland-Green branch. Ms. Melo reported that a pedestrian walking by and smoking a cigarette discarded it near the wooden steps in the courtyard and it ignited a paper bag which was under the steps.

The New Bedford Fire Department was called by a neighbor when he saw the smoke. The fire was put out quickly but the steps had to be rebuilt by a DFFM carpenter. The footage of the incident was captured on the surveillance security cameras and saved to a drive to share with the Police department for further investigation.

The staff reports were unanimously approved.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Melo reported the following; –

- FY21 budget City Council hearing/presentation via the Zoom meeting on July 27. The Library was not included in this meeting. due to the library budget being presented the same as the prior fiscal year.

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the director's report; seconded by Ms. O'Leary and unanimously approved.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. **Art:** Nothing to report.
2. **Building:** Father Kevin Harrington, Chair – Nothing to report.
3. **Development:** Ms. Kimberly Ferreira, Chair – Nothing to report.
4. **Finance:** Ms. Fraga, Chair - Copies of the ten library certificates of deposit were received from the City Treasurer's office which had matured and were re-invested for two years.
5. **Personnel:** Ms. Rogers, Chair – Nothing to report.

Mr. Cruz asked if the library would be filling the Library Assistant position at Howland-Green branch which was recently vacated. Ms. Melo explained that due to the current hiring freeze, vacancies may remain open longer than in previous years.

6. **Policy:** Ms. Blake, Chair – Nothing to report.
7. **Scholarships:** Mr. Cruz, Chair – Nothing to report.

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the Committee reports; seconded by Ms. O'Leary and unanimously approved.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Melo reported while the building is closed to the public, the library is open for business. Staff have all been assigned tasks in alignment with their job duties and are assisting patrons via phone or email. Our Facebook page is constantly updated with information, story times and virtual programming to let people know what is available to them. Bethany Coito, Youth Services Librarian, has taken the lead on the Facebook feed.

The summer reading programs are all being held virtually, along with video gaming competitions, bingo and severely story hour reads conducted by all members of the staff.

Curbside services for material pick-up and for printing/photocopying services are offered throughout the hours the library staff is on schedule. Some libraries are offering limited hours and by appointment but New Bedford is offering the services as needed during hours of operation at all five locations.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Melo noted that City Hall might be reopening sometime in early August for half days to the public. Hopefully, we will receive approval for opening the libraries in similar fashion shortly there-after.

The NB libraries will be extending the hours of curbside service to Monday- Saturday. With one evening a week and on Saturdays from 10-2 pm to meet the needs of our patrons who

cannot visit the libraries during the week. These “summer” hours will be increased after Labor Day to stay in compliance with the hours of operation to meet State Aid requirements.

Some discussion was held regarding the need for the library to open, even if on a limited basis, to the public as our community relies on the computers and other resources for children. Ms. Melo reminded the Board they are advocates for the library and as such, have a strong voice in sharing their concern of the library remaining closed to the public as the school year starts.

Mr. Cruz made a motion to advocate for re-opening of all the New Bedford libraries so long it is safe for the staff and public, as there is a real need in our community for the library resources; seconded by Fr. Harrington and unanimously approved.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Mr. Cruz asked if the public restrooms would have to be open if the library is open to the public. Ms. Melo explained that if public access hours to the building would be limited, restrooms could remain closed. The library does not have a custodian on shift all day to clean the restroom after every use, per the Board of Health, they cannot open the restrooms as they would need to be disinfected after every use due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Once full access is restored, the restrooms will have to be open as per law.

### **NEXT MEETING:**

Regular meeting: Tuesday, September 29, 2020, at 3:30 pm at the Main Library and or via Zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 4:01 pm.

Clerk,  
*Carl Cruz*