
Minutes of the Board of Library Trustees

The Board of Library Trustees met on October 29, 2019, 3:30 PM
in the meeting room of the Main Library

Present: Diana Henry, Vice-Chair
Elsie R. Fraga
Helen Rogers
Kimberly S. Ferreira
Ann R. O'Leary
Carl J. Cruz

Olivia Melo, Director
Carmen Brodeur, Account Clerk

Excused: Very Rev. Constantine S. Bebis
Father Kevin Harrington
Lee Blake

Guest: Kristine Arsenault-Cunningham, representing Mayor Jon Mitchell

Called to order: Ms. Henry called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the minutes of the September Trustees' meeting; it was seconded by Mrs. Fraga, and unanimously approved.

FRIENDS REPORT

Ms. Melo informed the Board that the meeting of the Friends of the New Bedford Free Public Library will be held on December 3rd at 6:00 pm in the Trustees Room.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the staff reports, it was seconded by Ms. Rogers.

Mr. Cruz asked for clarification on a notation in the Special Collection's report regarding paintings returned to a donor. Ms. Melo explained that the paintings were in the Art Room for consideration of acquisition to the library collection during Janice Hodson's tenure. She determined they were not of value and would need to be returned to patron who offered to donate them. Alexandra Copeland, our new Art Curator, followed up on the task which Ms. Hodson was unable to complete prior to her resignation.

Ms. Rogers noted that the usage statistics for the bookmobile had dropped drastically and asked if this was due to the bookmobile not making as many school stops. Ms. Melo explained the 3-year comparison statistics which indicate the service model of the Bookmobile up until this year. The higher statistic three years ago was based on the collection drop-offs at the schools and not a reflection of children coming on board the Bookmobile to check out materials. The numbers for the month on the report going forward will provide a more accurate circulation statistic as we have eliminated dropping off collections at schools and visit neighborhoods, community centers as well as some schools who have actively sought out our visits.

Ms. Henry noted that library program attendance has also dropped off at some of the branch locations and she suggested looking at different ideas to encourage parents and their children to attend library programs. Mr. Cruz suggested bringing library programming to the attention of the School Superintendent and asking for his help in informing parents and encouraging teachers to attend programs available to them at the libraries.

Ms. Rogers's asked Ms. Melo about the status of the Howland-Green library parking issue. Ms. Melo answered that this matter is still pending.

The staff's report was unanimously approved.

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the Director's report; it was seconded by Ms. O'Leary.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Melo reported the following:

- Switch up managerial office for Joseph Fernandes to 2nd floor at the main library and move Dale Easton to the 1st floor office to oversee public services as the main branch manager. Both Joseph Fernandes and Amy Ferguson are co-managing the 2nd floor department as the Technology and Information Services Librarians.
- Dr. Rita Faden, President of the Luso-American Development Foundation (FLAD - a private Portuguese institution) visited the Casa da Saudade branch to learn about the resources and how the branch is meeting the needs of the Portuguese community. Consul General of Portugal in New Bedford, Dr. Shelley Pires-Tracy and Library Director, Ms. Melo, accompanied Dr. Faden.
- The Casa da Saudade Branch Manager Daniela Ferreira will return to work on November 1st.
- Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners staff visited the main library to review the area designated for the 2020 LSTA CreateLab grant.
- On September 26th the library hosted a program in collaboration with the New Bedford Historical Society with author Beth Luey and Historic Homes of Eastern Massachusetts. It was an educational and fun program in thanks to NBFPL Board of Trustee, Lee Blake, for her work in coordinating this event.
- The library Amazon account was compromised and a new account has been set up.

The Director's report was unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Art:** Nothing to report.
2. **Building:** Ms. O’Leary, Chair – Ms. O’Leary reported that the Dept. of Facilities is working with the Architect on a plan to replace the rotted windows, roof replacement and security alarm system as part of the Capital Improvement Plan project.

Mr. Cruz asked Ms. Melo to look into quotes from Blinds and Designs for the replacement of the shades in the trustee meeting room and also all 2nd and 1st floor of the main library, preferably shades similar to those already installed on the windows of the 3rd floor. Mr. Cruz added that these shades allow natural light in while still protecting the collection from damaging sun rays and that the current aluminum shades need to be replaced. Ms. Melo will seek a quote from Blinds and Designs.

3. **Finance:** Ms. Fraga, Chair – Ms. Fraga said the Finance Committee met on Wednesday, October 2nd. The following accounts were reviewed and discussed: 12 certificates of deposits at Bay Coast Bank, Wilks Trust at Plimoth Investment Advisors (Bay Coast Bank), Clara L. Tripp Trust at Bank of America and Clement Yaeger Fund at Bank of America. Also discussed were the co-mingling of certificates of deposits and also, to create a memorial fund. These discussions will be continued at a later date.

Ms. Fraga also reported that the Finance Committee passed a motion supporting Olivia Melo, Library Director in asking the City for a transfer of \$13,000 from library salaries and wages to be set aside for purchase of a new bookmobile.

Mr. Fraga asked the Board for a motion to accept the Finance Committee report. Mr. Cruz made the motion; it was seconded by Ms. Ferreira and unanimously approved.

Ms. Melo informed the Board that the CFO’s office did not approve the transfer due to the FY20 budget implementation. Ms. Melo said that transfers from the general fund are being strictly limited to generate balance to offset the \$1,265,000 reduction that was imposed by the City Council and any anticipated personnel balances will not be available for unbudgeted uses in order to maximize the vacancy savings.

4. **Gifts:** Father Harrington, Chair – Nothing to report.
5. **Personnel:** Ms. Rogers, Chair – Ms. Rogers said that there are three vacant Library Assistant part-time positions at the following locations; Howland-Green, Wilks and Main. Ms. Rogers asked Ms. Melo to provide an update regarding these positions. Ms. Melo reported that she had just filled the Wilks vacancy and the positions for the Howland-Green and Main branch were still pending.
6. **Policy:** Ms. Blake, Chair –Nothing to report.
7. **Scholarships:** Mr. Cruz, Chair –Nothing to report.

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

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Melo reported on her attendance at the American Bookmobile and Outreach Services (ABOS) Conference in Omaha, Nebraska on Oct 23-25th. It was an educational and highly informative conference with presentations catered to urban and rural communities. The trend in Bookmobile services is as Outreach for Library Services and not to be delivery vehicles. Ms. Melo brought vendor contacts and information to share with the city garage manager.

NEW BUSINESS

Art Committee meeting will be scheduled for late November or early December.

COMMUNICATION

Nothing to report.

NEXT MEETING:

Regular meeting: Tuesday, November 26, 2019 at 3:30pm at the Main Library.

Meeting adjourned at 4:25 pm.

Clerk,

Lee Blake