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

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The Board of Library Trustees met on March 28, 2023, 3:30 PM,  
in the meeting room of the Main Library

**Present:** Carl J. Cruz, Acting Vice-Chair  
Kimberly S. Ferreira  
Elsie R. Fraga  
Ann O’Leary  
Helen Rogers  
María Gloria de Sa  
Olivia Melo, Director  
Carmen Brodeur, Administrative Assistant

**Excused:** Diana Henry  
Lee Blake

**Guests:** Joseph Fernandes, Main Library, Public Services Librarian  
Irene de Amaral, Casa da Saudade Library, Branch Manager  
Katherine Gomes, Plymouth Public Library

**Called to order:** Mr. Cruz called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Mr. Cruz welcomed Katherine Gomes, a student at Simmons University and an employee at the Plymouth Public Library who was observing the meeting as a school assignment.

Ms. Rogers made a motion to accept the minutes of the February Trustees meeting; seconded by Ms. Fraga; unanimously approved.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

Ms. O’Leary made a motion to accept the Staff reports; seconded by Ms. de Sa, unanimously approved.

Ms. de Sa inquired about the spice programs that all the libraries have now. Ms. Melo deferred the question to Joseph Fernandes, Public Services Librarian. Mr. Fernandes explained that the program features a spice packet to go with that month’s book selection which includes a culinary element. It was started by Amy Ferguson, Reference Librarian, as a grab-and-go program during the pandemic closure and it is now offered at all branch locations.

Ms. Rogers inquired about the notation in the Adult Services report regarding first interaction with patrons at the main desk. Ms. Melo explained that the procedure prior to the pandemic was for patrons to be directed to the second floor for photocopying, printing, placing books on hold or seeking help on where to find the book in the library. When services began to be offered on a limited basis and only on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, circulation staff were trained to handle these service requests, creating a more positive customer service experience to library patrons.

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. de Sa made a motion to accept the Director's report; seconded by Ms. Rogers; unanimously approved.

Ms. Melo reported the following:

- The wood panels covering the windows in the children's and meeting room area at the Howland-Green Branch were finally removed after 25+ years. This request was originally initiated over three years ago with the Dept. of Facilities, but it never moved forward due to the misconception that the windows underneath were damaged. The windows are in relatively good condition with only one being acrylic and all just need good cleaning. Until a replacement plan is initiated for the replacement of the current glass, signage with "*Under Surveillance*" is seen from the outside of each window. This library has several security cameras installed on the exterior of the building recording 24/7. The exterior lighting at this location was also a long-standing request and the lights were installed on March 6<sup>th</sup> and it has immensely improved the visibility of the courtyard.
- Previous Casa da Saudade Branch Manager, Daniela Ferreira, has agreed to work as a volunteer consultant with current Manager, Irene de Amaral, to assist her with the transition of pending projects and planned programming at this location.
- New Bedford Cable Access recorded an interview on March 6<sup>th</sup> with me and Mali Lim from Community Services and fellow SAWN (Southcoast Afghan Welcome Network) Board member, to discuss the Dil Bah Dil Rah Dhara Afghan exhibit on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.
- On March 8<sup>th</sup> I took our newly hired Branch Manager, Natalie Denby, Outreach/Circulation Librarian on a tour of the branches and introduced her to the rest of the branch managers and staff system wide.
- Participated in an NPR interview with Mali Lim, of Community Services, Allie Copeland, Art Curator and Dabeeri Ehssan, Afghan Project Coordinator on March 13th.
- Joseph Fernandes, Irene de Amaral, Linda Tarantino, and I attended Library Legislative Day at the State House on March 15th to advocate for the MBLC Legislative Agenda. Representatives Antonio Cabral and Representative Paul Schmid joined us at lunch, and we had the opportunity to discuss the MBLC legislative agenda with them. After our discussion, both Representatives signed Bill H.3239, an act empowering library access to eBooks and digital audiobooks.
- The FY24 Budget meeting was held in the CFO's office on March 21<sup>st</sup> and the need to increase the library materials line, as this has been level funded for over 10 years, was discussed. Our Materials Appropriation Requirement for State Aid is \$250,000+.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. de Sa made a motion to accept the Committee reports; seconded by Ms. Ferreira; unanimously approved.

1. **Art:** Ms. O'Leary, Chair – A vote of the full Board on the recommendation of the Art Committee to approve the *Deaccession* section was tabled at the last meeting. The updated draft was sent for review via email for edits and votes were cast by email. A vote

was compiled and is to be certified at this Board meeting with a verbal vote. All approved of **Deaccession** portion of the Art Policy as recommended by the Art Committee.

2. **Building:** Ms. Rogers, Chair –See above in Director’s report.

3. **Development:** Ms. Ferreira, Chair – Nothing to report.

Mr. Cruz recognized the diligent work Ms. Ferreira, as a Trustee, has done to help the Friends organization be recertified with the IRS and the State. Mr. Cruz added that Ms. Ferreira has gone beyond what was expected and that he and the rest of the Board, along with the Director, are greatly appreciative of her expertise.

4. **Finance:** Ms. Fraga, Chair – The library certificates of deposit will be maturing in June. Interim City Treasurer, Mark Fuller, was contacted and asked for advice on the best choice for going forward, whether that would be a one year or a 2-year CD.

5. **Personnel:** Ms. Blake, Chair –Nothing to report.

6. **Policy:** Ms. Blake, Chair – The final draft of the Collection Development Policy was tabled at the last meeting. All Trustees were provided with a printed copy of the draft to review for a vote to be cast by email by Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup>. The vote was compiled and is to be certified at this Board meeting. All approved Collection Development Policy as recommended by the Policy Committee.

Mr. Cruz asked for a motion to accept the Art and Policy Committees recommendation. Ms. O’Leary made a motion to accept; seconded by Ms. de Sa, unanimously approved.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Melo reported that three companies were contacted to obtain quotes for window replacement at the Howland-Green Branch. Guido’s Plate Glass Services met with the Director at the branch and provided a quote as requested. Two other bid requests did not receive a response. Guido’s quote to install the (3) windows of low-e tempered insulated glass in the six existing frames came in below \$10,000 and the three-quote requirement became null.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Melo reported that the research into a vendor for possible repair or replacement of the exterior signs at the following three locations, Wilks, Lawler, and Howland-Green branches, has been on-going. The signs, particularly at Wilks, are in serious need of repair or replacement.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Ms. Melo reported on the inclusion of 3 library projects in the Capital Improvement Plan funding presented by DFFM to the City Council, included the following: Howland-Green Branch

roof renovations; Lawler Branch floor renovations; Wilks Branch ADA upgrades on the Irvington side entrance. There is no current date set for the start of these projects.

Ms. Melo has submitted the nomination for the New Bedford Way Award as requested by the Mayor and Personnel Director. Mr. Fernandes is the nominee for this year in recognition of his role as Public Services Librarian and Assistant Director. Over the past several years, he has invested in his career as a New Bedford librarian by obtaining his master's degree from Simmons, worked through the ranks of Library Assistant to Pre-Professional and on to senior level management as Assistant Director in the past seven years. His attention to detail, efficiency and dedication to this organization are evident to his colleagues and staff throughout the system. Mr. Cruz asked for a motion to send a communication to the mayor in support of the nomination. Ms. de Sa made a motion; seconded by Ms. Fraga; unanimously approved.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE BOARD**

Mr. Cruz announced the (3) Trustees are up for reappointment: Elsie R. Fraga [2023-2026], Ann O'Leary [2023-2026], and Helen Rogers [2023-2026].

Irene de Amaral invited the Trustees to a Casa de Saudade Library program of Portuguese author, Pedro Almeida Maia, a writer of the year in 2014 and considered to be one of the best contemporary Portuguese writers in the Azores in recent years.

Mr. Cruz invited the Board and everyone in attendance to attend the Presidential Award, to be held at the Whaling Museum.

Regular meeting: Tuesday, April 25, 2023, will be held at the Casa da Saudade Branch. Future meetings are scheduled for Howland-Green Branch in May, Lawler Branch in June, and Wilks Branch in July. There will be no meeting in August, with meetings resuming at the Main Library in September.

### **NEXT MEETING:**

Regular meeting: Tuesday, April 25, 2023, at 3:30 pm, at the Casa da Saudade Library.

Ms. Fraga made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Rogers; passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 4:36 pm.

Clerk,

*Ann R. O'Leary*