

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

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The Board of Library Trustees met on January 30, 2024, 3:30 PM,  
in the Art room of the Main Library

**Present:** Diana Henry, Vice-Chair  
Ann O’Leary  
Helen Rogers  
Maria Gloria de Sá  
Kimberly S. Ferreira  
Lee Blake  
Olivia Melo, Director  
Carmen Brodeur, Administrative Assistant

**Excused:** Carl J. Cruz

**Guests:** Alexandra Copeland, Art Curator  
Joseph Fernandes, Public Services Librarian  
Henry Riley

**Called to order:** Ms. Henry called the meeting to order at 3:30 P.M.

Ms. Blake made a motion to accept the minutes of the November Trustees’ meeting with the edits suggested by Ms. de Sá; it was seconded by Ms. O’Leary; unanimously approved.

Ms. Melo asked Ms. de Sá to be listed as the recording secretary for the November minutes as she assisted with the editing of some grammatical errors and made recommendations on the structure of some sentences.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

Ms. Blake made a motion to accept the staff reports; it was seconded by Ms. Ferreira; unanimously approved.

Ms. Rogers commended the managers, Irene de Amaral from Casa da Saudade and Linda Tarantino from Howland Green, for the outreach work they have both done for their branches.

### **DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Ms. de Sá made a motion to accept the Director’s report, seconded by Ms. Blake, unanimously approved.

Ms. Melo reported the following:

- On December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the Main Library’s elevator passed inspection.
- A request for proposal (RFP) was developed by MIS (Management Information Systems) for the [ongoing discussion] updating of wi-fi access at all the New Bedford Library

locations. The approved proposal was for additional wireless points and new wiring to provide faster internet access. The wiring at the Main library began on December 4<sup>th</sup> and was completed in about a week's time, by vendor Ockers Company Inc. All branch wiring was completed by the first week of January.

The wiring project is complete, and the next phase of this project is to coordinate with the SAILS Library Network on connecting the staff computers to the new wiring and purchasing the equipment needed to do so. The complete cost of this project, totaling approximately \$100,000, is covered by State Aid Funds.

- The bookmobile is still housed at the Wilks branch garage until the city determines its liquidation. Purchasing Agent, Molly Gilfeather, was provided with the information in preparation for its Auction placement as per city policies.
- Since both the old and new vehicles are now residing at the Wilks garage, a request was made to the United Way of Greater New Bedford, Laundromat Project Coordinator, to find another sorting location for its donated books. They have been conducting book drives over the last two years, keeping the *Wash & Read* project well stocked. We provided them with space in the small office in the Wilks garage to store their books and organize them for distribution to the laundromats. With the new vehicle, we need to reclaim the space to house the materials for the newer, much smaller vehicle.
- Guido's Plate Glass Service, Inc. provided a quote to update the windows facing the courtyard at the Howland Green branch for energy efficient glass and it was approved as it fell within budget. The work should be done sometime in late January.
- The Glowforge printer acquired through the Library Services and Technology Act Grant (LSTA) in 2020 is housed in the administration office on the third floor of the Main Library. The grant proposal stated that it would be housed in the *CreateLab* area but due to the need for window ventilation, it could not be installed there. Now, in preparation for its relocation, four years later, a service request was opened with the Department of Facilities (DFFM) and carpenters Bill Shurtleff and Dimas Teves built the frame for the exhaust on the printer to be placed in the new window on January 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- As above, the two carpenters' next project was to remove the accordion style doors from the Teen Room at Howland Green and update the area by painting walls and installing shelves. A service request was opened and approved for the work to begin.
- Three additional video security cameras were installed at the Howland Green branch to cover blind spots and it was possible at this time due to funds being available in the FY24 budget. Clear Sound Communications will be installing the cameras in February.
- The FY25 Budget Kickoff was held on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. At this time the library budget will be submitted as a level funded budget with only one enhancement request.
- For the 8<sup>th</sup> year in a row, I participated in the Portuguese reading of *Moby Dick* in January at the New Bedford Whaling Museum, also, representing the library were Casa da Saudade Library staff members Irene da Amaral and Nidia Simoes.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. de Sá made a motion to accept the Committee reports, seconded by Ms. Blake, unanimously approved.

1. **Art:** Ms. O’Leary, Chair – The Board of the New Bedford Historical Society voted to give the New Bedford Free Public Library a small sized replica of the Frederick Douglass statue that now graces Abolition Row Park.

Ms. Blake added that the nationally renowned sculptor, Richard Blake, had a vision of a Douglass statue which was in line with the New Bedford Historical Society, and they hope to formally gift the statue to the library in February during Black History Month. The measurements of the Douglass statue model are as follows: 12 inches in width, 20 inches in height and 16 inches from front to back in length.

Ms. O’Leary asked for a motion to accept the statue of Frederick Douglass to the library collection at this time without it having to be on hold until the Art Committee meeting planned for late February; seconded by Ms. Rogers, unanimously approved.

2. **Building:** Ms. Rogers, Chair – Nothing to report.
3. **Development:** Ms. Ferreira, Chair – The Friends of the Library met on January 9<sup>th</sup>. The discussion was held on a membership drive, web page updates, and goals for the organization. The next meeting will be in April.
4. **Finance:** Vacant – Nothing to report.
5. **Personnel:** Ms. Blake, Chair –Nothing to report.
6. **Policy:** Ms. Blake, Chair – Nothing to report.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Melo reported that Matthews Specialty Vehicles sent all the paperwork for the Mobile Library vehicle to Garage Superintendent, Shaun Viveiros, on December 13<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Melo added that the more compact outreach vehicle was much easier to navigate on New Bedford streets. Also, it has already made home deliveries as noted in the staff reports by Ms. Tolman.

Ms. Melo reported that the most recent disbursement of State Aid funds from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners to New Bedford Library was \$167,120.80.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Melo updated the Board on the most recent Capital Improvement Plan (2025-2029 CIP) Critical Needs Assessment Project Nomination. It was submitted with the request for the replacement of the Heating and Air Conditioning system at the Main Library.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Ms. Melo reported that the library was once again the beneficiary of a \$1,000.00 monetary gift from Deborah and Benjamin Baker through their Enable Hope Foundation to be used in library programming. A letter of acknowledgement for the gift was sent on behalf of the Trustees. Ms. Melo also then informed the Board of the recent passing of Benjamin Baker. Ms.

Blake suggested a card be sent on behalf of the Trustees to Mrs. Baker in addition to the card sent by Ms. Melo.

Ms. Melo read the Open Meeting Law complaint filed by Henry Riley on November 14, 2023, to the Attorney General's Office regarding the Trustees meeting of October 31, 2023, which was held via Zoom.

The complaint was referred to the City Solicitor's office by Ms. Melo for assistance in seeking an extension from the Attorney General's office for a response. Acting First Assistant City Solicitor, Ryan Pavao, has been assigned to work with Ms. Melo on this complaint. The request was made and was granted on December 12, 2023, by the Attorney General's office.

Ms. Melo included a copy of the Open Meeting Law Complaint Form in the meeting packet but read the complaint for the record, followed by an explanation, read from handwritten notes, on the alleged violation.

*The library Zoom account is made possible through the Friends of the Library, who pay for the subscription so it can be used for virtual programming for youth and adults. To avoid infringement of the performers' copyright, the programs are not allowed to be recorded. The notification pop up requesting to record the meeting came as a surprise for this reason. Secondly, The Trustees had not met via Zoom in a long time, and everyone was rusty on accessing the platform. Ms. Rogers was calling in via my office phone, the login was not working for Ms. Henry and Ms. Blake couldn't access the audio so it was all a bit chaotic at the start of the meeting. Thirdly, as per Open Meeting Law, a member of the public who wishes to record a meeting must first notify the chair and that was not done.*

As required by the Solicitors Office regarding the complaint, Ms. Melo requested a motion be made to schedule a retraining for the Board with Solicitor's on Open Meeting Law. Ms. Blake made a motion. seconded by Ms. O'Leary; passed unanimously.

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

Ms. Blake will be sharing coloring, drawing books and bookmarks of Frederick Douglass with the library for the month of February in honor of Black History Month.

Ms. Melo said that she met on January 10<sup>th</sup> with the new City Treasurer, John Taxiarchos, to review the library trust funds and certificates of deposits.

#### **NEXT MEETING:**

Regular meeting: Tuesday, February 27, 2024, at 3:30 pm, at the Main Library.

Ms. O'Leary made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Blake; passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 4:07 pm.

*Clerk, Lee Blake*