

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

Meeting of the Trustees as a Corporation and Administrative Agency

Thursday, September 28, 2017 at 3:00 p.m.
Boston Public Library, Dudley Branch
65 Warren Street, Roxbury , MA 02119

MINUTES

A Meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston as a Corporation and Administrative Agency was held at the Dudley Branch Library, 65 Warren Street, Roxbury, MA 02119 on Thursday, September 28, 2017 at 3:00 p.m.

Present at the meeting were: Chair, Bob Gallery, Vice-Chair, Evelyn Arana-Ortiz and Trustees: Ben Bradlee, Priscilla Douglas, John Hailer, Paul LaCamera, and Representative Byron Rushing. Trustees Zamawa Arenas and Cheryl Cronin were absent. Also present were: David Leonard, President, Pamela Carver, Clerk of the Board, Councilor Matthew O'Malley, along with BPL staff and members of the public.

Chair Robert Gallery called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m. and addressed the order of business. Mr. Gallery thanked everyone for attending the meeting and invited Dudley Branch Library, Allen Knight to give welcome remarks.

Mr. Knight thanked the Trustees for their presence and introduced his staff, and welcomed the community members, friends and the Trustees to the Dudley Branch. He thanked the City of Boston for making the branch renovation possible. He stated his staff was working diligently preparing for the closing. He wants to ensure the Dudley Branch maintains a presence locally while closed. Mr. Knight explained they will be doing some activities with local companies and businesses to continue some Branch programming, also that October 21st at 11:30 a.m. they will be having a ceremony to honor the community and have last greetings before closing the branch in November. He closed by introducing Ms. Sarah-Ann Shaw from the Dudley Friends to give greetings.

Ms. Shaw, a longtime board member of the Friends of the Dudley Library and neighbor welcomed the community and Trustees. She explained that the Friends are a very active group and will be celebrating its 40th year with a celebration at the Kroc Center in May 2018. She highlighted that among some activities they do are: manage bake sales and give two \$1,000 scholarships to local residents. She recognized other members in attendance: Arthur McNair, President of the Friends Group, Mimi Jones, and Candelaria Silva (Fellowes Project Manager). She added they will be continuing with some limited programming in the local area with the support of the Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Fund. The Friends will continue to be supportive during the renovations and are very excited for this project. Ms. Shaw thanked the Board for their support and hoped to see them at their event in May.

Mr. Gallery thanked both Mr. Knight and Ms. Shaw for all they do for the branch and the community. He called for the approval of the minutes of the annual May meetings. With no edits or comments, a motion was duly made and seconded. The Trustees voted in favor to approve the minutes of both meetings on May 16, 2017.

Mr. David Leonard gave the President's report and update. He began by welcoming the newest Board member, Priscilla Douglas to the board.

Mr. Leonard acknowledged Councilor Matthew O'Malley, a champion of Boston Public Libraries and welcomed him to the meeting.

Councilor O'Malley, began by thanking the Trustees for allowing him to present his proposal to them. He explained he is the District 6 City Councilor who represents Jamaica Plain and West Roxbury. He has four thriving libraries in his district. He was joined by several Friends from the West Roxbury Library Group to formally request that the community room at the West Roxbury Branch be dedicated to the late Alice Hennessey. Councilor O'Malley gave a little background on Ms. Hennessey. He explained she was an aide to then City Councilor Tom Menino, and later became the City Council aide. She went on to be in charge of Mayor Menino's special projects, and shared her love of building a great community and was a great equalizer, bringing people together. He noted she was instrumental in the development of Millennial Park, and created the West Roxbury Library Friends group. Ms. Hennessey had passed away last spring and on May 24th, the City Council unanimously passed a resolution in support of this proposal. He stated she was remarkable and asked for the Board's support in voting to approve this proposal.

Mr. Gallery, thanked Councilor O'Malley for his long standing support of the BPL and noted that he had presented all the required criteria for consideration, which included: a letter from Mayor Walsh, City Council resolution, and a letter of support from the Friends group with the actual request. He called on the other board members to vote to approve this request. Upon a motion duly made and seconded:

VOTED: that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the dedication and renaming of the Community Room at the West Roxbury Branch library, the "Alice G. Hennessey Community Room".

Next, Eamon Shelton, Director of Operations, introduced some key members of the team working on the Dudley Branch Renovation. He stated that it was a large effort for this project including representatives from the Public Facilities Department (Maureen Anderson and Jim McGaffigan, who were present and recognized). Mr. Shelton also introduced the architect, Michael Leblanc from Utile. Mr. Shelton explained that they started the program study in 2012 but advocacy for this project was active long before then. This renovation has a dedicated \$14.7 million for this project (including a grant for \$5.5 from Mass Board of Library Commissioners that the BPL is currently on the waitlist for). He went on to explain that the BPL will also be granted monies from Percent for Art, which is above and beyond the budgeted amount. There is a scheduled Renovation Kickoff Celebration on Saturday, October 21, 2017 at 11:30 a.m. and the branch will be closing at end of day on Friday, November 17, 2017. Construction is expected to last for approximately two years.

Mr. Shelton invited Michael LeBlanc to give a brief update on the project. Mr. Leblanc thanked the Trustees and BPL staff on behalf of his team at Utile and said they were honored to be part of this project. He thanked the community members for their direction and began with his review of a slide show of the 27,000 square foot building. He noted they addressed some key concerns of the community (i.e. having a visible front entrance, an outdoor plaza, and a nutrition lab). They expect to begin construction on November 17th and anticipate reopening the branch in spring 2020.

Mr. Leonard thanked him for his presentation and said that the BPL is thrilled to begin this project. Mr. Hailer asked if there would be any programming offered during the closure. Mr. Leonard explained that there will be some requested programs at local facilities nearby which include: author talks, computer use, story times, etc. He stated it has been a true collaboration of community and explained the BPL can't provide a full slate of services but will try to honor the priorities of the community. The offered programming is responsive to that as well as the option to utilize other local branches.

Mr. Leonard explained that the November meeting topics will include: Philanthropic Strategy & Strategic Communications/Messaging and Library Programming & the TCA/WGBH Relationship.

Mr. Gallery invited Vice-Chair Evelyn Arana-Ortiz to give review for the Finance and Audit Committee. She introduced Mr. Matt Hunt from CliftonLarsonAllen along with Ellen Donaghey to discuss the auditor's financial statements. Mr. Hunt said in summary, that there were no major findings in the auditor's report. He reviewed some of the highlights and noted expenses were consistent with recent years. They anticipate wrapping up the audit within the next couple of weeks and were only waiting for a few standard items. He said there were no major findings to report and it was a good year overall. Ms. Arana-Ortiz stated the Board needed to vote to approve the financial statement. Upon motion duly made and seconded,

VOTED: that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the Boston Public Library's Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2017

Next Ms. Arana-Ortiz called on Mr. Donaghey to review the vote for approval of vendors for preservation supplies. Ms. Donaghey explained that due to the upcoming renovation, the Rare Books Department will be ordering more supplies from these companies. The Library's Preservation Manager has negotiated discounts with all these companies. She stated they are seeking approval of these two vendors without the need for further procurement approval. Ms. Arana-Ortiz called for a motion, that was duly made, and seconded,

VOTED: that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the use of Hollinger Metal Edge Company, Gaylord Archival and University Products, for the purchase of preservation and archival supplies.

Lastly, Ms. Donaghey briefly reviewed the Gifts Report and explained this was an informative presentation that did not require a vote. She reviewed the listing of grants totaling \$5.8 million. She made note the figure was large in part due to a large donation from the Roman Fund for \$2 million. Ms. Donaghey explained the funds from the Foundation and the Associates helped pay for programming, collections and salaries. Funds from the City-Wide friends in the amount of \$33,000 was used to purchase digital equipment and \$20,000 from various branch Friends groups provided Museum passes.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz continued with the Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee update. She explained this Trust was created in 1866 when the Trustees of the Fellowes transferred assets to the Trustees of the BPL. They were put in charge of finding out where and how to spend the funds for community programming. She explained that the Fellowes sponsored several successful programs for FY17 with Candelaria Silva-Collins as the Project Manager. Ms. Arana-Ortiz thanked the other members of the Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee for their assistance and guidance (who were

present and recognized). Ms. Arana-Ortiz reviewed the programs that were approved for FY18 which will continue to support the Dudley community.

Mr. Gallery called upon the Special Collections team to give their report on the Prints Inventory. Mr. Gallery recognized the Chair of the Special Collections Committee, Mr. Bill Stoneman who was present at the meeting.

Ms. Laura Irscher began by stating the Prints had limited records or incomplete records and no intellectual control, before beginning this inventory. She and her team worked with Library and Associates funding to develop a plan with Dr. Martha Mahard from Harvard University who surveyed the collection for one year in 2014.

Dr. Mahard gave some history on how the BPL came to obtain some of its prized collections and showed a slide presentation of some samples of these special prints. She stated the Prints Department was formally established in 1941 at the BPL when we accepted the Alfred Wiggins' Collection. She reviewed some of the highlights during the past year's inventory and explained the new process developed by her and her team. At the moment the size of print collection is 131, 320 prints and drawings. (But noted this figure is subject to change). She showed before and after pictures of the spaces to reflect the progress made and the storage issues that they were facing. She emphasized this is simply an inventory and that it is different from a catalog record (it includes minimal data and is very basic) She explained the next phase of the project is digitizing it. She reported that the Thomas Nason collection was already on Digital Commonwealth.

Mr. Leonard, thanked Ms. Mahard for her efforts and for getting the BPL on the right footing.

Beth Prindle give a brief overview of what's next. She commented on seeing the work occur in both physical and intellectual organization. The inventory data has been shared to a cloud database and explained it is currently for staff purposes only and not for public access. Next steps include beginning the print digitization process, chosen with our limited staff capacity and with an eye to what could be fast tracked. They have hired photographers and metadata assistants with funds that have been donated through the generosity of the Associates, and the Citywide Friends.

She stated this has so far been a three year span and the project has cost over \$450,000 paid through trust funds. She expressed in order to be responsible caretakers the BPL needs to know what exactly it has. The prints are only one portion of the Special Collections. Another major area that will be focused on is photographs, which are also housed in the Print Department but estimated to be over one million. Mr. Hailer asked if there was an opportunity to exchange or sell some of the collection. Ms. Irscher answered that this would be a future topic in the years ahead with a goal of strengthening each collection. While it may make sense to do so down the line, however, the focus currently is to figure out what exactly is in our collections first.

Next, Ms. Irscher moved on to a few requests that the Special Collections received from the Museum of Fine Arts ("MFA") for loans.

The MFA will be hosting two specific exhibitions in the coming year and requested a total of 6 prints for loan. All items are from the Miriam Collection. The items include: 1990's MC Escher's "*Rippled Surface*", a 1950 Linoleum cut printed from two blocks. As well as MC Escher's "*Puddle*" a 1953

woodcut, and “*Still Life with Mirror*” lithograph, and “*Sky and Water II*”, a 1938 woodcut. The MFA will accept all costs affiliated with this loan. (Handling, shipping and insurance) All prints are in great shape physically.

The second loan, is for September 2018- Kay Nielsen, “*Love’s Faces #2, The Stars*” and “*Snowdrop*” from 1925, pen ink and watercolor, with the same conditions and responsibilities.

Normally the Special Collections Committee would vote to recommend the Board of Trustees to approve, however, it was noted there was not a quorum at the last Committee meeting. Mr. Leonard explained they will be looking at the current membership of the Special Collections Committee moving forward. The Trustees noted there is a strong linkage by charter between the MFA and BPL and hope to support collaboration between the two to allow greater public access to appreciate the collections. With no further discussion, a motion was duly made, seconded, and

VOTED: that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston, pursuant to the terms of the Exhibition Loan Policy, approve the loan of four (4) objects to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston for purposes of an exhibition devoted to the art of M.C. Escher for period January 2018 to June 2018.

VOTED: that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston, pursuant to the terms of the Exhibition Loan Policy, approve the loan of two (2) objects to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston for purposes of an exhibition devoted to the art of Kay Nielsen for period September 2018 to January 2019.

Next, Mr. Leonard explained they will be taking a deeper dive into the topic of Strategies and Services for Patrons Living with Homelessness, Substance Abuse and Prison Outreach.

He introduced Jennifer Tracey, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Recovery Services and Helen McDermott, Project Manager from the Boston Public Health Commission (“BPHC”). He also introduced Jim Greene, Director of Emergency Shelter Commission from the Department of Neighborhood Development to discuss the homeless issues.

Ms. Tracey began with an overview of the Mayor’s Office of Recovery Services which was developed in 2015. In the last two years, they have improved access to care, they have worked with the Mayor’s 311 to connect residents directly with BPHC staff to answer questions, gave referrals, and anything involving recovery services. They are continually building partnerships with people across the city and collaboratively developing new initiatives with other city agencies. They are working on stronger recovery efforts for inmates before they are released from prison through the re-entry program. She and Ms. McDermott discussed the work they have done with the BPL since the opioid crisis has reached an all-time high with the arrival of Fentanyl. Ms. McDermott noted that the BPL is seeing an increase in bathroom safety incidents and managing the BPL spaces, especially at the Dudley Branch. She noted that Branch librarian, Allen Knight has been a great partner, always quick to support his staff and patrons alike. Together the Library Branches and BPHC have met to discuss potential preventive measures and offer EAP services after overdoses have occurred.

She explained there has been a lot of coordinated effort with many city departments, especially Jim Greene, who is a key player working with the homeless. These efforts along with added resources offered by Mayor Walsh, has started to show some impact, especially on the Melnea Cass corridor. As a result of these additional resources, the city opened The Engagement Center behind the Southampton Street Shelter this year. It is a temporary structure while it is still in the pilot phase. It has been extremely busy and services many of the patrons we see here at the Library. She thanked the Trustees, especially, Representative Rushing for his great collaboration with her office, and she thanked the BPL for donating several bookcases loaded with books for those who they serve at the Engagement Center.

Ms. McDermott and Ms. Tracey explained there are online trainings available which may be helpful to BPL staff and the public. They are trying to use more creative approaches by using creative art in addicts' recovery efforts. She mentioned that perhaps this art could be displayed in some branches in the future. Mr. Greene gave a brief overview in regards to the efforts on the Homelessness front and added that his office had submitted a budget request for \$25 million in Federal funds to fight homelessness. The funds would be used for operating costs and to preserve resources through outreach services.

They are currently trying to identify hotspots for the homeless community around the city. He noted the Libraries (especially Central, South End, and West End) are among them. He explained they developed a task force, of which David Leonard is a member. He has seen an uptick in violence among the homeless over the last year. They serve approximately 435 people a night throughout the shelters. Mr. Hailer added that the challenge to Boston offering such great services is that it is attracting homeless people from around the entire State (beyond the borders of Boston). The known homeless in the area are scared to death of the new people coming in. He commended the presenters for all their work, but noted the influx from around the state, has caught everyone off guard and the biggest concern of the Trustees is the violence you hear more and more about around the library. Jim Greene noted they have had long term consequences because the City offers a safety net, offers medical treatment, but did agree that 50% of guests in the shelter are from out of Boston.

Mr. Leonard discussed an outreach coordinator to begin working with the BPL under the partnership of organizations. He expected to share positive news on this front later in the week. The conversations have been threefold: the need for outreach, making sure public safety is responsive (ex. patrons abiding by the appropriate use policy, crime), and advocacy.

The Trustees discussed their concerns over increasing populations sleeping outside the library, bathroom safety, yet treating each patron with respect and dignity, all while working proactively to help alleviate the situation.

Michael Colford, along with staff members Jessi Snow and Anna Fahey-Flynn discussed some BPL services and outreach. Mr. Colford reviewed the new employee guides which offer extensive information on recovery services and resources. They will be available later that week via the staff intranet. Ms. Snow discussed the relationship with DYS and working with offering library services to incarcerated children. She also reviewed the de-escalation training that is offered to staff to help alleviate tense situations that may arise in the library. She stated that they were offering more family outreach resources in multi-languages. Ms. Fahey-Flynn discussed some collaborative services the BPL is doing with the Suffolk County Corrections Department and loaning books to inmates.

Mr. Gallery thanked the staff for their hard work and efforts on these issues.

Mr. Gallery asked if there was any Public Comment.

Louisa Stephens from The Associates, announced the new writer-in-residence, Laura Rees.

David Vieira, thanked Mr. Leonard for having the foresight to post meeting agendas on the front page of the BPL website. He expressed his disappointment that the Special Collections Committee did not have a quorum. He stated the meetings are set up far in advance and found it disrespectful to people who come, both presenters and the public.

He stated the handicap ramp appeared for the Election Department because by law the polling location needs to be accessible. ADA is a law too. He was bringing this to the Trustees attention because the automatic door was removed by the BPL.

Mr. Leonard responded that he rejected the characterization that we simply took down the door, as it only had a temporary approval. He explained that the BPL was ADA compliant, although there could be room for exceeding minimum requirements to provide a better services experience,

Sarah-Ann Shaw, Friend of the Dudley Library was glad to hear that the BPL is doing something regarding substance abuse and the homeless. She explained that lots of people come here to access computers, and we make that tool accessible. She liked to see lots of organizations in community working on drugs and homeless. She said it would be great if BPL held the meetings as not to not duplicate efforts.

Mr. Gallery closed by thanking Priscilla Douglas for joining the Board and thanked the Dudley Branch for hosting. Mr. LaCamera stated that with great respect for the content, thought it was a lot to take in and would like opportunity for reflection and discussion . With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela Carver
Clerk of the Board of Trustees