

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

Meeting of the Trustees as a Corporation and Administrative Agency

Thursday, November 19, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.
Central Library of the Boston Public Library
700 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

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 Central Library, on Thursday, November 19, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.

Present at the meeting: Vice Chair, Evelyn Arana-Ortiz and Trustees: Jabari Asim, Ben Bradlee, Cheryl Cronin, Priscilla Douglas, Linda Dorcena Forry, John Hailer, Jeff Hawkins, and Representative Chynah Tyler. Chair, Robert Gallery was not present due to illness. Also present were: David Leonard, President, Pamela Carver, Clerk of the Board, along with BPL staff and members of the public.

Vice Chair Evelyn Arana-Ortiz called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and addressed the order of business, noting Mr. Gallery extended his apologies for having to miss the meeting due to contracting the flu. She thanked the Trustees for their presence and welcomed everyone. Roll call was taken and determined there was a quorum. She called for a motion to approve the minutes of the October 3, 2019 meeting. With no edits or comments, a motion was duly made and seconded. The Trustees voted in favor to approve the minutes of the meeting on October 3, 2019.

Mr. Leonard gave the President's report and updates. He highlighted the BPL held its first ever all staff meeting with over 429 employees in attendance. The purpose was for staff development in the areas of customer service and customer engagement, and work on the roadmap to give a sense of direction heading into the New Year. All full-time and half-time employees that are represented by the unions attended at the Central Library. Mayor Walsh joined the meeting for a robust questions and answers session as well. It was a great success and the feedback has been extremely positive. The meeting was followed by an Employee Appreciation Dinner that evening where staff who have gone above and beyond were recognized along with those with twenty five and fifty years of service.

Mr. Leonard stated this continues to be one of the busiest times of the year with a large number of programs and events which were well attended. He next discussed the current mission statement of the Library along with draft priorities. The Trustees had a substantial conversation discussing whether it is more appropriate to amend the mission statement or determine if there is a need for a branding statement. There was no vote needed for approval at this time but an update is expected at a later time during the year and formal approvals of any changes as necessary.

Next Mr. Leonard turned to the draft organizational priorities which will enable the crafting of a detailed roadmap of initiatives going forward. He envisioned a process akin to strategic planning with input from staff, trustees, and some community members. He went on to discuss each of the seven priorities; enhancing public profile and funding, systemwide improvements to the facilities, enhancing collections management, increasing programming and outreach (with emphasis on youth services), updating innovation/technology, improving staff and organizational culture and preparing for the unexpected. These priorities combined with engaging division, and department leaders, and staff over the coming year will then lead to a public engagement process to move us forward.

Ms. Alison Ford gave an update on each of the ongoing active capital projects. The Trustees discussed the possibility of mixed use buildings. Ms. Ford also reviewed the smaller projects that included minor improvements or refreshes.

Next, Ms. Donaghey reviewed the gift shop concept. She noted that one of the most frequent questions we receive is if we have a gift shop. Both restaurant spaces have been refreshed and now was a good time to pilot the gift shop concept. She explained there will be thirty items for sale as a trial period. Trying to be sensitive to various socio-economic backgrounds. She showed some examples of the products (notecards, mugs, teddy bears, t-shirts, and Moscow Mules to name a few) and in addition they hope to sell more high end prints and items online. She noted she looked to other public libraries for suggestions when developing what would be appropriate keeping quality in mind.

Mr. Eamon Shelton introduced the new Senior Manager of Facilities, Julio Gonzalez. Mr. Gonzalez gave a brief background on himself and expressed how pleased he was to join the BPL team.

That concluded the President's report and Ms. Arana-Ortiz was invited to give the report on the Finance and Audit Committee.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz explained that the committee met with NEPC and did a brief review of the BPL's portfolio balance, which is currently at \$63 million dollars. She explained that the committee determined to explore a more socially conscious policy in our investments and will be interviewing an active asset manager, Impax Asset Management. This firm is based out of London and are leaders in social impactful investments with an emphasis on environmental products. They have performed well over the last ten years. The committee will interview them at the next meeting in January and bring their recommendation to the full board accordingly.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz moved onto New Business for which there was none. She then asked if there was any Public Comment.

Elissa Cadillic, President of AFSCME spoke in regards to the President's proposed roadmap. She hoped that employees' input will be valued and appreciated. She also stated that the gift shop should not be outsourced to the restaurant spaces of The Catered Affair but rather should be staffed with BPL employees.

A patron stood who did not give their name, asked if there was a way to access the Boston Globe and Herald online via a BPL subscription. Ms. Irmscher explained that it is a copyright issue. Libraries are not able to purchase online access at this time. She noted we have printed copies available to the public but only an individual is able to purchase an online subscription.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz thanked everyone for attending. With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 9:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela Carver

Clerk of the Board of Trustees