

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

Meeting of the Trustees as a Corporation and Administrative Agency

Tuesday, September 20, 2016, 3:00 p.m.
Commonwealth Salon, Central 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 in the Commonwealth Salon, Central Library, Copley Square, 700 Boylston Street, Boston, MA on Tuesday, September 20, 2016 at 3:00 p.m.

Present at the meeting were: Chair Robert Gallery, Vice Chair Evelyn Arana-Ortiz, Trustees Zamawa Arenas, Ben Bradlee, Jr., Cheryl Cronin, John Hailer, Paul LaCamera, and Rep. Byron Rushing. Also present: Boston Public Library President David Leonard; Boston Public Library staff; Matthew Hunt of CliftonLarsonAllen; and members of the public.

Chair Robert Gallery called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Gallery pointed out that this was the first meeting of the Board of Trustees since work had been completed on the Johnson Building Renovation Project. He offered his thanks to the team who worked on the building and on the opening celebrations.

Mr. Gallery asked if Trustees had edits for the draft Minutes of the May 10, 2016 Meeting and the Special Meeting held on June 14, 2016. With no comments, upon motions duly made and seconded, the minutes of the May 10, 2016 Meeting and the Special Meeting held on June 14, 2016 were approved.

Mr. Gallery then congratulated President David Leonard since he was about to offer his first President's report since being named Boston Public Library President in June.

President Leonard stated his initial focus was on the opening of the Central Library after the renovation project, but soon his attention shifted to the future of the Boston Public Library.

He has begun a series of listening sessions with members of the Library's senior management team, other key individuals on staff, leadership of both Unions, Trustees and Senior Officials for the City of Boston. He plans to extend these sessions to the whole staff of the Library in the coming months and then to members of the public.

President Leonard stated he sees these conversations as an opportunity to get input on issues that should shape the next year and future priorities. While he has been at the Boston Public Library for seven years, as President he is getting to know people from a new perspective.

Input from these sessions has helped him craft organizational changes at the Library's top level. The Library has begun implementing these changes, including meeting with members of the two Unions as some changes will affect Union members. He said the changes are planned to allow focus on collections, library services and the operational, financial and communications functions in an optimized way.

He has also begun strengthening the Library's external relationships, reaching out to Library Affiliate groups and representatives from the Arts and Culture, Statewide Library, and Funding Communities.

There were 111 applicants for the vacant position of Clerk of the Board of Trustees. President Leonard and Chief Financial Officer and Acting Clerk Ellen Donaghey are working to fill the position. Mary Bender, Records Management Assistant, has agreed to take minutes at Trustees meetings in the interim.

President Leonard said his priorities for the next few months include overseeing the completion of the Johnson Renovation, and beginning an Initiatives and Budget Planning process. Library staff will now turn to animating the Central Library, making the best choices about programming and staffing to bring the updated spaces to life.

As part of the city's responsibility to maintain excellent neighborhood library service, Mayor Marty Walsh has made a commitment to spend \$90 million over the next five years to improve branch libraries. Major Projects Program Manager Eamon Shelton was to report on those efforts.

A detailed plan on the Library's initiative for *Services to the Homeless* was not ready for Trustees but Library staff is looking at working with organizations like Healthcare for the Homeless and Pine Street Inn, said President Leonard.

Additionally, President Leonard is leading an examination of Youth Services system wide, making sure the Library is investing optimally on those services.

In response to a question from Trustee Arenas, President Leonard described the feedback from the listening session as more confirming than surprising. He said people are being open and frank with concerns, and presenting great ideas.

President Leonard then introduced Director of Library Services Michael Colford and Chief of Public Services Jen Inglis to speak on the Johnson opening.

Mr. Colford said that the July opening meant a 30-40 % increase in visitors over last summer but allowed a little breathing room before an even busier season with the start of the school year.

Opening day was a massive effort, said Ms. Inglis, and was a success because unions, management and branch staff worked together. She showed a video of people entering the space.

As of now, she said, the new Welcome Center is not fully staffed but those working there report nothing but positive feedback.

Mr. Colford said the new space presents many opportunities. Many people will come and the Library's job is to find them something relevant of which to take advantage.

While many programming efforts are focused on the newly renovated Johnson building, the entire system benefits, said Mr. Colford.

He went on to mention a host of new programs, many funded through the Boston Public Library Foundation, including: a slate of Lowell Lectures in newly renovated Rabb Lecture Hall which kicked off last week with local author Michael Patrick McDonald; theater productions throughout the year with performances by such groups as Ireland's Abbey Theater and Company 1 Theatre; and pop rock and chamber concerts.

Mr. Colford also said the new Community Learning Center in the Mezzanine has been even more popular than expected and is heavily used by people wanting to practice English or learn more about technology. President Leonard later thanked Trustee Paul La Camera for his efforts in securing Hearst Foundation funds that made the Community Learning Center possible.

A new composer-in-residence program, modeled after the Associates of the Boston Public Library's Writer-in-Residence initiative, will bring Beau Kenyon to the Library, where he will create new compositions, initiate collaborations with other organizations and offer workshops.

Many of the concerts and theater performances will also be offered at branch libraries. In addition, Grub Street will offer writing classes at the Egleston Square and Grove Hall branches, and other branches continue to offer education and technology programs including Tech Goes Home which allows graduates to take a computer home for \$50.

In response to a Trustee question, Ms. Inglis said WGBH is planning a wide range of programming for its soon to be opened newsroom.

Eamon Shelton, Major Projects Manager, provided an update on active capital projects. He explained that projects work through three phases: Programming; Design; and Construction.

Ongoing branch projects include:

Adams Street: In the Programming study phase with a community meeting on Sept. 20

Dudley: Kicking off Design phase with meeting during the week of Sept. 26.

Jamaica Plain: Construction is going quite well. The addition to the building is built and enclosed. Work is on track for a spring 2017 opening.

Parker Hill: In the Design phase for waterproofing, repairs, and interior painting.

Roslindale: A Designer will be selected this fall.

At the Central Library:

Rare Books: HVAC work is starting the Planning and Design phase.

Johnson improvement work – The connection between the two buildings is open on the main level and the Newsfeed Café will open in September. Punch list items, adjustments and corrections, will be addressed over the next of couple months.

President Leonard added two projects that are active from the Library's point of view, although in initial stages, are deciding on how to better provide services for the Chinatown and Uphams Corner neighborhoods.

Chairman Gallery asked a question about the Arts area and the McKim third floor of the Central Library. He expressed a need for more work than the currently planned project, which will focus on HVAC. President Leonard agreed the space is in need of attention but said there is no active capital project.

Chairman Gallery led a round of applause for Mr. Shelton and his team and city colleagues, including City Project Manager Jim McQueen, for their efforts to steer the Johnson building project.

Beth Prindle, Head of Special Collections, spoke on exhibitions, remarking that over the next few months, the Boston Public Library's greatest treasures will be on display in five separate exhibitions.

Ms. Prindle said the Boston Public Library is a major contributor to "Beyond Words: Illuminated Manuscripts in Boston Collections," the largest exhibition of medieval and Renaissance illuminated manuscripts ever held in North America. It is showing in three venues: the McMullen Museum of Art at Boston College, the Houghton Library at Harvard, and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Nineteen area institutions are participating and the Boston Public Library is the second largest lender after Harvard. Of the 260 objects on display, 36 are being

shared by the Library, including a French Lectionary from 925. Conservation and digitization efforts were integral to preparing to exhibit these materials.

Opening soon at the Library is *Shakespeare Unauthorized* featuring items from the Boston Public Library's world class collection including rare and first editions, and a first folio. Curator Jay Moschella, the Library's Curator of Rare Books, focused the exhibition to look at our modern understanding of Shakespeare. Funded through gift from Iron Mountain, the exhibition is open through March 31. The Associates of the Boston Public Library contributed to the curator's salary and conservation efforts. The Boston Public Library Foundation has underwritten booklet advertising companion Shakespeare programming at Boston Public Library locations across the City.

The Norman B. Leventhal Map Center show, *Shakespeare's Here and Everywhere*, draws from the maps of the worlds of Shakespeare and his plays, and is on display through February 26.

Ms. Prindle next spoke of a remarkable effort to conserve the Library's copy of the iconic, Audubon's *Birds of America*. The large-scale book includes 435 plates in 4 volumes from 1827-1838. The Library's Vol. 3, one of only 120 in existence, is in desperate need of conservation work. The Associates will fund conservation of up to 75 prints for a cost up to \$35,000.

Ms. Prindle reported that restoration of the Chavannes mural on display in the Library's McKim building is nearly complete. Several factors made the project complicated and unprecedented but, the work will be returned to its place within a week or so.

President Leonard spoke of the unprecedented level of collaboration and cooperation involved in all the projects and said it resulted in conservation and access for some of the Library's incredible works of art.

Trustee Hailer remarked that the depth of the Boston Public Library is remarkable in that it offers Children's programs, ESL, music, and other programs while at the same time it curates medieval manuscripts, works by Shakespeare, and other art pieces at such a high level.

Melina Schuler, Chief of Communications, spoke of efforts to redesign and energize the Library's website, the next item on the agenda. Ms. Schuler said she and a team are involved in efforts to launch a redesigned website in 2017 working with the vendor, BiblioCommons. Staff and website users have been queried about what they would like to see as the Library's digital front door. The Library's logo has also been refreshed for use in digital platforms.

Trustee Zamawa Arenas said she would like to see an effort aimed at digital strategy more broadly than simply a redesign of the homepage.

Ms. Schuler agreed and said the effort is starting many strategic conversations about branding and about integrating the Library's digital and social media efforts.

In the next item on the agenda, Ms. Evelyn Arana-Ortiz, Committee Chair, reported on the Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Committee and their efforts to award this year's distributions for programming. She thanked the members of the committee for their time and thoughtful deliberation. This year, the Committee approved two new and nine returning programs to benefit members of the Roxbury community.

In discussing the next item on the agenda, Chairman Gallery said Library governance and the Library's Affiliate organizations are something he said he has wanted to explore for some time. He says he sees examples of successful collaboration, but wonders if the current structure is optimal from a fundraising and governance standpoint. In the Library's effort to shoot even higher, the Boston Public Library Foundation, The Associates

of the Boston Public Library and the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center might raise even more money if the system supported them differently.

Mayor Walsh, Mr. Gallery, President Leonard and representatives from the three Affiliates met recently. The Affiliates were asked to think and talk to their Boards about structures that might support them better. More conversations should happen in the fall, Mr. Gallery said.

President Leonard said the conversation will grow to include the City-Wide Friends of the Boston Public Library and branch Friends groups as the Library thinks about a structure that makes the whole bigger. With the greatest respect for all individuals and their good work, the Library and its supporters have an opportunity now to explore taking this collaboration to the next stage, said President Leonard.

Mr. Gallery said that with the Johnson project complete and all the work that, with the Mayor's strong support, is now being done in the branches, the Library still has projects to complete like fixing the third floor of McKim. There is a need to make the pie bigger, he said.

Trustees Cronin and Rushing offered support for the conversation and encouraged looking at the history of the Library's fundraising efforts and at how other institutions have been successful.

The next item on the agenda was the approval of the Boston Public Library Financial Statements for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2016, as presented by Matthew Hunt of CliftonLarsonAllen. Mr. Hunt reported that it is CliftonLarsonAllen policy not to include the auditor's opinion in the draft financial statement, but does not expect anything other than an opinion of "not modified," the highest opinion available, on the final report.

In describing Financial Highlights of the report, Mr. Hunt pointed to a decrease in the General Fund balance from the previous year. He later said this is mainly due to one-time repair, maintenance and security costs in FY16. He reported the balance in each of the fund categories, and pointed out that revenue and expenses remain consistent.

He noted that this is the first year the Foundation was included in the report as a Major Fund and said that is because their contribution for FY16 constituted more than 10% of the Library's total revenues.

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, it was:

VOTED: "that the Trustees of the Boston Public Library of the City of Boston approve the draft Financial Statements with the stated caveats for information outstanding."

Ms. Ellen Donaghey, the Library's Chief Financial Officer, presented *the Report of Gifts, Grants, and Donations to the Boston Public Library Fiscal Year 2016* as the next item for discussion. Ms. Donaghey pointed out that this was an especially robust year for the Boston Public Library Foundation.

President Leonard said the Boston Public Library was level funded through the State Budget thanks to great work by Trustee Rushing and other elected officials.

In addressing the next agenda item, Ms. Donaghey said that due to a recent change in state procurement law, the amount of spending for which municipal agencies are required to get three bids has been changed from \$35,000 to \$50,000. If the Trustees approve, Library staff will send out bids and accept the lowest for procurements of between \$10,000 and \$50,000. Purchases of over \$50,000 will be sent out to bid and will require approval by the Board of Trustees.

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, it was

VOTED: “that the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston require Trustee approval only for those competitive and sealed bids which meet or exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000).”

The Associates recently gave \$35,000 to the Library to fund the conservation of 78 Audubon prints. Ms. Donaghey said the Library sought bids from experts whom the Boston Public Library and other similar institutions use for such specialized projects, and is recommending Bryan Owen Conservation.

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, it was

VOTED: “that the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve a contract for conservation work not to exceed \$35,000 be entered into with Bryan Owen Conservation.”

Ms. Donaghey then presented two proposals that would have the Board of Trustees delegate certain approvals to the Committee.

The first would have Library staff vet certain conservators to be put on a list of pre-approved, authorized vendors for projects of up to \$50,000.

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, it was

VOTED: “that the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston delegate the approval of an authorized list of conservation vendors, as recommended by the Chief of Collection Development, to the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee.”

The second vote would allow the Committee to approve the awarding of \$80,000 once a consultant is selected to study potential Chinatown Library Services.

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, it was

VOTED: “that Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston delegate the approval for a Library Services consultant for Chinatown Library Services.”

The Chairman called for New Business, and there was none.

The Chairman called for Public Comment.

Greg Tobin of the Friends of the Roslindale Branch Library thanked the Trustees, Mayor Walsh, and City Councilor Tim McCarthy and his colleagues for allocating \$6.7 million for interior work at the branch.

Elissa Cadillac, President of AFSCME, spoke of open positions the union would like to see filled as well as safety concerns with malfunctioning elevators and drug use in and around libraries. She asked Trustees to be aware of safety issues and participate in contract negotiations.

Vivian Wu from the Friends of Chinatown Library Committee offered thanks for an upcoming feasibility study and search for a consultant. Her colleague spoke about a Town Meeting attended by 100 Chinatown residents recently. The Master Plan for Chinatown includes a branch library, she said.

Don Haber, co-chair of the Friends of the Jamaica Plain Branch Library, told Trustees that he had been told by members of the Connolly Friends group that the Connolly Branch Library's Homework Assistance Program, which included bilingual mentors, has been terminated. He has been told Dudley is also without Homework Assistance.

President Leonard said there has been miscommunication regarding the program. There are some changes and new updates being considered and the Library is working with representatives of the children's librarians' team to look at what makes sense going forward.

David Vieira of Citywide Friends of the Boston Public Library said his group recently awarded \$5,000 in grants for branch libraries. He also spoke of the need for signage when an elevator is out of service; staffing at the new information and welcome desk; and a multilingual website.

In response to a question from Trustee LaCamera, President Leonard said the Homework Assistance Program is being reviewed to see at which locations it works and where it doesn't. The Library is now looking to make sure any changes are well informed, responsive to the community and to the abilities of staff. He offered to report on the program at the next meeting.

There being no other business, the Meeting adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Upcoming Trustee Meeting Schedule

2016

Tuesday, November 15, 2016, 8:30 a.m., Central Library

2017

Tuesday, January 17, 2017, 3 p.m., Charlestown Branch

Tuesday, March 14, 2017, 8:30 a.m., Central Library

Tuesday, May 16, 2017, 8:30 a.m., Annual Meeting, Central Library

Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston

Robert E. Gallery, Chair; Evelyn Arana-Ortiz, Vice Chair,

Zamawa Arenas, Cheryl Cronin, Carol Fulp, John Hailer, Paul A. La Camera, Byron Rushing

President, David Leonard

Minute taker, Mary Bender