

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

**Meeting of the Trustees Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee
Tuesday, June 2, 2015 12:00 p.m.
Dudley Branch Library 65 Warren Street, Roxbury, MA 02119**

MINUTES

A meeting of the Trustees Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, June 2, 2015 at the Dudley Branch Library, 65 Warren Street, Roxbury, MA 02119 at 12:00 p.m.

Present at the meeting were: Trustees Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee (“Committee”) Chair Evelyn Arana-Ortiz, Committee members: Ms. Sarah Ann Shaw and Ms. Che Madyun of the Friends of the Dudley Branch Library, Ms. Christine Schonhart, Director of Library Services, Branches, Mr. Allen F. Knight, Dudley Branch Librarian, Ms. Candelaria Silva-Collins, Project Manager, and Sarah Markell, Assistant Neighborhood Services Managers. As Deborah Kirrane, Clerk of the Board, was unable to attend, Sarah Markell, recorded minutes of this meeting.

After discussion, the Committee asked that the minutes of the August 2, 2014 meeting be amended to reflect that, pursuant to the terms of the trust, the Dudley Branch continue to be provided \$10,000 in programming funds and \$1,700 to purchase a tablet for registration purposes during outreach or during programs. Chair Arana-Ortiz and the Committee approved the meeting agenda and, on motion made and duly seconded, the minutes from the August 7, 2014 meeting, as amended, were approved. The amended minutes will be posted on the Boston Public Library’s (BPL) web page at www.bpl.org.

Ms. Schonhart reported that she will discuss the Fellowes account balance with BPL Director of Accounting, Sean Monahan and report, after the next meeting, what additional funds will be available to Dudley Branch.

Ms. Silva-Collins presented her review of the FY15 program, beginning with a timeline of events from issuing Requests for Proposals (“RFP”), through Advisory Committee selection, notification, orientation, and commencement of programming. The RFP was sent to several interested parties, was advertised in the Dudley Branch, and was advertised in The Banner, as well.

Ms. Shaw asked if attendance at the Orientation / Technical Assistance session was required for all grantees, whether they were returning grantees or not. Ms. Silva-Collins advised that yes, attendance is mandatory. In her experience, the majority of grantees attend and she meets individually with those who are unable to attend.

Ms. Silva-Collins will be increasing overall marketing efforts this year, in addition to the marketing efforts of each grantee for their own programs. Mr. Knight asked that grantees

be made to understand that all programs must end by 7:30 pm so that all may leave the Dudley library building by 7:45 pm.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz confirmed the following change to the timeline: Advisory Committee Proposal Deliberations would take place on August 11, at 1:00 and not on August 6.

Ms. Silva-Collins illustrated in a PowerPoint presentation, the highlights from last year's programming. In discussing the FY15 programs, Ms. Silva-Collins described the highlights and challenges of each program, along with pointing out recommendations made to many program presenters to increase the program's success. Her presentation included the following:

The Visual Art and Storytelling program eventually included interactive activities for the children participating. The first session storyteller was not as strong as the second session narrator.

The Children's Book Writing Class with Irene Smalls included providing a template, writing exercises, sharing writing, and of the seven evaluations received, all rated the class "good to excellent." Ms. Silva-Collins would not recommend that this course be approved again. The instructor was not as engaging, original, or prepared as she had been in prior years. Ms. Silva-Collins also plans to address multiple sessions in the Orientation / Technical Assistance session. She feels that attendance in programs tends to wane after several sessions and programs are most successful with fewer sessions.

English Second Language Course for Local Businesses conducted eight of the proposed sixteen classes. Of the twelve business owners who expressed an interest in attending, only two students actually enrolled. This is the second program proposed by Dudley Main Streets that they have not been able to complete.

The Free Computer Class instruction classes were successful. The instructor was extremely patient and hands-on, even bringing in a computer to dismantle and explain to the students where various parts of the computer resided. Attendance was consistent. Students prepared a simply business flyer and brought in their own technology for troubleshooting. Sessions had strong class participation and the instructor was well-prepared. Class feedback was positive and it was suggested that similar programming related to how to use one's cellphone or smart phone be offered.

The premiere screening of "Entering Roxbury" had nearly 100 people in attendance. The three panelists were each videographers. Feedback was very positive with people enjoying the large screen and the informative content. Suggestions included conducting a similar screening for a younger audience and showing the video at another location. Ms. Shaw suggested editing the video to include educational narrative, especially if presenting to younger audiences.

The Makanda Project concerts on November 11 and April 4 both incorporated live painting sponsored by sparc!. Ms. Shaw stressed the importance of the concerts in

providing people who may not necessarily be able to attend a show at Scullers or Regattabar, the opportunity to enjoy a live jazz performance. The first concert provided youth outreach by including vocalists from MssngLnks and a young steel drummer from a local church. More than 150 people attended both concerts, including lots of young people and families.

The Math Power course, for people who work with children from pre-Kindergarten to 8th grade, addressed instructional strategies and practice exercises and activities to use when teaching math skills. Attendance in classes varied from two to eight students. The plan is to revamp the grant for next year to include workshops for parents in working with their own children, partnering with afterschool programs to conduct Saturday sessions, and instead of offering five sessions, only three will be offered.

The Memoir Writing Workshop offered eight 2-hour sessions for eleven participants. The instructor discussed autobiographical versus memoir writing and provided lots of examples, prompts, writing exercises, opportunities for reading aloud, and editing of multiple drafts. The instructor is currently compiling participants' final work into a publication for the branch. There is a waiting list of six people for next year's offering and feedback was extremely positive.

The Stress Reduction Workshop was a successful program of mindfulness and meditation. The instructor, Bonita Jones, is working with Ms. Silva-Collins to incorporate an orientation session prior to the first workshop class to address questions and inform participants as to what they may expect. There is interest for a "graduates" monthly program and Ms. Silva-Collins informed the instructor of additional grant sources. Challenges included a leaky roof and obtaining yoga mats. The Committee felt that it was not unreasonable to require participants to bring their own mat.

Saturday Morning Piano Class was able to include everyone who was initially on the waiting list. Classes culminated in a piano recital. Ms. Silva-Collins plans to meet with the instructor to discuss ways in which class may be improved next year: including two sessions with a break in between, limiting the number of students, and incorporating a substitute teacher early on in the program to cover for any instructor absences.

Playreading Book Club was "magnificent." Together with Stress Reduction Workshop and Concept to Catwalk, these three programs were stand-outs. Four plays were discussed in each of four classes with reading, discussion by Emerson graduate students, participation, and attendance at the plays with post-discussion by producers, actors, and various stage technicians. Class size ranged from 22 to 35 participants and people attended despite severe weather challenges of this past winter. Ms. Silva-Collins attributes the success of the program to the enthusiasm of the Emerson students, the good food, the outstanding plays, the level of engagement of all participants, and email and telephone reminders to all participants. The final report for this program has not yet been submitted.

Roxbury Elder Storytelling Project: We Will Not Forget, introduced elders to the art, techniques, and experience of storytelling, and collage making. Participants bonded and students from Dudley Branch's cooking class made cookies for and attended the final event. Neighborhood members of Boston Youth Orchestra, The Phoenix Trio, provided musical interludes for the final presentation. Challenges included a lack of heat for initial sessions, reminder calls were necessary, one participant required transportation, and there was no listing of the project on the branch or BPL webpage.

Ms. Schonhart advised that the City of Boston does not turn on heat until October 15th, and to bear that in mind.

Ms. Silva-Collins reported that some instructors have inquired about storage space for materials used during classes. Mr. Knight will attend the Orientation / Technical Assistance session to explain the branch's storage policy. Additionally, she asked if someone could be available in the branch on those days that Mr. Knight is not working, to assist in accessing storage.

Ms. Silva-Collins visited The WAITT House program and reports that they are doing well. She was pleased to see so many male participants engaged and attending regularly.

Each course offering requires that an attendance sheet be prepared for each class. This aids in measuring and holding people accountable for attendance. Ms. Silva-Collins also reports that having to produce a final report is also a good tool for making decisions about going forward.

Concept to Catwalk is going very well. The instructor purchased two or three sewing machines, and others were obtained by Ms. Silva-Collins on loan. The final presentation is scheduled for the end of June and Ms. Silva-Collins will distribute details. The instructor is very serious and holds the students to exacting standards. Ms. Shaw applauded the instructor in serving as a positive and influential role model to her students.

The Committee congratulated Ms. Silva-Collins on her efforts and on her presentation.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz next reported on the FY16 budget, reviewing carry-over funding, distributions, and allocations. She explained that the fund has grown almost 11% and that the investments are doing well, yielding an FY16 distribution of \$92,194.00. Ms. Schonhart noted for the record that the Trustees voted to approve a distribution of \$92,000 (using the rounded number).

Ms. Shaw asked the Committee to reflect on and consider how to control the success of the program going forward. She explained that as the fund grows and becomes more popular, the Committee should work to differentiate between older and smaller versus newer and larger successful programs, and should work to continue promoting and supporting the creativity of all programming.

Ms. Silva-Collins stated that she wants to maximize the Fund's relationship to the Boston Public Library. For example, she asked Veronica Koven-Matasy, Dudley Branch Youth Librarian, to attend the Concept to Catwalk sessions and produce BPL programming and book selections regarding fashion. Ms. Silva-Collins would like to meet with BPL staff throughout period of programming and inform them of the types of programming that is being done so that BPL may partner or provide related opportunities. She would also like program participants to know who the BPL staff are and will encourage this type of introduction.

Ms. Silva-Collins is also considering a weighted scoring system that would provide points for an older, possibly smaller, returning successful program. She states that she has trouble providing those larger institutions who have their own financial resources, funding to provide Fellowes programming. She also asked the Committee to consider increasing the funding allocation from \$5,000 to a higher amount and stated that will pay greater attention to references going forward.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz asked if Arts Emerson was a student-run organization. Ms. Silva-Collins answered that ArtsEmerson is a theater arts program of Emerson College.

Ms. Madyun asked if Final Reports could include information related to how the instructor and class participants used the library. Ms. Schonhart suggested that Mr. Knight highlight the next round of grantees at a staff meeting, and ask library staff to consider creating related book lists, book displays, lobby displays, etc. Ms. Silva-Collins will invite branch library staff to attend the Orientation / Technical Assistance session in an effort to enhance coordination and eliminate redundancy of programming efforts.

Ms. Shaw and Ms. Schonhart pointed out to the Committee that the year after next, while the branch will be under construction, consideration will have to be given as to where to conduct various programs.

Ms. Silva-Collins will be using funds for regular advertising in The Banner.

Mr. Knight asked that grantees be reminded that they are responsible for their own photocopying and Ms. Schonhart asked that grantees budget, specifically, for their photocopy costs.

Ms. Schonhart announced that Ms. Silva-Collins' contract had been renewed and she would continue to serve as the project manager for the Fellowes Athenaeum Trust for the next fiscal year. Ms. Schonhart explained that the number of hours in the contract had been increased and payment to Ms. Siva-Collins would increase accordingly. She thanked Ms. Silva-Collins for her work in providing exciting programming.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz moved to next Agenda item: FY16 Program Goals and Priorities. Ms. Silva-Collins expressed an interest in seeing more history related programming. Ms. Arana-Ortiz described an individual currently partnering with the City of Boston teaching entrepreneurship skills to teens, and thought that the Fund should reach out to this

individual. She will provide Ms. Silva-Collins with the appropriate name and contact information.

Ms. Shaw suggested that the Fellowes get the word out – particularly to youth – as to what is available for them. She further asked the Committee to consider ways in to further promote and support younger people presenting their own programming, similar to Concept to Catwalk.

Ms. Silva-Collins will contact other community youth programs (e.g., 826 Boston) and make them aware of the Fellowes.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz pointed to the popularity of local restaurants conducting demonstrations incorporating cultural elements. Ms. Silva-Collins will reach out to local restaurants and invite them to participate. Ms. Shaw asked about agencies (e.g., the Boston Police Department) participating alongside youth in various programs.

Ms. Schonhart asked that the Fellowes look to programming that will introduce youth to a potential career path that they may not have considered or have exposure and access to. Ms. Shaw asked that the Fellowes consider promoting programming for adults on issues like finances, home buying, or other opportunities for empowerment.

Ms. Silva-Collins asked that Committee members send her their ideas and the names of individuals and organizations that she should reach out to. She reminded the Committee that sometimes agencies with their own site are hesitant to come to the Dudley Branch to offer programs.

Mr. Schonhart encouraged Ms. Silva-Collins to contact Grub Street.

Mr. Knight asked that the Committee seek the input of the Mayor's Youth Council for ideas of what youth are interested in.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz addressed the next Agenda item: Proposed Meeting Schedule, and confirmed that the next meeting would take place on Tuesday, August 11 at 1:00 pm.

At the next Agenda item: Old Business, Ms. Silva-Collins asked if the Committee would like to raise the maximum requested grant from \$5,000 to \$7,000. After discussion, the Committee decided that the determination of \$5,000 or \$7,000 would be made individually, taking into consideration the success of returning programs.

Under New Business, the Committee agreed that the issue of funding \$5,000 to the branch for the next fiscal year will be confirmed at the next meeting of the Fellowes.

Ms. Schonhart announced that the BPL has recently hired a new Youth Services Manager, Farouqua Abuzeit, and that through Ms. Abuzeit's many writing and publishing connections, she will be bringing Jacqueline Woodson, author of Brown Girl Dreaming, to the Dudley Branch in the fall. Ms. Abuzeit has been working with Mr. Knight on

logistics for this event. The event at Dudley Branch will be a culmination of a Citywide initiative encouraging children to write about their own dreams and, from the submissions, Ms. Woodson will select the top three entries.

There being no further business, the Committee adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah A. Kirrane". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Deborah A. Kirrane
Clerk of the Board of Trustees
August 11, 2015