

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

Special Meeting of the Trustees as a Corporation and Administrative Agency

Thursday, July 30, 8:30 a.m.
Boston Public Library, Commonwealth Salon
Central Library, 700 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

MINUTES

A Special 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, Boston Public Library on Thursday, July 30, 2015, at 8:30 a.m.

Present at the meeting were: Interim Chair John Hailer, Vice Chair Evelyn Arana-Ortiz, Trustees: Zamawa Arenas, John Hailer, Paul A. La Camera, and Rep. Byron Rushing. Trustee Laura DeBonis participated via telephone. Also present at the meeting were: Boston Public Library Interim President David Leonard, Clerk of the Board Deborah Kirrane, Boston Public Library staff; Corporation Counsel Caroline Driscoll, Senior Advisor to the Mayor of Boston Molly Murphy, and members of the public.

Interim Chair John Hailer presided, called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m., and addressed the Chair's Call to Order and Report. Mr. Hailer acknowledged that this was his first BPL Trustees Meeting as Interim Chair and stated that he is looking forward to working with Interim President David Leonard and fellow Trustees, and thanked everyone for their support.

Mr. Hailer addressed the Review and Approval of Minutes of the June 18, 2015 Special Trustees Meeting and, upon motion made and duly seconded, it was

VOTED: "that the Minutes of the June 18, 2015 Special Trustees Meeting be approved."

Mr. Hailer next introduced Mr. Leonard to deliver the President's Report. Mr. Leonard announced that Boston Public Library long-serving Budget and Procurement Manager, Ed Maheigan, would be retiring in August from the BPL. Mr. Leonard recognized Mr. Maheigan's more than 16-year tenure and thanked him for his exceptional service. All applauded.

Mr. Leonard next called attention to the Urban Library Council (ULC)'s Innovation Award for the BPL's Pathway to Reading Sensory Wall in the Children's Library, Central Library, which serves all children, and especially those on the autism spectrum. Mr. Leonard thanked Children's Librarian Laura Koenig and Major Projects Program Coordinator Sydney Thiel for their work in bringing the wall to life at the BPL.

Since former President Amy Ryan's departure from BPL on July 3, 2015, BPL has rolled out an interim management structure, modifying direct reports and membership of Leadership and Administrative Councils. Mr. Leonard feels that the interim organization will help to successfully manage the BPL in the coming months and position it for success in achieving its goals going forward. Mr. Leonard has been meeting with BPL managers, staff, and members of

the affiliates (Boston Public Library Foundation, Associates of the Boston Public Library, The Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, and the Citywide Friends of the BPL), as well as City of Boston staff: Molly Murphy, Senior Advisor to the Mayor, who has been assigned to serve as the BPL's liaison to City Hall, Dan Koh, Chief of Staff, Patrick Brophy, Chief of Operations, David Sweeney, Chief Financial Officer, and Julie Burros, Chief of Arts and Culture. Mr. Leonard reports that all are interested in working with the BPL to address existing challenges and support its initiatives. He further reports that relationships with the affiliates are strong. The Foundation is currently conducting a search for a new Executive Director, and the Associates have been very supportive in helping to address challenges confronting the Special Collections.

BPL will also be reaching out to the City's Office of Neighborhood Services, the new Boston Public School Superintendent, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Digital Public Library of America, and Digital Commonwealth.

Mr. Leonard stated that addressing the BPL's challenges will require substantial funding commitments and reaching out to all of the listed community partners will help the BPL succeed. In the coming months Mr. Leonard will meet with staff of all departments and visit all of the branches.

In each Trustee's packet was a compilation of press and social media activities for the month of July 2015. The positive press shows a return in the broader community of holding the BPL in high regard. The BPL will continue to highlight good news across the system, whether it is programming in the branches or advancements in digitization.

With respect to major projects, renovation of the Johnson Building continues. A recent electrical shut down was successful but distressing to staff to some extent. The BPL is within budget and timelines regarding the Central Library Renovation Project, and is looking toward a summer 2016 opening.

The Jamaica Plain Branch will close on Saturday August 1 to begin its much anticipated renovation project.

Mr. Leonard next addressed the BPL's Action Plan in response to the Chrysalis Operational and Financial Assessment. Priorities for the President's Office during the transition phase include: (1) Collections Management and Security Improvements; (2) having staff and security in place for Johnson Phase 2 completion in summer 2016; (3) supporting the presidential search process; (4) customer service remains a strong priority for the BPL and has been identified as an action item for the Library Services department, going forward; (5) the action plan will be used to prioritize systemwide activities; and (6) provide alignment between affiliates on fundraising priorities; (7) closely work with City of Boston colleagues and (8) labor leadership of both unions here at BPL; (9) the BPL will remain transparent and continue to communicate with the public especially regarding near term actions; and (9) overall remaining focused on balance of services to include education, branches, and arts and culture objectives.

Mr. Leonard next turned toward to updating the Trustees on activities of Collections and Security departments. Upon learning of the misplaced artwork this past spring, reports came to

light of other materials that may be missing. BPL management is tracking each report and investigating the disposition of each item. Some investigations are in the jurisdiction of the Boston Police Department and some are in the jurisdiction of administrative investigations. Mr. Leonard is confident that each report is being handled in the appropriate manner and will report to the Trustees at the conclusion of each investigation.

Rep. Rushing asked that Mr. Leonard explain further the role of Molly Murphy, Senior Advisor to the Mayor. Mr. Leonard stated that Ms. Murphy has been appointed the BPL's day-to-day liaison, and is positioned to answer questions related to communications, approval of positions, and joins in BPL meetings by invitation. In addition, Mr. Leonard and Ms. Murphy meet weekly. Mr. Hailer added that Ms. Murphy's position affords greater collaboration between the BPL and the Mayor's Office.

Mr. Leonard next introduced Laura Irscher, BPL Chief of Collections Strategy to provide a report on the Collections Management Action Plan.

In regard to the first action item, Ms. Irscher explained that an inventory of the Print Collection is currently underway. The BPL is collecting information (title and artist) for each item and entering same on a spreadsheet. The work is being performed by a team of approximately six interns from Simmons College and the team is devoting approximately 90 hours per week to this task. Due to a delayed start, infrastructure requirements, complexity of the collection and general staff availability, the project is running behind deadline. Ms. Irscher is confident that through the use of paid staff and the use of outside consultants, however, the deadline will be met.

In regard to cataloging the Print Collection, the work will build from the information currently being collected. Through funding from the Associates, a cataloger is currently cataloging the Merriam Collection, a subset of the Print Collection. As work continues the BPL will need to identify a system to capture the relevant data in a way that will function within the integrated library system with a structure unique to visual materials. In the meantime, spreadsheet template are being used to capture the information which can later be imported into the proper catalog system once developed.

Once the inventory is complete, the BPL will prioritize the collection based on recommendations made in the Chrysalis assessment in regard to space, organization, and access to the collection.

The second action item: Special Collections assessment was next addressed. Detailed planning for this is currently underway. The BPL is currently gathering information to be placed onto one spreadsheet. Historically, BPL's definition of "Special Collection" has varied over time and currently includes approximately 500 types of materials that have been called a "Special Collection." The BPL plans to issue a request for proposal (RFP) for a consultant to perform the assessment. The RFP and work scope will be modeled after the print project currently underway.

In response to a question by Mr. Hailer regarding acceptance of items as gifts, Ms. Irscher explained referred to the sections of BPL's Collection Development Policy which speaks to gifts

and the necessary endowment to support large gifts. The BPL has currently stopped, for the short term, accepting new collections until the proper inventory, cataloging, and assessment may be made. The Special Collections assessment will review items historically collected and what agreements were made in the past, what was asked of the BPL, were the requirements reasonable going forward, and what can the BPL do to address this.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz asked what services the consultant RFP will be looking for. Ms. Irmischer stated that the RFP will ask for consultant assistance to define the term Special Collection and how to deal with items which have, in the past, been titled Special Collection but perhaps are not, make suggestions for appropriately describing such items, recommending organization and strategic priorities and lay the groundwork for the Special Collections inventory. Any recommended changes to the Collection Development Policy, if required, will go through Committee process.

Mr. Leonard recently met with Bill Stoneman, Chair of the BPL Special Collections Committee. Mr. Stoneman and the Committee are ready to assist in this process.

Ms. Irmischer indicated that the RFP will be released on the fall. Her research indicates that there is a greater volume of work than initially expected and wants the RFP to reflect this. Mr. Leonard used the Print Collection Project as a baseline. The Print Collection assessment took approximately 12 months, and the current inventory stage, following the assessment, is taking between six and 12 months based upon the volume of items.

The third action item: retrospective conversion, was next addressed. Ms. Irmischer reminded all that retrospective conversion was the transfer of paper records to an electronic record. She reported that 18,000 cards were converted in FY2015. The plan for FY2016 is to continue to work through the research collection and focus on the special collections, music and fine arts in particular. The recently hired music curator is examining partnership opportunities with local schools and institutions for interns to assist with the preparation work necessary for the conversion.

Ms. Irmischer reviewed for the Trustees collection access protocols which have been either developed or strengthened since April 2015, including (1) a draft missing item protocol listing steps to follow if a special collections item is not found on a shelf, providing guidance as to where to look and a clear reporting structure. This protocol is still in draft form. Ms. Irmischer confirmed that access to the Special Collections vault is extremely limited the tracking of items to and from said location has been greatly increased. (2) Secure movement of prints within staff-only areas of the building protocol has been implemented, and the BPL has eliminated transfer of prints to public areas. (3) A protocol guiding the workflow of prints for digitization has been implemented, controlling movement to and from the digital lab. The protocol designates tracking at multiple points of materials leaving and returning, strict staff log-in procedures, and limits the number of rare materials moving at any one time. (4) Identifying materials in other departments to be transferred to rare books, focusing first on items in the music collections. 250,000 items have been transferred to date, and the collection continues to be evaluated.

Ms. Irmischer reported that the staff of 27 covering special collections is supplemented by a number of interns from Simmons College, working with two paid consultants. The interns possess varying levels of expertise. A paid component will attract more qualified staff to assist.

Ms. Irmischer reported that the BPL circulating collection is completely transferred to electronic records. The BPL research collection is still in the process of being transferred from manual card catalogs to electronic entries. Ms. Irmischer further reported that once converted, catalog cards are microfilmed. Mr. Leonard stated that BPL staff would report to the Trustees on exactly what happens to physical cards once they are transferred to electronic entries.

Rep. Rushing asked for an example of a similar institution that has already converted its card catalog to electronic records. He stated that the BPL is continually getting “beat up” for things that no other institution has done. He asked if the BPL was ahead of, or behind, similar institutions in terms of retrospective conversion. Is there a model institution? Is the BPL the model? Mr. Leonard stated that he would speak with New York Public Library and Harvard, to determine their retrospective conversion status. Mr. Hailer added that knowing best practices would help the BPL in speaking about this issue, and determining a correct measure of success. Ms. Arana-Ortiz added that this process would not take place overnight, and that it would take investments of time and funding. It is important to set expectations and help the public understand the scope and magnitude of the project. Ms. Fulp stated it is important to see what others have accomplished so that the BPL may establish an appropriate benchmark.

Mr. Hailer agreed that establishing a peer group rationale going forward is in the best interest of the BPL. He stressed the importance of the BPL affiliates in moving forward and for them to better understanding how they can help the BPL in determining how to best balance its mission and resources between an active public learning presence in the neighborhoods and as an archive.

Mr. Leonard introduced Paul Levasseur, BPL Manager of Security Services, to provide an update on BPL systemwide security efforts and implantation. The KCMS Security Consultant final draft report has been delivered, making key recommendations including: expanding key card access to more locations and expanding security camera coverage to 24/7 live monitoring with a control room. Live camera monitoring would be the highest cost improvement. Additional recommendations and implementations include increase use of panic buttons, expanding the number of secure collection areas, changing locks and adding key card access to additional spaces, adding cameras and motion detectors, and directing the stack alarm panel and camera feed to Municipal Protective Services.

Mr. Leonard stated that a master security plan, incorporating improvements and protocols, will be brought back to Trustees at a later meeting. The master plan will also include the precise duties and responsibilities of the new guard and security patrol service provider, G4S, whose contract begins on September 1. He further explained that the KCMS report advised BPL to distinguish between “secure” and “restricted” areas of access within buildings, and to ensure that there are no points of vulnerability along the perimeter.

The approved capital budget allows for security improvements, and the BPL has begun using these funds. Based on this funding, there may be a difference between recommended security upgrades and what can actually be implemented. At that point, a discussion with the Trustees would occur as to how to address this difference.

In regard to financial updates, Mr. Leonard reported that the City of Boston's operating budget was approved as proposed, but that the state budget was decreased in two areas. The BPL believes that this may be absorbed through utility savings based on recent energy improvements, and through salary savings. There is no change in plans with respect to operating budget. Ms. Donaghey added that while cuts had been made, Library for the Commonwealth ("LFC") has level-funded the BPL and changes are within a threshold that BPL can manage.

Ms. Donaghey next reported that bids have been received in response to the Johnson Retail Project request for proposals. She explained that the selection process is confidential and that following the award of contract, all documents will become public record. She identified William Tod McGrath as a third-party validator who will review concepts and financials of submitted bids. Ms. Arana-Ortiz asked that a statement of services be written for the third party validator.

Ms. Donaghey next provided the Trustees an update on the Norwood Storage Facility. The Department of Neighborhood Development is handling the issuance of an RFP for the sale of this property. It is estimated that it will sell for an amount between the appraised \$2.5 and \$3 million, and should be ready to be brought before the either Trustees at the September 29 meeting, or a later meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee. Funds from the sale of the property will go to the City of Boston.

Mr. Hailer updated the Trustees on the search process for a BPL President, indicating that the BPL and Trustees are working closely with the City and the Mayor's office. It is hoped that an RFP for a search firm would be in place by the beginning of September.

Prior to moving to Public Comment portion of the meeting, Mr. Hailer explained that at the conclusion of Public Comment, the Trustees would move to adjourn to Executive Session for purposes of discussing Anticipated Litigation Related to Ongoing Administrative Review and BPL Property. At Public Comment, one member of the public asked that the public be included in the search for a new BPL president, one member thanked the Trustees for renovating the JP Branch and also asked for public input in the presidential search process, a member asked that branches be remembered as part of the presidential search process, an additional member also asked for public involvement in the search process and voiced opposition to the proposed retail space in the Johnson Building, the Trustees were invited to the JP Branch groundbreaking ceremony in September by a member of the public, a member of the public mentioned staff considerations in 24/7 security camera monitoring to which Messrs. Hailer and LaCamera responded that the Trustees will always be cognizant of dignity and privacy in striking an appropriate balance regarding security so that staff and public feel comfortable and welcome.

A roll call vote to move the meeting to Executive Session was taken. Each Trustee voted affirmatively. The public meeting was adjourned and the Trustees moved into Executive Session at 9:45 a.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah A. Kirrane". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deborah A. Kirrane
Clerk of the Board