

**PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Minutes of Meeting
February 2, 2009**

The meeting was called to order by Board President Martha Cavanaugh at 7:30 pm.

As there was a quorum present, the roll call was taken:

Present

Darryl Ann McCarthy
Christopher Burbridge
David Hallinan
Maria Dakos
Don McAllister
Robert Walsh
Rosemary O'Brien
Nancy Sue Keller
Jerry Bellew
Martha Cavanaugh

Absent

Ted Quinn
Margaret Tierney

Also present was Library Director Martha Holden, Reference Librarian Gwen Charter and recording secretary Allison Lytle.

A **MOTION** was made by David Hallinan calling for the suspension of the rules of the Board in order to hear from Library employee Gwen Charter. The motion was seconded by Don McAllister.

All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

President Martha Cavanaugh introduced Reference Librarian Gwen Charter who was present at the meeting to discuss her request discussed at the previous meeting for an extended vacation leave.

Ms. Charter stated that last month she had submitted a request to the Board for a six week leave which included three weeks of paid vacation and three weeks of unpaid leave. Ms. Charter stated that at the time she made her request, she did not realize she had already accrued five weeks of vacation and, should she modify her request, she would not need to take any time off without pay. Ms. Charter stated she would like to request four weeks vacation (in total), rather than her previous request of three weeks vacation and three weeks unpaid leave. Ms. Charter stated that she felt a four week vacation was appropriate as she had been at the Library for over ten and a half years and did receive a total of four weeks vacation per year. Ms. Charter explained that she already had five weeks of vacation available to her and therefore would not need to take any time without pay. Ms. Charter stated that she would like the extended vacation as she had rented a place in Florida for a month.

President Cavanaugh thanked Ms. Charter for appearing before the Board to present her request. President Cavanaugh stated that the Board had carefully considered Ms. Charter's original request and spent quite a bit of time discussing it. President Cavanaugh stated that the Board felt they needed to balance the need of Ms. Charter and the need of the other staff members who would be covering her responsibilities during that time. President Cavanaugh stated the Board was concerned that during Ms. Charter's leave, there would be a problem keeping that key position staffed, especially given the time of year and the possibility of illness during that time period, which was why the Board approved a three week vacation, rather than the six weeks requested. President Cavanaugh stated those issues continued to be a concern with the revised request of a four week leave.

Trustee McAllister stated he agreed that the main concern of the Board was the strain on the staff and the possible disruption of service to the public.

President Cavanaugh thanked Ms. Charter for her time and stated the Board would discuss her revised request during the normal business of the Board.

Ms. Charter thanked the Board for their time and consideration.

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to resume the normal rules of the Board. The motion was seconded by David Hallinan. A vote was taken.

All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

Approval of minutes from previous meeting

President Cavanaugh called for a discussion on the minutes from the January 14, 2009 meeting. President Cavanaugh noted that Trustee McAllister's name was spelled incorrectly on page two of the minutes. The recording secretary noted that correction.

As there were no additional changes or corrections to the minutes, a **MOTION** was made by Christopher Burbridge to accept the minutes from the January 14, 2009 meeting as amended. The motion was seconded by Don McAllister. A vote was taken.

All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved

Receipt of Communications

President Cavanaugh reported the Board received a thank you note from Merritt Kirkpatrick, curator at the George Peabody House Museum, for the framed portrait of Queen Victoria that the Trustees donated to the GPHM.

Report of the Library Director

Staffing: Director Holden reported the negotiations with the Librarians' Union had concluded. Director Holden reported the Library hoped to have a signed Agreement within the next several days.

Buildings & Grounds: Director Holden stated that the Library's HVAC project was submitted as part of the Commonwealth's share of the federal economic stimulus recovery package, as discussed at the previous meeting. Director Holden stated that the request from the Commonwealth was for proposals for projects that would be "shovel-ready" within 180 days. Director Holden reported the initial response from the Commonwealth was positive for several of the projects put forth by the City, including the Library's proposal. Director Holden stated she was hopeful that the Library would have a response within the next several weeks.

Director Holden reported that the capital improvement projects that were submitted in 2008 might be postponed for the foreseeable future because of budgetary concerns.

Director Holden reported that because of the numerous snow storms that season, the custodians had worked hard to keep the Library walks as free of snow and ice as possible. The freeze/thaw cycle had made it extremely difficult that year, and the previous week's rainstorm only complicated the situation. Director Holden reported the Library had to order another pallet of ice melt this past week and would keep its eyes on the forecast for the next day's predicted snow event. Director Holden stated that, as reported last month, the overtime budget was significantly (negatively) impacted by the storms.

Grants: Director Holden reported she and Young Adult Librarian Melissa Rauseo met with representatives from the Essex County Women's Fund to discuss funding for a proposed program called "Toolkit for Tomorrow's Jobs", a career education program for teens at the Library. Ms. Rauseo also received \$500 from the National Education Association for WORM (Words Open Readers Minds). WORM would create reading mentorships between young adults (mostly members of Young Adult Klatsch (YAK) and Peabody Youth Service Committee (PYSC)) and the children living at the Inn Transition in Peabody. Director Holden reported "Big Worms" (the Young Adults) would select books to read with their "Little Worms" and design fun activities to do together related to their book(s). Big Worms would also plan a final "Book Ball" at the end of six weeks. Director Holden reported the project would begin on Nat'l Endowment for the Arts Read Across American Day (3/2/09) and would end on Global Youth Service Day (4/26/09). Director Holden reported the grant provided \$500 for project related expenses, including books, refreshments and t-shirts for all participants.

Director Holden reported that in January, the Library started implementing the "Active PBD" Libraries for the Future (LFF) grant that would run for one year. Director Holden reported the grant covered programs for all ages at all three Library locations. Director Holden stated the programs were designed to encourage healthful and fit lifestyles for

people in Peabody. Adult Services Librarian Kelley Rae Unger also secured \$2,000 in LFF funding, administered by NMRLS, to run a series of Explorers programs in conjunction with Salem State College.

Director Holden reported upcoming programs in February included the following:

- Monday, February 9th, 7pm – “The Chinese Healing Arts of Taijiquan and Qigong.”
- Tuesday, February 17th, 7pm – “Eat Locally with Community Supported Agriculture.”
- Thursday, February 19th, 10am – “Stamping” with Evelyn Rauseo.
- Monday, February 23rd, 7pm – Author Ruth Nemzoff.
- Monday, February 9th & 23rd – Young Adult Team Community Health Initiative at the Main Library.
- Wednesday, February 4th, 11th & 25th – Young Adult Studio 82 Art Club at the Main Library.
- Wednesdays in February – Storytime at the West Branch Library.
- Wednesday mornings in February – “We’re Game!” at the West Branch Library.
- Thursday, February 12th, 1:30pm – “Bridging the Gap” (for developmentally disabled patrons) at the South Branch Library.
- Monday through Thursday, February 2nd – 12th – Daily storytimes for children at the Main Library.
- AARP Tax Assistance (by appointment) at all three locations from the first week in February through April 15th.

Budget: Director Holden reported she had reports available for the review of the Trustees. Director Holden stated the Library was slightly above its’ target for that point in the fiscal year. The wage/salary portion of the budget would balance out by the end of the year because of the configuration of pay periods in the year as there were fewer in the second half.

Director Holden reported the Library’s State Aid application was approved at the December meeting of the Board of Library Commissioners. Disbursements were being made in two parts that fiscal year – the first installment was received in December and the second installment was expected to be paid in full in the spring. Director Holden reported that Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick had proposed a nearly 15% cut in state aid to public libraries for Fiscal Year 10. Director Holden stated that the proposed cut, compounded with the City’s overall reduction in FY10 state aid relief would have a dramatic impact on the Library’s budget and operations for next year.

Director Holden reported mid-year reductions in state aid to cities and town had Peabody struggling to cover a deficit of over \$800,000. The Mayor anticipated that with some belt-tightening and opt-in wage reduction initiatives, Peabody should survive FY09 without layoffs. Director Holden stated, however, the FY10 was not as optimistic. Director Holden reported that department heads would receive FY10 budget instructions from the Mayor in February. At that time, Director Holden stated she would make the Trustees aware of the extent to which the Library’s budget would be trimmed so that the

Board could plan for next year with the best interests of public service and efficiency in mind.

The Board discussed the possible upcoming budgetary issues and what the Library might consider doing in response to the cuts. The Board discussed how the Library cut hours in 2003 in response to budgetary issues and was never able to add those hours back into operation.

In response to a question from the Board, Director Holden explained that the Library had decided to close on Friday afternoons rather than Sundays as Friday afternoons were less busy as the students didn't come in after school on Fridays as they did on other weekdays. Also, Sunday was one of the only parent/child days and the Library was very hesitant to close one of the only parent/child days.

President Cavanaugh suggested that the Library consider closing earlier during the week, rather than closing an afternoon or a weekend day, should such cuts become necessary. Director Holden stated she did think it was important to consider such a solution.

Trustee McAllister stated he felt it was important that should the Library need to make changes in the hours or cuts of that manner, the Library make the changes across the branches so that each branch is affected equally. Director Holden stated that she agreed that any cuts made needed to be equitable.

In response to a question from the Board, Director Holden stated that 100% of the programming funding came from grants that the Library staff worked hard to obtain. None of the programming funding came from the operations budget.

Director Holden stated that about half of the people using the Library computers in the morning were there working on resumes. In response to that need, the Library would be setting up resume workshops.

Reminder: Director Holden reminded the Board that the wreath laying ceremony to commemorate the 214th Birthday of George Peabody would be held on February 14th at 11am at Harmony Grove Cemetery. The ceremony would be followed by birthday cake at the George Peabody House Museum. Director Holden stated Trustee Don McAllister would provide the wreath and hopefully Ted Quinn would be able to arrange for a bagpiper. The GPHM staff would provide refreshments for the celebration. Director Holden stated that if there was a snow emergency, she would leave a postponement message on the Library's answering machine. The snow date was February 21st.

Request for Funds: Director Holden stated she was requesting authorization to spend \$800 from the Community House Fund to purchase a storytime rug for the Lower Level and a shelving unit for Young Adult paperbacks.

Miscellaneous: Director Holden stated she was planning to take a vacation the week of February 16th – February 20th.

As there were no additional questions from the Board, a **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to accept the Director's Report as presented. The motion was seconded by David Hallinan. A vote was taken.

All in favor: Yes. Any opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

Report of Committees

President Cavanaugh provided the Board with a draft of the list of the committee assignments for the year. President Cavanaugh requested that should anyone have any changes or questions, please let her know.

AUDUBON PRINTS: Committee Chair Jerry Bellew stated there was no new report from the committee.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: Committee Chair Christopher Burbridge stated there was nothing new to report in addition to the report given by the Library Director.

FINANCE: Committee Chair Don McAllister stated there was no new report from the committee in addition to the report given by the Library Director.

PERSONNEL: Committee Chair Nancy Sue Keller stated there was no new report from the committee in addition to the report given by the Library Director.

FUNDRAISING: Committee Chair Maria Dakos stated there was no new report from the Committee.

FUTURE PLANNING: Committee Chair Rosemary O'Brien stated there was no new report from the committee.

LIAISON TO THE FRIENDS OF THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY: Liaison Rosemary O'Brien state there was nothing new to report.

LIAISON TO THE PEABODY HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Liaison Jerry reported he was doing some research regarding the naming of Washington Street in Peabody to see if it was named after President Washington following a visit to the area.

LIAISON TO THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY FOUNDATION: Liaison Don McAllister reported the Foundation had recently held a meeting but, unfortunately, there was not a quorum present and therefore official business could not be conducted. Trustee McAllister stated the Foundation did hold an informational meeting and continued to discuss ways to increase fundraising efforts for the Library, including an expansion of the *Starry, Starry Night* fundraiser.

POLICY REVIEW: Committee Chair Don McAllister stated the Policy Review Committee had met earlier that evening to review the changes to the Material Circulation Policy that were proposed, the information for which was provided at the last Trustees Meeting. Trustee McAllister reported that the changes would increase the loan period on audiobooks, which was seen as appropriate as the demand for the audiobooks was not as great as it had been in the past. The second change to the policy that was proposed was a shortening of the borrowing period for new books. Trustee McAllister stated the Library proposed to shorten that borrowing period in order to keep a better stock on the new releases in order to get the new release into the hands of more patrons. Trustee McAllister reported it was the unanimous recommendation of the Policy Review committee to approve the changes to the policy recommended by Director Holden. Trustee McAllister reported he would be making a motion during the New Business of the Board to approve the changes as discussed.

SPECIAL EVENTS: Committee Chair Darryl Ann McCarthy stated there was nothing new to report from the committee.

A **MOTION** was made by David Hallinan to accept the reports of the Committees as presented. The motion was seconded by Nancy Sue Keller. A vote was taken.

All in favor: Yes. Any opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

Unfinished Business

The Board discussed the amendment made by Reference Librarian Gwen Charter to her original vacation request as presented earlier at the meeting. Ms. Charter wished to amend her request and was now seeking four weeks paid vacation; the Board had already approved a three week paid vacation in response to her initial request of a six week leave.

In response to a question from the Board, Director Holden stated that a vacation of one or two weeks was the usual request and requests for longer periods were subject to the approval of management based on staffing needs. Director Holden stated that the Mayor had final approval on any vacation requests longer than two weeks. Director Holden stated that when a vacation was taken that was longer than two weeks; it was difficult on the staff and had an impact on them. Director Holden stated that in her time, she had never dealt with a request over three weeks and, when she had received a request for three weeks, she sought the approval of the Board.

The Board discussed the hardship that a vacation of four weeks would place on the staff, particularly given that Ms. Charter's position was a key position. The Board discussed its concern for the possible disruption of public service and disruption to the staff that would be covering for Ms. Charter during that extended time. The Board discussed the impact that such a lengthy leave would have on a staff of that size, particularly given Ms. Charter's position at the Library. The Board also expressed concern over setting a precedent by granting a request of that length.

A **MOTION** was made by Nancy Sue Keller to deny the request for reconsideration of one additional week of vacation made by Gwen Charter. The motion was seconded by Don McAllister. A roll call vote was taken:

Trustee	Vote
Darryl Ann McCarthy	No
Christopher Burbridge	Yes
David Hallinan	Yes
Maria Dakos	Yes
Don McAllister	Yes
Robert Walsh	Yes
Rosemary O'Brien	Yes
Nancy Sue Keller	Yes
Jerry Bellew	Yes
Martha Cavanaugh	Yes

The motion was approved by a vote of 9 to 1.

As the above motion was approved, the request of a revision to the previously approved vacation of Gwen Charter was denied.

New Business

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to approve the expenditure of up to \$800.00 from the Community House Fund for the purchase of a storytime rug for the Lower Level and a shelving unit for the Young Adult paperbacks. The motion was seconded by David Hallinan. A vote was taken.

All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

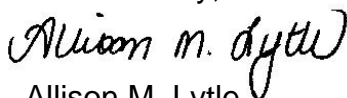
Trustee Nancy Sue Keller stated that she was a helper in her daughter's Girl Scout Troop and their service was to help get the word out about the Library's programs and services. Trustee Keller stated she just wanted to make the Library aware of the efforts that would be taking place that involved the Library.

As there was no additional business to come before the Board, a **MOTION** to adjourn was made by David Hallinan and seconded by Nancy Sue Keller. A vote was taken.

All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm.

Submitted by,



Allison M. Lytle
Recording Secretary