

**PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Minutes of Meeting  
February 5, 2018**

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The meeting was called to order by President Stephanie Najjar at 7:30pm. President Najjar noted the meeting was being recorded by Recording Secretary Allison Lytle

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

**Present**

Richard Shruhan  
Anne Quinn  
Don McAllister  
Kate O'Brien  
Frances Gallugi  
Stephanie Najjar  
Dianne Caputo  
Thomas Pappas  
Wes Merrill

**Absent**

Margaret Tierney  
Jean Ahearn

President Najjar reported that new elected Trustee Sandra Fecteau's father had passed away which was why she had been out of town. She would be returning to the area shortly and would be sworn in upon her return.

**Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting**

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2018 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Richard Shruhan. A vote was taken.

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

**Receipt of Communications**

President Najjar stated there was no communication on which to report.

**Director's Report**

**Staffing:** Library Director Melissa Robinson reported Cate Merlin had returned from leave that day, February 5<sup>th</sup>. Director Robinson stated that with her return, the Information Desk was once again fully staffed. The medical leaves that had been ongoing over the past six months had required a great deal of flexibility and sacrifice from staff at all levels. Director Robinson reported many staff worked extra shifts, including weekend hours. Director Robinson stated that at the department head level, Sara Kelso and Kelley Unger assumed many extra responsibilities to ensure that the

Reference and Teen Departments continued to offer excellent service to patrons despite low staffing levels.

Director Robinson reported the personnel issue she informed the Trustees about in January had been resolved. South Branch Library Aide Brian Donnegan resigned as of February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Director Robinson reported Main Library Aide Priscilla Lavoie had informed the Library of her intention to retire. She was working with Assistant Director Guyote to time her departure so that it caused as little disruption to the Library as possible. Director Robinson reported Teen Library Aide Rebecca Goode had also tendered her resignation. Her last day would be February 13<sup>th</sup>.

Director Robinson stated she had submitted the paperwork for all three of those vacancies to the City.

#### Buildings & Grounds:

- Huntington Control Lawsuit: The trial date for the lawsuit with Huntington Controls had been postponed. The new trial date was in June.
- BMS conversion: Viking Controls began onsite work on January 18<sup>th</sup>. They had been on site for two days. The hot water and chiller systems, including the boiler, had been switched to the new controller, pending full operation. For the moment, the old BMS system was still running all systems.
- Elevator: Director Robinson spoke with City Elevator regarding the issue of low oil levels. City Elevator believed the issue was not an oil leak, but rather that the scavenger pump needed replacement. The Library would be acting upon their recommendation to replace that pump.
- At the advice of the Director of Facilities, Limbach rewired the heating and cooling units at the South Branch. The rewiring was necessary to be compatible with the updated thermostats they installed. Previously, the units were on two separate thermostats, but they were now connected to just one. That should cut down on energy use and extend the life of the equipment. That work was just done last Friday, but staff reported seeing a tremendous difference in terms of the community room's temperature.
- A representative from Saulnier Floor visited the Library to inspect the floor in the Sutton Room and prepare a quote for its cleaning and/or refinishing. Saulnier Floor was the company that did the original floor work on the Sutton Room. The timing of that project would depend on the cost associated with the work.
- Director Robinson submitted a 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan to the City. A copy of the plan was available for the Trustees' review.

Space Reorganization: Director Robinson reported that after receiving continued input from staff and reviewing the costs associated with the plan to reorganize the Main Library, they had decided to approach the move in a more gradual manner. Rather than completing all three phases (moving computers, moving fiction collections and moving the Children's Room) over the course of just a few months, they planned to spread the plan out over a longer timeline. Director Robinson stated that decision would conserve both the Library's financial and personnel resources in such a way that they would end up with a better final outcome. Director Robinson stated they would focus that spring on

the Main Reading Room. They would be redesigning the floor plan to accommodate more books while still keeping public computers on the first floor. They would create space for those collections by shrinking one staff desk, coming up with a new magazine shelving scheme, weeding the Reference collection and moving other collections to other places. Director Robinson reported the first priority was to bring large print collections downstairs. They also would bring other fiction or non-fiction collections down as the remaining space permitted and would put as many collections as possible on mobile shelving. Director Robinson stated she would have a floor plan for the Main Room at the March meeting for the Trustees' review.

Director Robinson reported they would also move ahead with the plan to change the way they staffed desks. Director Robinson explained that while there would still be two desks in the Main Room, one would be the primary Public Service Desk and the other would be a much smaller Tech Help Desk. While circulation, reader's advisory and basic information requests were intended to be handled by the Public Service Desk and tech help questions to be handled by that desk, the overarching goal would be for the Library's patrons to get answers to most of their questions at whatever desk they approached.

Director Robinson reported the plan change meant that in the short-term the Children's Library did not gain a larger space and they also did not gain the basement level as a programming room. Head of Children's Services, Al Hayden, and Director Robinson were planning some changes to their existing floor plan and aesthetics to better utilize their current space.

In response to a question from the Board, Director Robinson stated the circulation desk was going to stay where it currently was located and they hoped to use the information desk as part of the new tech help desk. The Library would be working with the computer rotation plan that was drafted when they purchased. Computers were rotated throughout the Library according to the plan. Director Robinson also confirmed that the teen room would stay in the same location and they would develop quiet reading areas but they would be in different locations than currently situated. Director Robinson stated she could only speculate as to why self-check out wasn't used previously when it was located in the Children's Room but she felt it was worth a second try in the new location.

*Budget:* Director Robinson provided the Board with an updated budget for their review.

*Programs/Activities:* Director Robinson reported the Library was participating in the annual pajama drive sponsored by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Boston Bruins from February 1<sup>st</sup> – March 15<sup>th</sup>. Those pajamas were distributed to babies, children and teens served by the Department of Youth and Families and the non-profit organization Cradles to Crayons.

Director Robinson reported that on February 6<sup>th</sup> the West Branch Library was hosting a lecture and slide show on the life and art of Georgia O'Keefe. They expected a good turnout based on the current interest in the exhibit of Ms. O'Keefe's artwork that was currently at the Peabody Essex Museum.

Director Robinson reported the second annual PILCon comic book convention would take place on Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. Director Robinson stated that after the success of last year's event, with over 250 attendees, library staff was planning to expand programming on that day, including offering more programming for children.

Director Robinson reported Community Relations and Public Programming Librarian, Kelley Unger, was offering a new class in the Creativity Lab that month: Embroidery for Book Lovers, which would teach participants basic embroidery skills that they could use to create frameable artwork featuring favorite quotes from literature, along with a bit of decorative embellishment.

On February 27<sup>th</sup>, the South Branch was offering an art class on using pastels to create water lily paintings inspired by Monet.

The Library's annual Food for Fines program to benefit Haven from Hunger would run from February 15 – March 15 that year. Patrons who donated non-perishable food items would have their overdue fines on Peabody-owned items forgiven.

Archives: Director Robinson reported that as directed by the Board the previous month, she spoke with Archivist Erik Bauer about approaching the Peabody Essex Museum about storing some Peabody related documents in the Library's archives when they moved their local history collection to Rowley. Director Robinson stated that she and Mr. Bauer were in agreement that the type of loan agreement was, unfortunately, not feasible. Director Robinson explained the Library's archives did not have the space, security, or appropriate climate controls to store the types of materials owned by the PEM. Additionally, any loan of historical documents from PEM would require significant additional insurance coverage, which would be well beyond their budgetary capabilities.

Director Robinson reported the Library received two responses to their request for bids for the 1,700 books from the Sutton Room collection stored in the basement of the Library. Brattle Books and G.S. McManus submitted a combined bid of \$125,000. Dewolfe and Wood submitted a bid of \$35,000. Director Robinson reported the bids were higher than the expected because two volumes were deemed especially valuable: *The Yellowstone National Park and the Mountain...* by F.V. Hayden and *Algeria and Tunis Painted and Described* by Frances Nesbitt. All three book sellers were of the opinion that the other books had little market value. Director Robinson stated she confirmed again with the City Solicitor that there were no legal barriers to the sale of those books. Director Robinson recommended that the Board vote to accept the bid offered by Brattle Books and G.S. McManus and that the Board specify that those funds were to be placed in a restricted account to be used for acquisitions, preservation or restoration projects associated with the Sutton Room and Local History Department.

Other: Director Robinson reported that year's George Peabody Medal Awards Ceremony would take place on Wednesday, May 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm. The Peabody High School Full House Ensemble was booked to perform at the event.

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister accept he report of the Library Director as presented. The motion was seconded by Wes Merrill. A vote was taken.

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

### **Reports of the Committees**

**BUILDINGS & GROUNDS:** Committee Chair Wes Merrill stated there was nothing to report in additional to the report provided by the Library Director.

**AUDUBON PRINTS:** Committee Chair Richard Shruhan stated there was no new report from the Committee.

**PERSONNEL:** Committee Chair Don McAllister stated there was nothing to report in addition to the report provided by the Library Director.

**POLICIES:** As Committee Chair Jean Ahearn was absent, there was no new report from the Committee.

**LIAISON TO THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY FOUNDATION:** Liaison Anne Quinn reported Reported that as of January 10, 2018, the Foundation had a balance of approximately \$48,500. They had discussed possibly reestablishing their Investment Committee to discuss investing a portion of the funds.

Trustee Quinn reported they held a meeting of the Special Events Planning Committee on January 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss future fundraising events but unfortunately only five people attended. Trustee Quinn stated that in order for them to be successful in planning some of the larger scale events of which they are speaking, they would need more people to pitch in and help.

Trustee Quinn reported they were planning a floral arranging event in May which would be held at the West Branch Library. The event was entitled “Novel Arrangements” (name courtesy of Don McAllister) and would involve participants making their own floral arrangements which they could take home. Trustee Quinn reported Foundation Director Martha Holden had made arrangements with Evans Flowers to provide flowers at low cost and a free instructor. Trustee Quinn stated more details would follow.

Trustee Quinn stated the Committee had also discussed possibly trying to capitalize on the PBS Series *Victoria* and somehow tie that in to the Library’s picture of the Queen. One possibility which was discussed was holding a high tea in late summer or early September.

Trustee Quinn reported they continued to discuss holding a period dinner in the spring of 2019. They had begun to speak with some chefs about the menu. Trustee Quinn circulated a sample menu from one of the dinners for the Trustees’ information. Trustee Quinn stated they would need some large sponsors in order to succeed with an event of that scope and therefore needed more active participation from the Foundation members, or anyone else who would be interested in volunteering their time. Trustee Quinn stated that should any Board of Trustees’ member be interested in participating in

developing these fundraising events, they were welcome to attend the Committee meetings at any time. The next planning meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. Trustee Quinn stated they had a large list of action items and would welcome anyone who wished to attend or if they knew anyone who would be interested in participating in the planning.

**LIAISON TO THE FRIENDS OF THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY:** Liaison Dianne Caputo stated there was nothing new on which to report.

**LIAISON TO THE PEABODY HISTORICAL SOCIETY:** Liaison Tom Pappas stated that the Historical Society held their meetings on the same day and time as the Trustees' meeting so he was unable to attend. Trustee Pappas stated that he did try to reach out to them over the phone and spoke with Ann Birkner. Ms. Birkner sent him information on the HS's next event and asked him to share it with the Board. The Historical Society would be hosting a lecture at the Felton-Smith Historic Site on Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. The lecture, entitled "Finding My Irish Roots" would be held by genealogist and historian Ellen Alden who would speak about her genealogical journey.

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to accept the committee reports as presented. The motion was seconded Richard Shruhan. A vote was taken.

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

### **Old Business**

President Najjar reported the Trustees' would host George Peabody's birthday event on Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup> at 11am in the Sutton Room. President Najjar requested Library Director Melissa Robinson invite the elected officials in the City as they had in year's past. They would have tea, coffee and cake. Director Robinson agreed to order the cake from the bakery and President Najjar stated she would look into ordering the wreath.

President Najjar reported that Library Trustee Margaret Tierney requested the Board discuss compensating the photographer who took the Board photos in December. The Board discussed the issue prior to the work and she had stated that she would take the photos free of charge. Trustee Frances Gallugi stated she knew the photographer personally and stated she attends many of the events in Peabody and takes photos for the City and does not look to be reimbursed. The Board agreed it was not necessary to go back and revisit the issue as she did not wish to be compensated.

President Najjar stated she spoke with Mary Bellevance from the Mayor's office about having a line item from which they could pay for certain small expenses such as the gifts for departing Trustees as discussed at the previous meeting. President Najjar reported she was looking into the issue.

### **New Business**

President Najjar reported that Steve Howlett, former Chief Executive Officer of the Peabody Trust in London, was recently bestowed the honor of Commander of the British Empire. President Najjar stated that where they had a good relationship with

him, she felt it would be appropriate for the Board to send him a letter congratulating him on the honor. The Board agreed. Trustee Anne Quinn agreed to draft the letter for the Board's approval.

A **MOTION** was made by Richard Shruhan to authorize the Library to accept the bid of \$125,000 submitted by Brattle Books and G.S. McManus for the purchase of the archived books from the Sutton Room collection. Further, the Board requests the funds should be placed in a restricted account as described by the Library Director. The motion was seconded by Don McAllister. A vote was taken.

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

As there was no additional business to come before the Board, a **MOTION** to adjourn was made by Don McAllister. The motion was seconded by Richard Shruhan. A vote was taken.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.

Submitted by,

Allison M. Lytle  
Recording Secretary