

PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of Meeting  
October 1, 2018

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The meeting was called to order by President Stephanie Najjar at 7:00pm. 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  
Stephanie Najjar  
Dianne Caputo  
Jean Ahearn  
Sandra Fecteau  
Thomas Pappas  
Frances Bisazza-Gallugi  
Wes Merrill

**Absent**

Margaret Tierney  
Thomas Pappas  
Kate O'Brien

President Najjar reported Trustee Thomas Pappas unfortunately had a work obligation so he was unable to attend and let her know prior to the meeting.

**Approval of the minutes from the September 11, 2018 meeting**

Trustee Anne Quinn requested a change to the following sentence on Page 5 of the minutes under the Director's Report on the Audubon Prints:

*Director Robinson reported the full exhibit would be shown at three venues: Princeton, the Peabody Essex Museum and the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Arkansas, but their Audubon print would only be displayed at the last two venues.*

Trustee Quinn stated that she felt the use of the word "their" made it unclear as to whose Audubon Print was being referenced.

The Recording Secretary stated she would change the wording to read: "...The Library's Audubon Print would only be displayed at the last two venues."

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2018 meeting as amended. The motion was seconded by Wes Merrill. A vote was taken.

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

## **Receipt of Communications**

President Najjar stated that there were no communications on which to report.

## **Report of the Library Director**

*Staffing:* Library Director Melissa Robinson reported that Cate Merlin began her responsibilities as the Senior Public Services Librarian as of Monday, September 17<sup>th</sup>.

Director Robinson reported the Library had received 11 applications to date for the Senior Teen Services and Special Projects Librarian. Director Robinson reported they were conducting interviews that week for the position.

Director Robinson reported Roshan Mahato had accepted a position as a library aide at the Public Service Desk; he would begin work on Tuesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Former West Branch page, Rhiannon Anderson had accepted the position of library aide at the South Branch and she would begin work on October 9<sup>th</sup>. Director Robinson reported library aide Abbey Barre resigned in September to accept a job at an academic library; her last day was September 29<sup>th</sup>. The job was currently posted and they hoped to complete the interviews and make a job offer quickly. Director Robinson stated that the recent high turnover rate for staff on the Public Service Desk and the pending full-time retirement are making coverage for that desk very challenging.

Director Robinson reported a job offer had been made and accepted by a candidate for the vacant West Branch page position. A start date would be scheduled once all the paperwork was completed. Director Robinson reported interviews were still being conducted for the vacant page position at the Main Library. Director Robinson reported South Branch library page Erin Rooney had resigned and her last day was October 4<sup>th</sup>. Director Robinson would start the process to hire for the position that week.

Director Robinson reported the Library's next all-staff meeting and training was scheduled for September 19<sup>th</sup> from 9am-11am. The anticipated topic of the training would be recent updates to the Library's electronic collections. As a result of the meeting, the Main Library would be closed from 9am-11am and the branches would be closed from 9am-12noon on that day.

Director Robinson reported Peabody police officer Mark Saia would be conducting active shooter training for library staff on Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup>.

President Najjar inquired as to whether or not the active shooter training was required due to the public nature of the building. Director Robinson stated it was not required but several staff had requested it and it did seem like a smart training to hold. Trustee Shruhan stated he held active shooter trainings in the past and inquired as to whether or not he could attend the upcoming one at the Library. Director Robinson stated she would sign him up for one of the sessions.

Director Robinson reported the collective bargaining process for the new librarian contract was now underway.

**Buildings & Grounds:** Director Robinson reported the Library had just received three quotes for the replacement of one of the South Branch condenser units when the second one failed. Director Robinson was now collecting revised quotes to replace both units. Director Robinson reported the energy efficiency grant the Library still had funds in should still be able to cover the cost.

Director Robinson reported they were awaiting delivery of the windows and the PTAC heating/air conditioning units to begin work on those two projects at the West Branch.

**Trusts:** Director Robinson reported City Treasurer Julie Daigle provided her with the following information regarding the trust fund investments: The Library's trust funds were pooled with other City trusts, scholarships, Community Development Authority funds and Community Preservation Funds. All of those funds were diversely invested. Director Robinson reported right now the funds were in: Apple, AT&T, Bank of America, Baxter Intl., California Resources Corp., Citigroup, Dowdupont, Exxon Mobil, Fifth Third Bancorp, General Electric, General Motors, Occidental Petroleum, Verizon Communications & Viacom; and a large portion was in US Treasury Bills. Director Robinson reported when bonds or other investments matured, the Treasurer worked with the City's financial advisor to project if they should reinvest long or short-term based on future funding needs for liquidity.

Director Robinson reported the City's financial advisor of over 20 years, Rich Rogers of LPL Financial, had confirmed that he would be at the next Board of Trustees meeting on Monday, November 5<sup>th</sup> to speak with the Trustees and answer any questions they had. Mr. Rogers would speak about unrealized gains since the City recently converted from cost to market basis.

**Programs/Activities:** Director Robinson reported on Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, Archivist Erik Bauer conducted two art and history tours of the Library as part of the Essex County annual Trails & Sails event; 16 people attended the tours.

Director Robinson reported Coordinated Family and Child Engagement of the North Shore was partnering with the Children's Department to offer literacy-based playgroups at the Main Library on Friday mornings that fall. CFCE offered similar groups at the West Branch on Monday mornings. That addition to these children's programs meant there was now a program for babies, toddlers or preschoolers every weekday morning at the Main Library.

Director Robinson reported the South Branch was hosting an afterhours mystery dinner party on Friday, October 12<sup>th</sup> from 5-8pm. The event was fully booked and had generated a lot of enthusiasm. Director Robinson reported Senior Branch Librarian Morgan Yeo and a library aide would be staffing the event.

Director Robinson reported the Library was working with the Peabody Cultural Collaborative and the Community Development Department on a temporary pop-up children's museum called CuriousCity that would be open at the George Peabody House from March to June of 2019. As a member of the Peabody Cultural Collaborative, the Library would be assisting with the planning of the museum. Specifically, they were coordinating a play-based exhibit that revolved around world

folktales, puppets and storytelling. After the pop-up museum was completed, the finished exhibit would be permanently housed at the Library. Director Robinson reported that additionally the Library staff would be assisting with literacy-based programming at the museum as a form of community outreach.

Trustee Quinn stated she thought there had been talk previously about developing a children's museum in the City. Director Robinson stated that the pop-up children's museum would serve a proof of concept to show that people would be interested in a children's museum and that the concept was viable. It would offer an opportunity to collect feedback on the concept as well.

Director Robinson stated that after the Board approved moving forward with the loan of the Audubon print to Princeton University, the Curator of American Art from the Peabody Essex Museum went to the Library to view the *Carolina Parakeet*. Director Robinson reported she took photos and notes on the Print's condition and measured it for framing. She would request that Princeton or PEM assume the cost of appropriately framing the print to ensure proper display and safe transportation at PEM and the Crystal Bridges Museum. Director Robinson reported she confirmed with her that PEM would send a professional art handler to crate and transport the print in January. Archivist Erik Bauer had arranged for an art appraiser from Kaminski Auctions in Beverly to perform an insurance appraisal on Wednesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>. The cost of the appraisal would be \$500.

Other: Director Robinson reported over the summer, Louis Zirin, a regular library patron, contacted the Library to volunteer to build some bookcases for new adult books at the West Branch Library. Mr. Zirin felt that the existing cases were too low for easy browsing, especially for patrons with limited mobility. Director Robinson reported that during the long-range planning process, the Library had received quite a few similar comments. As such, Senior Branch Librarian, Linda Cappabianca and Director Robinson gratefully accepted his offer. Director Robinson reported Mr. Zirin and his son constructed six small bookcases that were connected together and now held all of the West Branch's new adult books. Director Robinson reported that at Mr. Zirin's request, the Library added a plaque to the area in memory of Mr. Zirin's wife and last Thursday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, they held a small ceremony at the West to dedicate the cases. Director Robinson reported that West Branch staff have stated patrons were very grateful and pleased with the new shelving.

Trustee Quinn stated she thought a thank you should be sent to Mr. Zirin on behalf of the Board. Director Robinson stated she would draft a thank you.

A **MOTION** was made by Richard Shruhan to accept the Director's Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Don McAllister. 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 addition to the report provided by the Library Director.

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

Trustee Anne Quinn stated while she knew the missing three Audubon Prints would be expensive to purchase (as they had discussed at the September meeting), she thought trying to raise the money for the prints' purchase would be good motivation for a gala.

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

**LIAISON TO THE PEABODY HISTORICAL SOCIETY:** As Liaison Tom Pappas was not present, there was no new report.

**LIAISON TO THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY FOUNDATION:** Liaison Anne Quinn reported the next meeting of the Foundation was scheduled for Wednesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>; the meeting was the annual meeting of the board where Directors and Officers would be elected.

Trustee Quinn reported the Events Planning Committee held a meeting immediately before the Trustees' meeting to discuss the final planning of Starry, Starry Night which would be held on Wednesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Trustee Quinn stated the event was all set. They had added a reverse raffle and also kept the raffle bags like they had in previous years as those were very popular.

President Najjar reminded the Board that Starry, Starry Night started at 6pm and they could use help setting up prior to the start of the event. Also, the wrap-up usually only took about a half hour for anyone who was able to stay and help after the event.

Trustee Quinn stated they were also talking about planning a wreath-making event for the holiday season.

Trustee Quinn stated they continued to work on the planning for the George Peabody dinner which they hoped to hold in the spring of 2020. Trustee Quinn reported that she and Foundation Director Martha Holden had recently met with two caterers who had expressed interest in doing the event. Trustee Quinn stated that both caterers were knowledgeable and had an understanding of what the Foundation was looking to accomplish and saw the event as something that could be an exciting challenge for the chefs. They had another interview scheduled for the next day as well with another caterer.

Trustee Quinn stated that the main issue would be the cost. Trustee Quinn reported one of the caterers suggested that if they held it at a lower ticket price, they would attract people who were there just for the dinner, however, if they held it at a smaller venue, made it more exclusive and charged a higher ticket price, they would be attracting potential donors. Trustee Quinn stated they were more interested in having a more exclusive event with more interested attendees. For an event of that nature they would need to have nice linens, china, candelabras, etc. They would also have to consider location and decided it would be nicer to hold the event at the Library and make it more exclusive.

Trustee Quinn stated they planned to solicit enough sponsorship to cover all of the costs of the event, then the ticket sales would in turn be the profit from the event. Trustee Quinn suggested everyone begin thinking about potential sponsors for the event.

Trustee Don McAllister inquired as to whether or not any of the caterers had estimated what the cost would be for the dinner. Trustee Quinn stated they had received an estimate that it would be approximately \$200/per person for the food.

President Najjar suggested that should someone have a potential sponsor in mind, they could consider inviting them to the Library for a tour where they could see the work being done there including all of the programming, the community involvement and the Creativity Lab. Trustee Quinn stated she has sent the programming brochures to potential sponsors in the past for their information.

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES:** Committee Chair Jean Ahearn stated there was no new report from the Committee.

**LIAISON TO THE FRIENDS OF THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY:** Liaison Dianne Caputo stated there was no new report as the Friends were not meeting that month as their meeting usually would be held the same night as Starry, Starry Night.

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to accept the Committee reports as presented. The motion was seconded Jean Ahearn. A vote was taken.

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

### **Old Business**

President Najjar stated there was no unfinished business on which to report.

### **New Business**

Trustee Quinn inquired as to what the status was of the roof repairs. Director Robinson reported they were waiting on the next round of capital funding from the city which should be in the fall. Director Robinson stated the roof repair was supposed to be part of that funding.

President Najjar requested the Library Director send out a reminder that the financial advisor would be attending the next Trustees' meeting when she sent out the notice and agenda.

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 7:35pm.

Submitted by,

Allison M. Lytle  
Recording Secretary