

**PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Minutes of Meeting
September 9, 2019**

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

Anne Quinn
Stephanie Najjar
Dianne Caputo
Wes Merrill
Jean Ahearn
Thomas Pappas
Richard Shruhan
Kate O'Brien
Sandra Fecteau

Absent

Don McAllister
Frances Bisazza-Gallugi

Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting

A **MOTION** was made by Wes Merrill to approve the minutes of the special meeting held on May 22, 2019 as presented. The motion was seconded by Thomas Pappas. A vote was taken.

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

A **MOTION** was made by Wes Merrill to approve the minutes of the meeting held on June 3, 2019 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

Director Melissa Robinson presented the following report and provided the Trustees in attendance with written copies for their information.

Director's Report to the Board of Library Trustees
September 2019

Staffing

Unelia Videira, Alysa Hayden and Yahaira Cosme are all back from their parental leaves.

On Wednesday, August 14th Librarian Sharon Janus fell behind the Public Service Desk and fractured her foot in two places. Sharon was able to return to work the following week and per her doctor's orders, will be on seated duty for six weeks.

Three library staff members filed Family Medical Act Leave paperwork this summer. Library Assistants Mo Jayroe, and Karen Vocino and Librarian Gail Desmond are all taking intermittent medical leave.

As of August 19th, Jillian Parsons assumed the position of Senior South Branch Librarian. Jillian brings with her over 10 years of experience in collection development, programming and outreach, most recently at the Worcester Public Library. Her training has gone very smoothly.

Former Library Assistant, Yahaira Cosme accepted the position of West Branch Children's Librarian. Yahaira brings great enthusiasm to the West Branch for children's literature and programming. She is currently enrolled at Simmons in a dual Master's Degree program in library science and children's literature. We have begun the hiring process to fill the position left vacant by Yahaira.

Senior Teen Librarian Aubrey Apodaca resigned effective August 3rd for personal reasons. After going through the hiring process, we offered the position to Joanna Correa, who was initially hired as a temporary librarian to fill in during maternity leaves this spring and summer. Joanna brings with her years of experience working with teens in a variety of settings and many creative programming idea. She is also currently enrolled at Simmons in Master's Degree program in library science. Since Joanna's position here was originally temporary, we do not need to fill that position going forward.

We are still in the process of filling the position of Senior Adult Services and Public Programming Librarian, vacated by Kelley Unger. I hope to have a new person in place by the end of September. Assistant Director Merlin has been handling scheduling and advertising a few programs for adults for the fall in anticipation of filling this vacancy.

Sunday Reference Librarian Unelia Videira has resigned her position due to personal obligations. Unelia has worked at the library since 2002 when she was hired a page. She has agreed to continue covering Sundays until we can make other arrangements.

I am asking the Board this evening to vote to pre-approve reimbursements for fall semester classes for 3 staff: Sharon Janus continues to take classes towards her bachelor's degree and Senior Librarians Kristi Bryant and Joanna Correa are enrolled in classes working towards their Master's Degrees in Library Science. Each staff member is entitled to \$500 per semester according to the Union contract; it

is paid out of the personnel budget.

Building & Grounds

Elevator: Problems with the elevator continued through the first half of the summer, including four entrapments. Finally, City Elevator recommended and the Director of Facilities agreed to changing out the valve that had been previously cleaned. Although this was an expensive repair, going forward with it seems to have been a good idea. We have had no issues with the elevator in over a month since the repair was made. The elevator passed its annual inspection on July 30th.

West Branch windows: The installation of the windows at the West Branch is now complete. A replacement window that fits properly was installed in August.

West Branch roof: We had two more leaks in the West Branch roof in August, which have been repaired. Staff from the facilities department are getting quotes for a full replacement of that roof so that we can include it in the next round of capital requests to the City.

Main Library security: The Little Green Button has now been installed on all staff computers at the Main. When pressed, this button will contact administration and other coworkers if there is an emergency or need for immediate assistance in another area of the library.

Budget

An updated budget is available for your review and questions if any. I also brought copies of the final FY20 budget as passed by the City Council in June.

Given the change in the final library budget over what was under consideration when the Board last met, I am asking you to approve a change to the allocation of State Aid. Traditionally, the Board has put 20% of State Aid into books to meet our material requirement for certification. This year’s budget allocated an additional \$30,000 into our book budget, so I am asking the Board to reallocate \$8,400 of that to programs and building projects.

Here is the breakdown approved in June:

Utilities	\$5,000 (8%)
Operating	\$12,000 (16%)
Books	\$13,400 (20%)
Audubon	\$11,000 (18%)
Programs	\$10,000 (16%)
Building	\$8,600 (14%)
Public technology	\$5,000 (8%)

This is the new proposal:

Utilities	\$5,000 (8%)
Operating	\$12,000 (16%)

Books	\$5,000 (8%)
Audubon	\$11,000 (18%)
Programs	\$14,000 (22%)
Building	\$13,000 (20%)
Public technology	\$5,000 (8%)

Programs and Activities

Since we don't have a fall events brochure this year, I have some handouts and calendars for the Board's information. Programs continue to be added as more staff are hired and trained, so I recommend continuing to the library's event calendar for updates.

Audubon Loan

The Carolina Parakeet Audubon print that the library loaned to the Peabody Essex Museum and the Crystal Bridges Art Museum as part of Princeton University's Nature's Nation exhibit will begin its journey back here on September 16th with USArt. It will be delivered to the Crozier Warehouse in New Jersey on September 18th and USArt will arrange delivery to the library the following week. Assistant Director Merlin and I will be on hand to accept delivery when it is returned.

Trustee Anne Quinn inquired as to whether or not there was any room to change the allotment of the budget dedicated to the Audubon Prints to another line item to help with any potential budget shortages. Director Robinson stated that was up to the Board's discretion. Director Robinson stated that she did put a hold on the restoration of the prints while the budget was uncertain but now that the budget was finalized, the Foundation Board would discuss starting the restoration process again at the next meeting. Director Robinson explained that most of the budget cuts the Library experienced were in staffing and they did not use state aid for staffing so she was unsure if cutting the funding to the Audubon line item would make a difference that year.

Trustee Quinn inquired as to how the staff was doing in light of the budget cuts. Director Robinson stated that the staff had adapted admirably. Director Robinson stated that she was most afraid of how the cuts would affect morale but the staff had been great and had managed so well under stressful conditions. Director Robinson stated she thought the vacancies caused by the departure of a couple of long-term staff members had been more disruptive than the cuts due to the budget. The staff had really stepped up to fill any roles or take on any tasks that they had not traditionally done in order to help.

A **MOTION** was made by Jean Ahearn to accept the Director's Report 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.

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.

In response to questions from the Board, Director Robinson reported the valve cost \$6,059.48 and had a one-year warranty.

AUDUBON PRINTS: Committee Chair Richard Shruhan stated there was nothing new on which to report.

PERSONNEL: As Committee Chair Don McAllister was not present, there was no new report.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES: Committee Chair Jean Ahearn stated there was nothing new on which to report.

LIAISON TO THE FRIENDS OF THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY: Liaison Dianne Caputo reported the last meeting of the Friends was held on September 4th and provided the following update –

- The International Festival was held on September 8th and the Friends sold whoopie pies. The sales were successful but they were not done selling at that point; there were still some left being sold at the Library. Their initial investment in the pies was \$274.
- The Friends received a quarterly check of \$402 from the Planet Aid collection bin at the West Branch Library.
- Merchandise sales for the half-year totaled \$1,400.00.
- The Friends had to stop giving out reusable bags because the cost of making the bags had gotten so high. The Friends were discussing whether or not they thought people would pay for them so they were still determining if they were going to make them again in the future.
- Annual mailings for memberships were folded and would be sent out soon.

Trustee Thomas Pappas inquired as to whether or not the Trustees should consider making disposable bags with the Audubon Prints on them to sell to benefit the Library. President Najjar stated she liked that idea and thought it could be a good way to promote the restoration of the Prints. The Board discussed the idea and agreed the Foundation should discuss the idea at their next meeting.

Trustee Jean Ahearn inquired as to how much the Friends had made from the Amazon Smile program. Trustee Caputo reported the Friends had not received much money from the program at all and estimated it was around \$30. Trustee Caputo stated she would find out the exact number and would report back.

LIAISON TO THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY FOUNDATION: Liaison Anne Quinn reported the Foundation had not met since June but had their next meeting scheduled for October 23rd and it would be their annual meeting.

Trustee Anne Quinn reported that due to an unforeseen scheduling conflict with the City Council's candidates' night, they had to change the date of Starry, Starry Night from October 2nd to October 16th. Trustee Quinn reported that fortunately the change did not cause too much of a disruption because they had not started the major promotion for the event. Trustee Quinn reported the next events planning committee meeting was scheduled for Monday, September 16th at 6pm in the Trustees' Room.

President Najjar reminded the Board that they asked for gift cards as donations from the Trustees. The minimum amount for the gift cards was \$10 and could be up to \$25; the gift cards would be used in the surprise raffle bags.

LIAISON TO THE PEABODY HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Liaison Thomas Pappas reported the next event was the annual potluck kick-off event for members. The annual elections would be held on October 9th. The Historical Society had a lecture scheduled about the Felton family and the Salem Witch Trials.

A **MOTION** was made by Jean Ahearn to accept the Committee reports as presented. The motion was seconded Kate O'Brien. A vote was taken.

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

Unfinished Business

The Board had tabled the discussion on the proposed revisions to the City charter at the June meeting. Director Robinson stated she did not have any updates at that time; there was a meeting scheduled to discuss the City charter at the end of June but that meeting was postponed but she did not know if it was rescheduled. Director Robinson stated she would follow up with the Board at the October meeting.

New Business

President Najjar reported that the International Festival went well and it was estimated that over 10,000 people attended.

President Najjar reported that she recently met with Assistant Library Director Cate Merlin as they both had a passion for offering English classes to the citizens of Peabody. President Najjar stated the City had a lot of parents and citizens with limited options for learning English as most of the English classes offered in Peabody were full and had wait lists. President Najjar reported that Assistant Library Director Merlin was investigating a grant for an English program and they could use the funding to obtain a teacher and offer classes at the Library. They planned to focus on the school department and would look to appeal to parents as they had a lot of parents in the school district who didn't speak English and their options were limited. President Najjar stated she would provide updates on the initiative when available.

President Najjar reminded the Board that the elections would be held in November and there were four openings for the Board of Trustees and four candidates for those spots. President Najjar and Trustee Don McAllister were running as incumbents and there were two new

candidates running for the spots that were being vacated by Jean Ahearn and Dianne Caputo. One of the spots was for a two-year term and former Librarian Morgan Yeo was running for that position.

A **MOTION** was made by Thomas Pappas to approve the reimbursement for fall semester for up to \$500 for three library staff: Sharon Janus, Kristi Bryan and Joanna Correa. The motion was seconded by Kate O'Brien. A vote was taken.

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

A **MOTION** was made by Jean Ahearn to change the allocation of the state aid in accordance to the request of the Library Director and as outlined below:

Utilities	\$5,000 (8%)
Operating	\$12,000 (16%)
Books	\$5,000 (8%)
Audubon	\$11,000 (18%)
Programs	\$14,000 (22%)
Building	\$13,000 (20%)
Public technology	\$5,000 (8%)

The motion was seconded by Richard Shruhan. A vote was taken.

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

President Najjar reported they had a patron who requested the Library hold classes and obtain books on cybersecurity and how to protect yourself online. President Najjar stated she thought it was a great idea. Director Robinson reported that they did have those types of books in the Library and they had held those types of classes before. She stated she would pass the suggestion along to the programming librarians.

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm.

Submitted by,

Allison M. Lytle
Recording Secretary