

**PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Minutes of Meeting  
November 6, 2017**

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The meeting was called to order by President Richard Shruhan at 7:00pm. President Shruhan noted the meeting was being recorded stenographically by Recording Secretary Allison Lytle

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

**Present**

Richard Shruhan  
Anne Quinn  
Don McAllister  
Wes Merrill  
Linda Quigley  
Martha Cavanaugh  
Stephanie Najjar  
Dianne Caputo  
Jean Ahearn

**Absent**

Margaret Tierney  
Tracy Valletti

President Shruhan introduced Tom Pappas who was in attendance. President Shruhan stated Mr. Pappas was currently running for the office of Library Trustee in the November election.

**Approval of minutes from previous meeting**

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to approve the minutes of the October 2, 2017 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Anne Quinn. A vote was taken.  
All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Receipt of Communications**

President Shruhan stated the Board had received a nice card from Linda Quigley.

**Report of the Library Director**

**Staffing:** Library Director Melissa Robinson reported three library staff members, Unelia Videira, Cate Merlin and Gail Desmond, remained on leave.

Director Robinson reported the temporary library aide vacancy was offered to and accepted by Lena Weiner. During Ms. Weiner's first week working at the Library, she received a full-time job offer in her field. Subsequently, Ms. Weiner resigned her Library position. Director Robinson reported they had determined it was not worthwhile to try to hire another temporary aide since the position would last less than two months.

Director Robinson reported she, Assistant Director Gerri Guyote, and Head of Children's Service, Alysa Hayden would be conducting interviews that week for the vacant Library Assistant Position. Director Robinson stated they had some very strong applicants and they hoped to have the position filled well before the holiday vacation season.

Director Robinson reported Reference Librarian Sara Kelso had been accepted to the Massachusetts Library System's IDEAL program. The Institute for Database Engagement and Leadership was designed to help participant libraries promote and increase usage of their online resources.

Director Robinson reported the City and the collective bargaining unit had reached a tentative agreement. The agreement still needed to be ratified by the members of the bargaining unit before it could be signed by the Mayor and President of the Board of Trustees. Director Robinson stated she expected a decision about the agreement would be final by the December Trustees meeting and at that time, she would be able to discuss the details of the agreement.

Director Robinson reported the All Staff Meeting on Monday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> was a great success. The Mayor addressed the staff and then Director Robinson and Assistant Director Guyote shared information about the Library's current goals and plans for staffing and building changes. Reference Librarian Sara Kelso gave an extremely well-done and helpful presentation on Fake News and public service interactions. Director Robinson reported they ended the meeting with an activity that allowed staff to recommend books to the public and a staff recognition piece. Director Robinson reported feedback about the meeting was extremely positive; over 80% of staff reported that they learned something new that would enable them to do their jobs better. Director Robinson reported the most common comments received in the follow up survey stated that the meeting was important to improve communication and that people felt it was a great morale booster and team builder. Director Robinson stated, based on the initial success, she would like request that the Board grant approval for library administration to host those meetings 2-3 times a year.

*Buildings & Grounds:* Director Robinson provided the following project updates –

- *Elevator:* The Library's contract with Associated Elevator expired on November 1<sup>st</sup>. The Clerk of the Works was in the process of adding the Library's preventative maintenance service to a current contract Peabody had with City Elevator. City Elevator's rates for preventative maintenance and for service were lower than Associated's. Once City Elevator took over, the Library would ask for their assessment of the elevator's condition and any needed repairs.
- *West Branch Replacement Windows:* The Director of Facilities reported that work on the window replacement project would likely begin the week after Thanksgiving.
- *West Branch PTAC replacement:* The demonstration PTAC for the West Branch had been ordered.
- *Closeout of the HVAC Project:* Viking would begin work on the BMS as soon as the contract was signed.
- *HVAC Maintenance Agreement:* Limbach did their first preventative maintenance visit at all three libraries the first two weeks in October. They

reported that the boilers at the Main and the West were operating at 85% efficiency, which was considered quite good. They were not able to test the South Branch's boiler because the air conditioner was still on; they would test in January. They reported no deficiencies. The Library was reminded, however, that the outside condensing units at both branches would need to be replaced eventually.

- The Department of Public Services removed a number of downed and dead trees from behind the West Branch Library. Another large tree also fell into the rear parking lot during the recent wind storm, but there was no damage to structures or cars. The DPS removed the tree that day. Director Robinson was working with the Peabody Police to arrange for trustees from the Middleton House of Corrections to come at the beginning of December to help with some landscaping clean-up behind the West.
- The sidewalk at the West Branch was repaved last Friday. The Library received a complaint that the cracks in the sidewalk were making it difficult to navigate in a wheelchair. The Library expected that would rectify any accessibility problems.
- For the past few months, the staff and Director Robinson had been discussing ways that the Library could rearrange the collections and departments at the Main Library with three major goals in mind. Those goals were:
  - (1) to better serve readers and increase circulation by making the Library's collections more accessible,
  - (2) provide a larger and more family friendly children's library and
  - (3) create a more flexible and accessible program and public meeting space.

The current working plan was to move all large print and a selection of fiction and nonfiction from the stacks on the second and third floors to the Main Reading Room. The Library would install the majority of the public computers in the second floor Technology Lab in the old building and move some small media collections to that space. The Children's Room would then relocate to the Osbourne Room on the second floor in the new building and the basement level would be converted into a programming and public meeting room. Once those moves were completed, there would be one public service desk in the Main Room and one in the Technology Lab. Patrons would be able to check out materials and get answers to basic questions at both desks. To achieve that, the Library would need to provide additional staff training and adjust desk schedules and assignments. Director Robinson stated the staff believed that the "one desk" model in the Main Room would greatly improve public service and make better use of staff talent. Director Robinson and Assistant Director Guyote were working with department heads to coordinate the training, weeding of collections and scheduling that the move would require. The Library hoped to start "Phase 1" of the move, which is relocating the public computers, at the beginning of April of next year. Director Robinson stated they intended to take every possible measure to minimize any resulting impact on public service that the moving of collections, computers and staff would create.

- As the Board requested last month, Director Robinson raised the issue of the Main Library roof to the Mayor and the Director of Facilities. The Director of Facilities did a visual inspection of the roof. His recommendation was that the Library contract with a roofing company to do an extensive inspection and estimated \$13,000 for the inspection due to the logistics of accessing the roof. In 2015, an architect prepared a quote for extensive repairs and replacement. The

East side of the roof was original and would need replacement. The West side of the roof was roughly 40-50 years old and required repair. The estimate at that time was for \$233,000. Director Robinson would be starting the process of securing funding for the first option in the coming weeks.

The Board discussed the issue of the roof repair. In response to a question from the Board, Director Robinsons stated the repairs would have to be a capital expense as the Library could not absorb that expense out of their operating budget.

The Board discussed the recommendation of hiring a roofing company to do an extensive inspection. President Shruhan explained the reason why it would cost so much for the inspection was because the lift which was necessary for the project was very expensive. While the inspection was costly, President Shruhan stated he fully supported the expenditure and felt it was important for the City to do their due diligence when it came to a project of that scope.

In response to a question from the Board, Trustee Wes Merrill stated that the City had done some visual inspections of the roof under the tiles and what they had inspected so far had looked good.

Director Robinson stated that should the Board approve the process, she would begin securing funding for the inspection. Once funding was secured, she would need to obtain quotes for the project.

The Board reviewed the proposed plan for the rearrangements of the collections and departments as outlined by Director Robinson. Director Robinson explained their hope was that moving the books downstairs to the main floor would help with the circulation which was down. The Children's Room, once moved, would be larger and more functional as well.

*Budget:* Director Robinson provided the Board with a copy of the budget to date for their review.

President Shruhan inquired as to why the books and subscriptions line item was over budget at that time. Director Robinson explained that the Library paid for most of those items at the beginning of the year so the expenditures were front-loaded.

*Programs/Activities:* Director Robinson reported that that evening was the first meeting of the Peabody Suffrage Centennial Committee. Director Robinson and local historian and school librarian, Sudi Smoller, were spearheading that group and would plan a local commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 2020.

Director Robinson reported the Library was once again hosting the Green Peabody Committee's Drawn to Peabody event on Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup>. The annual event highlighted the artwork of children in grades 5-12. Director Robinson stated the main focus of the exhibit was on recycled artwork and the works of Peabody High School's Advanced Placement art class.

Director Robinson reported that as part of the Mind of the Making grant, the children's librarians at all three libraries would be launching a community-wide early literacy

campaign that encouraged parents to talk, read and sing with their children beginning at birth. To better prepare Library staff and other early childhood educators to support the literacy needs of the community's youngest children, the Library would be hosting a training in early December with Compass Training.

Grants: Director Robinson reported Reference Librarian Sara Kelso applied through the Foundation to Cell Signal Technologies to purchase tablets for the Library to use for technology education, archival displays and children's programming and gaming.

Other: Director Robinson reported there were currently approximately 1,700 books from the Sutton Room collection being stored in the basement of the Main Library. Former Director Holden previously secured the Board's approval to deaccession those books from the collection. Those books were on topics that fell outside of the Local History collections policy. Director Robinson reported it was the opinion of former City Solicitor John Christopher that since those books were purchased using Library funds and were not part of any estate gift to the Library and had no connection to donations made by George Peabody or the Sutton family, that the sale should not create legal concerns. After securing the Board's approval, the first lot of those books were listed on the rare book website, Alibris, in 2014. By posting the lot on Alibris, the books were cross posted on a number of book selling websites. Director Robinson reported it was now three year later and they still had not received any bids or inquiries. Director Robinson reported she and archivist Erik Bauer were of the opinion that leaving them for bid longer would not result in a sale. Director Robinson recommended that the Board approve bringing in rare book sellers to bid on the entire lot. Should the Board approve the request, Mr. Bauer would bring in three book sellers to submit bids. Since the books were not currently stored in an archival setting and there were no climate controls in the basement, the books were undergoing an advanced aging process. Director Robinson stated the timely sale of those books would ensure that they were in the best possible condition and could garner a fair price. Funds from the proceeds of that sale would be placed in to a restricted fund for archival use. Director Robinson reported approved usage of those funds would be the preservation of the collection or the purchase of new items for the archive.

A **MOTION** was made by Stephanie Najjar to accept he report of the Library Director 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 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:** Committee Chair Jean Ahearn stated there was no new report from the Committee.

**LIAISON TO THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY FOUNDATION:** Liaison Stephanie Najjar reported the next event planning meeting was scheduled for December 6<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

**LIAISON TO THE FRIENDS OF THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY:** Liaison Dianne Caputo reported the Friends last met on November 1<sup>st</sup>. The Friends discussed the following issues-

- The Friends had a current balance of \$7,500.
- Last quarter they allotted \$3,000 for the Library wishes.
- They made \$998 through selling books through perpetual book sales.
- The Board voted to spend \$75 for chocolates for the Library staff for the holidays.
- The hardcover book about Peabody was now available at the libraries for a discounted price of \$30.
- The Friends made a profit of \$385 from the sale of whoopie pies during the International Festival.
- The poinsettia sale was currently in progress.

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

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

### **Old Business**

A **MOTION** was made by Jean Ahearn to move the December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting time to 6pm, followed by dinner at Gallo Nero. The motion was seconded by Stephanie Najjar. A vote was taken.

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

A **MOTION** by Stephanie Najjar to invite the following individuals to the December 6<sup>th</sup> Board of Trustees meeting and dinner:

- New elected Library Trustees.
- Library Director Melissa Robinson and her spouse.
- Former Library Director Martha Holden and her spouse.
- Assistant Library Director Gerri Guyote.
- Friends of the Peabody Institute Library President Alysa Hayden.
- Mayor Bettencourt and spouse.

The motion was seconded by Don McAllister. A vote was taken.

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

### **New Business**

A **MOTION** was made by Stephanie Najjar to authorize the Library Director to put out a request for private bidders for the deaccessioned books that were currently being housed in the Library basement. The motion was seconded by Jean Ahearn. A vote was taken.

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

A **MOTION** was made by Jean Ahearn to allow the Library Director to close the Library in the mornings 2-3 times a year for all-staff meetings. 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 Stephanie Najjar. The motion was seconded by Don McAllister. 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