

**PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Minutes of Meeting
March 2, 2020**

The meeting was called to order by President Stephanie Najjar at 7:00pm. President Najjar noted the meeting was being recorded by Recording Secretary Madelyn Firth.

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

Stephanie Najjar
Richard Shruhan
Peter Bakula
Kate O'Brien
Anne Quinn
Don McAllister
Wes Merrill
Stephanie Dallaire
Morgan Yeo
Frances Gallugi (absent)
Tom Pappas (absent)

Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to approve the minutes of the meeting held on February 3, 2019. The motion was seconded by Stephanie Najjar. A vote was taken. All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

Receipt of Communications

President Najjar reported there were no communications received.

Library Director's Report

Library Director Cate Merlin presented the following report and provided the Trustees in attendance with written copies for their information.

Staffing

We remain fully staffed and eagerly awaiting Spring.

Assistant Director Al Hayden gave a webinar presentation about the Children's Department's Stuffed Animal Sleepover to 81 librarians through the Massachusetts Library Service.

South Branch Senior Librarian Jillian Parsons will be presenting at the North Shore Computer Society's March 19th meeting about library resources.

Sunday Reference Librarian Unelia Videira remains out on family leave, and we have had no issues covering her shifts.

Building & Grounds

Last week, the West Branch Library's main phone line stopped working. Bookkeeper Russ Whitehead, along with the city electrician, were able to determine that the problem was in the Avaya switch box, and switched the lines calling in to solve the problem. The Avaya box is old, and the company is out of business, so we are lucky that Russ has the experience to troubleshoot this.

The City Facilities Department is currently measuring the West Branch Library roof, in preparation for accepting bids to determine the cost of replacing the entire roof.

Baby steps have been taken toward an upgraded security system, with the determination of where we would like to add additional cameras. This is a slow process, and our next step is working with the City Purchasing Agent and city IT to determine whether we want to use a wireless or wired system.

Custodians will begin removing two aisles of shelving from the 2nd floor adult fiction section of the main room, to make way for tables and chairs, and the creation of a new group study area. Senior Teen Librarian Joanna Corea has begun ordering new furniture for the Teen Room, funded by the Massachusetts LITT (Library Initiative for Teens and Tweens) program, and the old Teen Room tables will be moved up to this 2nd floor study area.

Budget

An updated budget is available for your review and questions if any.

The Library Director has begun to prepare the Library's FY21 City Budget Request, which is due to City Hall on March 13th.

Programs and Activities

In a sentence the Director never thought she would read to the Board, a paranormal investigation society out of New Hampshire has contacted her, and offered to conduct a free "paranormal investigation" of the Main Library after-hours sometime in April. This society gives presentations about "ghost hunting" at MA and NH libraries, and investigates historical buildings every spring to prepare a new summer presentation.

This year, they would like to spend a few hours here at night over a weekend, setting up their recording equipment, and then include their findings in this summer's presentation. This is not an event that is open to the public- instead, Director Merlin, a custodian, and a few other staff

members would supervise them, and they would report their findings, obviously for entertainment reasons only, to us after the fact. While quirky, Director Merlin feels that this would be a unique form of publicity, especially since we are located so close to Salem. She would appreciate the Board's feedback this evening.

The PeaPod Community Seed Exchange, in partnership with the Peabody Garden Club, will return to all three library locations beginning Saturday, March 21st. Seeds donated by independent companies will be given to all local residents. In 2019, almost 1,000 seed packets were distributed. The Peabody Garden Club will also be decorating the South Branch (inside and out) for Spring on March 19th.

The West Branch will celebrate its 30th birthday on Saturday, March 28th at 10am, with a family birthday celebration that also debuts the new West Branch Children's Room furniture, funded by the Foundation.

PILCON, the library's 4th annual free all-ages comic con event, will be taking place on Saturday, May 2nd. This year, Senior Teen Librarian Joanna Corea has invited critically acclaimed Young Adult fantasy author Malinda Lo, who will be giving the event's keynote address. Additionally, the Harry Potter tribute band "Draco and the Malfoys" will be performing. In order to accommodate what we anticipate to be large crowds; we will be moving the Registration Table and PILCON store to the Magazine area of the Main Reading Room.

In previous years, registration has been in the 1st floor elevator lobby, which has not been ideal for crowd flow and crowd control. We will warn patrons ahead of time, as we do every year that the Main Reading Room will be a bit louder than normal on the morning of PILCON- public computers will still be available, as will the quiet study areas on the 2nd and 3rd floor. We also hope that PILCON attendees will take the opportunity to explore the Main Reading Room, update their library card, and see what the library has to offer.

As has been done every year, Director Merlin is requesting that the Board approve the use of the Trustees Room for board games during PILCON. The room will be supervised and no food will be allowed in the space. Also, as in previous years, Director Merlin is requesting that the Board vote to allow the artists who are donating their time to run workshops to sell their artwork at the event.

Interim Assistant Director Al Hayden has met with Peabody Main Street to partner for an end-of-summer celebration, in conjunction with their August 15th "Dinner on Main" downtown event.

Birds & Bubbly, the new annual Foundation fundraiser centered on our Audubon prints, is scheduled for Friday, May 8th, followed by the free family open house event Birds & Books that Saturday, May 9th. The ticket price for Birds & Bubbly is \$40, and tickets are now available to purchase through Eventbrite. Publicity will begin next week.

The 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment is in August, and the renaming ceremony for the West Branch Community Room, in honor of local suffragette Mary Upton Ferrin (voted upon by this board last Spring), will take place on Thursday, August 27th.

Policy

Tonight, Director Merlin is suggesting that the Board approve changes to two library policies: the Creativity Lab Maker Policy and the Creativity Lab Guidelines for Tool Usage. Director Merlin is also suggesting that the Board approve the adoption of a new Mobile Hotspot Checkout Agreement, and approve the adoption of NOBLE's AutoRenewal Policy. Director Merlin shared copies of the relevant policies and updates for their review.

The Creativity Lab policy changes both involve making age criteria for usage consistent with age requirements for Teen Room use. Currently, the Teen Room is open to patrons in grades 6-12, while the "Teen Makers" open lab is open to patrons from ages 11-18. These ages and grades are generally equivalent, but I believe that changing Teen Makers to grades 6-12 will ensure that there is no confusion.

In addition to Teen Makers, there are now Adult Open Labs and Family Open Labs. Director Merlin suggests that Adult Open Labs be open to patrons ages 18+, Teen Makers for grades 6-12, and Family Open Labs for all ages, with a parent/guardian necessary for patrons in grades 7 and under. This allows older teens to participate in Family Open Labs without an adult, while ensuring that younger children are always under their guardian's supervision. This also welcomes younger children into the Creativity Lab, and Programming Librarian Ahearn will be adding more child-friendly activities like coloring and Legos as needed.

Director Merlin suggests that Tool Usage Guidelines be updated to follow these age policies, simplifying the guidelines to All Ages, Grades 6+, and Adults 18+. These guidelines match those of the Open Labs, and also give younger children more access to safe technology when accompanied by an adult to Family Open Labs.

We currently lend Verizon Mobile Wi-Fi hotspots to patrons, and Director Merlin would like to have all patrons who check out a hotspot sign a basic agreement, stating what is and isn't allowed. Director Merlin shared paper copies of the agreement with the Trustees, written in conjunction with Senior Technology Librarian Yunan Guo.

Tonight, Director Merlin also suggested that the Board consider the adoption of the available NOBLE AutoRenewal program. Director Merlin shared a supplemental handout to explain this program, and why it would benefit the library and our patrons.

Policy Committee Chair Kate O'Brien has reviewed these policy changes. It is my suggestion that the Board review these policies and vote on them at the April meeting.

Archives

The George Peabody House has generously set up a display of historical Time Magazine covers in the 1st floor elevator lobby, and will regularly install new displays every few months.

Trustee Quinn has completed a preliminary appraisal of the piano, and Director Merlin would appreciate her sharing her information with you later this evening.

Audubon Prints

Studio TKM Prints has not yet begun the conservation of the library's prints, so Director Merlin has not yet received possible tour dates. She will keep the Board updated.

A **MOTION** was made by Stephanie Najjar to accept the Library Director's Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Rick 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.

AUDUBON PRINTS: Committee Chair Richard Shruhan stated there was nothing to report in addition to the report provided by the Library Director.

PERSONNEL: Committee Chair Don McAllister reported we have a new Library Director, Cate Merlin. They are in the process of formalizing the Assistant Directors position.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES: Committee Chair Kate O'Brien stated there was nothing to report in addition to the report provided by the Library Director.

LIAISON TO THE FRIENDS OF THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY: Committee Chair Morgan Yeo reported she would be meeting with Friends of the Peabody Institute Library this month.

LIAISON TO THE PEABODY HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Liaison Thomas Pappas was absent, therefore there was nothing additional to report.

LIAISON TO THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY FOUNDATION: Liaison Quinn reminded the Trustees of two upcoming events: Birds & Bubbly on May 8th and the Windows Donors on May 27th.

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to accept the Committee reports as presented. The motion was seconded by Kate O'Brien. A vote was taken.
All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

Unfinished Business

Liaison Anne Quinn updated the Trustees on her piano research. The piano is in its original condition, there are some cracks in the sound board, it is out of tune, but the keys are in good condition except for just a few. A complete rebuilt was estimated to cost between \$40-50K, and would take 6 months to 1 year to complete. If Liaison Quinn suggested fundraisers could help

raise money to help cover the cost. If completely rebuilt, the Chickering piano could be used for events such as music concerts, performances, and recitals.

A **MOTION** was made by Anne Quinn for the Board to approve this expenditure of \$125 to be paid to Brian Grindrod for a thorough evaluation of the piano and a detailed estimate of the work to be done and the cost to completely restore it. The motion was seconded Richard Shruhan. A vote was taken.

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

New Business

A **MOTION** was made by Richard Shruhan to approve the Paranormal Investigation of the Main Library.

The motion was seconded Rich Shruhan. A vote was taken.

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

A **MOTION** was made by Kate O'Brien to use the Trustees Room for board games during PILCON on May 2nd. The motion was seconded Wes Merrill. A vote was taken.

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

The Board of Trustees will vote on the policy changes proposed by Director Merlin at the next meeting.

President Najjar reminded the Board that the next Trustees meeting would be held at 6:00pm on Monday, April 6, 2020.

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 8:09pm.

Submitted by,

Madelyn Firth
Secretary