

**PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Minutes of Meeting
April 5th, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by President Thomas Pappas at 7:00pm. This meeting was held via Zoom virtual webinar and was broadcasted live on PATV's television station and on Facebook. President Pappas noted the meeting was being recorded by Catherine McGrath.

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

Present

Rick Shruhan
Peter Bakula
Kate O'Brien
Anne Quinn
Don McAllister
Fran Gallugi
Stephanie Najjar
Tom Pappas

Absent

Stephanie Dallaire
Morgan Yeo

Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting

Trustee Quinn clarified a mistake she discovered in the March meeting minutes.

A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Najjar to approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 1st, 2021 with the appropriate amendments. The motion was seconded by Trustee Shruhan. A vote was taken.

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

Receipt of Communications

President Pappas reported there were no communications received.

**Director's Report to the Board of Library Trustees
April 2021**

Staffing

All staff will return to the buildings full-time this coming Monday 4/12. Director Merlin stated that she offered the position of Senior Local History & Public Services Librarian to a qualified and enthusiastic candidate, and hopes to set a start date soon. Director Merlin stated that she will share her information with The Trustees as they move forward.

Director Merlin stated that they will be conducting interviews for the Senior Children's Library position tomorrow, and hope to move forward with this hiring process quickly. We will be moving forward soon with the filling of 6 Aide positions, as funded by the Mayor and City's generous supplement to our staffing budget for the remainder of FY21.

Budget

Director Merlin sent the Trustees the current budget for their information. She submitted two FY22 budget proposals to the Mayor in March; a Level Funding proposal as requested by the Mayor, and a proposal that returns us to Full Staffing. Level Funding would allow us to open the Main Library for a maximum of 2 evenings per week, with no Fridays or Sundays, and each Branches for 2 days each week and alternating Saturdays. The MBLC requires that the Main Library be open 63 hours over 6 days per week beginning after Labor Day based on Peabody's population. The Level Funding proposal (which maintains our current staffing levels, including the 2 Senior positions and 6 Aide positions that will be filled soon) would require staff shifting to the Main Library in September to meet that requirement, and would therefore unfortunately require the decreasing of Branch hours at the same time. The hours open requirement was waived for FY21.

The Full Staffing proposal would still not include Pages, but would return us to pre-pandemic operational hours via hiring more Aides and filling the currently vacant Senior South Branch Librarian position, and would allow us to open all 3 locations back to their normal hours (Main Library 7 days/4 evenings, Branches 5 days/2 evenings each), and would also satisfy the MBLC's

Hours Open and City budget requirements for full certification (by a margin of around \$2,000). Anything less than this Full Staffing requirement would require that the City apply for a waiver for

FY22 certification once again, but because our budget would not decrease between FY21 and FY22, a waiver would be easy to obtain.

A budget meeting with the Mayor, Finance Department, and President Pappas should be scheduled

for later this month. We all know that the pandemic and its financial ramifications continue, but Director Merlin stated that she wanted to make sure that everyone is on the same page regarding what is possible going forward.

MBLC Certification

The City received a Waiver of the budgetary requirement for FY21, as voted on by the Mass Board

of Library Commissioners in March. We received the first half of our State Aid award, and will receive the second half by the end of April. The MBLC State Aid budget line increased by 20% for

FY21, so our award increased significantly as well. Director Merlin stated that she is requesting Board approval of the following allocations. She added, to please note that we usually allocated 20% of our Award to supplementing our Books & Materials budget, but the City's supplemental budget from February included a \$65,000 increase to that line item, so she is

proposing a slightly different allocation this year, to put more funds towards Public Technology and Audubon restoration.

Initial award: \$41,009.18

Expected Total Award (second half received by end of April): \$80,000.00

Utilities \$6,000 (7.5%)

Operating \$12,000 (15%)

Books \$4,000 (5%)

Audubon \$16,000 (20%)

Programs \$16,000 (20%)

Building \$16,000 (20%)

Public technology \$10,000 (12.5%)

TOTAL \$80,000

Reopening

Director Merlin stated that they continue to work toward the planned Main Library reopening date of Tuesday, April 20th, which includes the implementation of the MeeScan self-checkout system, the installation of dividers, automated hand sanitizer dispensers, signage, the Main Library welcome desk, new holds pickup process, and all of the small details that will make this a safe and welcome experience for patrons and staff.

Because the first open week coincides with April Break Week, Director Merlin stated they will have a “pop-up” selection of new materials for all ages under the Courtyard Tent so that families and patrons may browse and select new items without having to enter the building if they’re not yet comfortable. This pop-up will end on Saturday, April 24th.

The Main Library’s hours upon reopening will be:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 10am-4pm

Saturday: 10am-2pm

Director Merlin stated she hopes to expand these hours to include full Saturdays and 2 evenings/week in May, to coincide with the Branches reopening. The implementation of MeeScan, dividers, etc, will expand to the Branches once the Main Library reopens. She will share more details about expanded Main Library hours and Branch hours as they move forward with filling the necessary staffing positions that will make them possible.

Policy

In order to ensure that the Face Covering Policy also applies to outdoor spaces in the upcoming Pop-Up library and future outdoor programming, Director Merlin is requesting that the Board approve the following highlighted addition:

“In alignment with Commonwealth of Massachusetts and CDC guidance, face coverings are required for all individuals over the age of two while **in the buildings & outdoor spaces of** the Peabody Institute Main Library, South Branch Library, and West Branch Library, in order to address asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission (transmission from

infected individuals who may or may not have symptoms) of COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status.”

Services

The library continues to offer the following services:

- Materials Pickup
- Museum Passes
- 3D Printing
- Document Printing
- Library Takeout
- Grab and Go Crafts for All Ages
- Expanded Library of Things

All of these services will still be available when the library reopens. Holds Pickups will shift to the Main Library courtyard entry, will no longer require a pickup appointment, and will be checked out by patrons using the MeeScan self-checkout system or MeeScan phone app. All service changes will be outlined in upcoming patron newsletters and signage as details are worked out and finalized over the next 2 weeks. Holds pickups will be available at the Branches once they reopen in May.

Audubons

Director Merlin proposed that the Trustees approve the continuation of the Audubon restoration project. She will discuss the continuation of this project with the Foundation as well, and their willingness to continue funding a portion of the project. Once the Foundation decides on their preferred course of action, Director Merlin will reopen discussions with TKM Studios, and develop a plan for moving forward based on our budget.

Building & Grounds

Nothing to report.

-End of Report -

Trustee Bakula inquired about the hiring of staff, asking if they are bringing back staff who were laid off due to the pandemic. Director Merlin responded that they were still working things out.

Trustee Najjar inquired about the Audubon prints asking what percentage of the cost the trustees were responsible for. Director Merlin responded that normally it would be 50% State Aid and 50% from the Foundation. Director Merlin also stated the studio would be happy to slow down the project to work with what the budget allows. Trustee Najjar also asked if Director Merlin needed a vote for this project and Director Merlin responded that yes, a vote is needed.

Trustee Quinn inquired about the discussion with Mayor Bettencourt Director Merlin mentioned at the last meeting. Director Merlin and President Pappas responded that the meeting went very well, and that Mayor Bettencourt and Human Resources were impressed with the detailed reopening plan. President Pappas mentioned that Mayor Bettencourt did not put any pressure on them to open by a certain date, but let him and Director Merlin take the lead to make an informed decision on what was best.

Trustee Najjar inquired about the outside Pop-up and if it was weather dependent. Director Merlin responded that they would use tents, so hopefully even with a drizzle they would still be able to hold the event.

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

A vote was taken.

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

Reports of the Committees

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: Committee Chair Richard Shruhan stated there was nothing to report in addition to the report provided by the Library Director.

AUDUBON PRINTS: Committee Chair Anne Quinn stated the Foundation has two meetings coming up where discussions about funding the Audubon Prints would take place. There will be an events committee on April 7th and a Foundation board meeting on April 14th.

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

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

LIAISON TO THE FRIENDS OF THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY: Committee Chair Morgan Yeo was not present.

LIAISON TO THE PEABODY HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Liaison Stephanie Dallaire was not present. President Pappas shared that the Peabody Historical Society is holding a virtual presentation titled "The Value of Old and Rare Books" on Wednesday April 7th on Zoom.

LIAISON TO THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY FOUNDATION: Liaison Stephanie Najjar stated the events meeting is on Wednesday April 7th at 6 pm, and the quarterly foundation meeting is on April 14th where they will be discussing finances. Trustee Najjar stated that everyone is welcome to come as well as share any ideas via email if they are unable to attend.

A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Najjar to accept the Committee reports as presented. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gallugi.

A vote was taken.

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

Unfinished Business

Nothing to report.

New Business

A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Najjar to accept the updated face covering policy. The motion was seconded by Trustee McAllister.

A vote was taken.

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

A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Najjar for the continuation of the Audubon restoration project. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gallugi.

Trustee Quinn began a discussion if they should add a clause to motion due to funding concerns. Director Merlin stated that funding also comes from the State. The Trustees agreed to vote on the motion as is.

A vote was taken.

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

President Pappas reminded the Board that the next Trustees meeting would be held on May 3rd, 2021 at 7pm.

As there was no additional business to come before the Board, a **MOTION** to adjourn was made by Trustee Gallugi. The motion was seconded by Trustee McAllister.

A vote was taken.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Submitted by,

Catherine McGrath
Secretary