

PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of Meeting
March 7th, 2022

The meeting was called to order on Zoom by President Thomas Pappas at 7:03pm, with Director Merlin having started the webinar at 6:55pm and quorum having been reached at 7:01pm. The meeting was held simultaneously on Zoom and in-person and broadcast live on PATV's television station. President Pappas cited open meeting laws. Viewers were allowed to pose questions or comments to the chair in real-time.

The roll call was taken:

Present

Peter Bakula
Stephanie Dallaire
Frances Gallugi
Don McAllister
Thomas Pappas
Richard Shruhan
Jennifer Smith
Ruth Titelbaum
Katrina Vassallo

Absent

Stephanie Najjar
Kate O'Brien
Anne Quinn

Approval and discussion of minutes from previous meeting

There was a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the previous meeting by Trustee Gallugi. The motion was seconded by Trustee Vasallo.

The Board paused to review previous minutes. Director Merlin entered edits suggested by Trustee Quinn. President Pappas approved as long as all items are satisfactory. Director Merlin read the minute changes; some of the discussions and questions paragraphs were unclear.

There was a **MOTION** to approve the minutes as amended by Trustee Shruhan. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gallugi.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion carried unanimously.

There were no further communications.

Receipt of Communications

None.

Director's Report to the Board of Library Trustees

Staffing

Senior West Branch Librarian Kristi Bryant has resigned in order to take a position at another library, and her last day will be this Thursday, March 10th. We wish her the best of luck! Director Merlin will be posting this position internally as soon as possible, and expects to have the position filled as early as the end of this month.

Director Merlin requests this evening that the Trustees approve a late opening (12pm at all 3 locations) on Monday, March 21st, in order to allow for an all-staff training.

Programs & Initiatives

On Friday, February 18th, the Main Library hosted the Peabody High School's Winter Art Show and Acoustic Coffee House Performance and Reception, and over 100 people attended this event, which included a toast to George Peabody's birthday, and the attendance of patrons of all ages, including Senator Lovely, Representative Walsh, and Representative Kerans. The Spring Art Show is planned for Friday, May 20th.

The PeaPod, our annual free seed library, will return for its 4th growing season this coming Saturday, March 12th, with flower, vegetable, and herb seeds available to patrons at all 3 locations.

Budget

Director Merlin has included the monthly budget for your review. Nothing is of concern at this time.

Director Merlin's departmental budget request for FY23 is due to the City on Friday, March 18th.

Policy

A committee of 3 Senior Librarians completed their review of "Amazing Women of the Middle East," about which there was a Request for Reconsideration filed in late January. Based on our policies, they did not recommend withdrawal of the title, and Director Merlin agreed. Director Merlin sent the initial response, with the Senior Librarian's and her own comments, to the patron who filed the complaint last week, and has not received a response as of yet.

Local History & Audubons

The next 15 Audubons are scheduled for pickup this coming Friday, March 11th.

The Library has been awarded a Preservation Assessment Grant from the Mass Board of Library Commissioners. This grant, applied for by Senior Local History Librarian Catherine Badal, will allow us to, “work with a qualified preservation assessor [that] can help libraries understand the full scope of their collection needs as well as formulate preservation plans.” This grant covers the cost of the assessment and plan, and Senior Librarian Badal is reaching out to the assessor provided to us by the State to begin the process. Because of this grant, we have paused the search for window coverings and other repairs, as we anticipate these being included in the report, with more suggestions that will need to be addressed, so we will wait for the final report before moving forward. This should be completed later this spring, and Director Merlin will share the report with you.

Building & Grounds

Director Merlin met with the Chair of the Peabody Historical Commission and other members this morning, who were thrilled to learn about the focus now being put on the Main Library building. They will support our plans, moving forward, to upgrade and improve Courtyard lighting, and Director Merlin is still awaiting sample fixtures from Bay State Lighting.

New light bulbs for the light poles in the West Branch parking lot have been ordered and will be installed shortly.

Director Merlin met with the Head of City Security to discuss security needs at all 3 locations, and will be meeting with the vendor that the City will be using for City Hall and the golf course regarding upgrading our current security cameras, and adding more as needed.

Discussion and Questions for the Director

President Pappas asked for the amount of the Mass Board of Library Commissioners Preservation Assessment grant. Director Merlin responded the value was \$4,200, which covers the assessment. The collection should be appraised regardless, along with the room itself and other collections. The last preservation assessment took place in 1999, and no records of a previous appraisal are available.

President Pappas asked about the uplighting in the front of the building; it appeared to be halogen as it was steaming. Director Merlin stated that she did not plan to adjust said lights and was focusing on the courtyard pole lighting. The focus is on pole lighting because the lights need to match the historical aesthetic of the building and courtyard pole lights provide patron safety. Director Merlin added that she has been working with Peabody Municipal Light Plant to place a light pole in the parking lot adjacent to the Children’s Room. Placing a floodlight there will cover half of the parking lot, costing \$65 for a setup fee and \$2.50 per month going forward.

President Pappas asked about the status of the custodian position. Director Merlin replied that it would move forward in the next few weeks, within the month.

Trustee Gallugi asked about the procedure for the PeaPod seed library. Director Merlin replied that she had purchased many packets of seeds and organized them. The seed packets will be placed in the card catalogs at each branch. Trustee Gallugi asked if the packets will be alphabetical in the card catalog, and Director Merlin replied yes, but patrons will not be required to sign out seeds. Instead, patrons will be asked to limit their selections to five vegetables and five flowers. The program will be active on Saturday, March 12th.

Trustee Gallugi then asked about the courtyard. The Peabody Garden Club has already planted some flowers there, but is concentrating on the Peabody House to beautify the community. Trustee Gallugi offered help to Director Merlin, who accepted on the grounds that the Library is doing spring and fall cleanups with a landscaping company. She will ask them to hold off mulching until planting is done.

Trustee McAllister asked if the Peabody Garden Club is still providing flowers for the George Peabody grave site. Trustee Gallugi replied that this is the first she has heard about providing flowers for the grave site, but the Garden Club would be happy to help with some guidance. Trustee McAllister suggested succulents.

Trustee Shruhan asked about the condition of the roof at the West Branch and whether it was within the library budget. Director Merlin stated that she had not made the capital request yet.

There was a **MOTION** to receive the Director's Report by Trustee Vassallo. The motion was seconded by Trustee McAllister.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of the Committees and Sub-committees

Executive Committee:

Nothing to report.

Audubon:

Nothing to report.

Trustee O'Brien is absent.

Building and Grounds:

Nothing to report.

Personnel:

Nothing to report.

Policy and Procedures:

Nothing to report.

Liaison to the Peabody Friends of the Foundation:

Nothing to report.

Trustee Najjar is absent.

Liaison to the Peabody Historical Society:

Nothing to report.

Trustee Quinn is absent.

There was a **MOTION** to receive the reports of the committees and sub-committees by Trustee Gallugi. The Motion was seconded by Trustee Smith.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion carried unanimously.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

Director Merlin asked for a vote for a late opening at 12pm of all branches on Monday, March 21st, 2022 for an all-staff training.

There was a **MOTION** for the Board to approve the late opening of 12pm for all three locations in order to allow for all-staff training by Trustee Shruhan. The Motion was seconded by Trustee Gallugi.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution

No new matters suggested to the Board.

Trustee Gallugi asked if the next meeting would be on Monday, April 4th, 2022. Director Merlin confirmed. Trustee Gallugi stated she would be absent as there will be a coinciding zoning board meeting.

Trustee Shruhan asked about the winter holiday dinner that the Board had elected to postpone so that new Trustees could join. He asked a) if the dinner would occur and b) when the last Trustee meeting for the summer would be. Director Merlin confirmed that the last meeting will be held on June 6th, 2022. There was some discussion whether June 6th is a Monday.

There was a **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting by Trustee Gallugi. The motion was seconded by Trustee Titelbaum.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm.

Submitted by,
Sarah Boçi
Recording Secretary

