



Board of Library Trustees

February 28, 2017– 3:30 p.m. – **Minutes**

Main Library, 613 Pleasant Street

The Board of Library Trustees met on February 28, 2017, 3:30 PM,
in the meeting room of the Main Library.

Present: Diana Henry, Vice-Chair
Very Rev. Constantine S. Bebis
Dr. John Fletcher
Elsie Fraga
Helen Rogers
Carl Cruz
Fr. Kevin Harrington
Jill Horton-Simms
Lee Blake
Olivia Melo, Director
Carmen Brodeur, Account Clerk

Guests: Kristine Arsenault, representing Mayor Jon Mitchell
Kathleen Vernon, Branch Manager for Howland Green Library
Janice Hodson, Curator of Art

Called to order: Ms. Henry called the meeting to order at 3:33 pm.

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the minutes of the December Trustees' meeting. The January Trustees' meeting was not held due to a snow storm. Motion was seconded by Dr. Fletcher. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Mr. Cruz asked Father Harrington to lead the meeting in a moment of silence and prayer in honor of the passing of Paul Cyr, Head of Special Collections and Joan Halter, President of the New Bedford Free Public Library Friends organization.

Ms. Melo informed the Board that the newly elected president for the Friends of the New Bedford Free Public Library is Ms. Diane Duprey.

A letter was read out loud to the Board by Ms. Melo in regards to Ms. Kathleen Vernon, Howland Green Branch Manager, and her upcoming retirement. A patron of the branch wrote to the Board acknowledging her excellent service and expressing sadness at the loss of Ms. Vernon as Manager of the branch. Ms. Melo and the Board also expressed their appreciation to Ms. Vernon for her great service, dedication and commitment to bringing the branch forward to what it is today. Everyone agreed she will be missed and wished her a very happy retirement.

Ms. Henry said the first of the *Winter Warming's Music Series* presented by the Friends of the New Bedford Free Public Library and Whaling City Sound were held on Sunday, February 26th and it was well attended. Mr. Cruz agreed it was a fun event and held in a wonderful setting.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Cruz made a motion to accept the staff reports and it was seconded by Ms. Fraga.

Mr. Cruz asked Ms. Melo regarding the repair of the bookmobile radiator and if the bookmobile was still off the road. Ms. Melo answered it was off the road only for the month of January and it had been fixed and was back on the road.

Mr. Cruz asked about the vacancy of the van driver for the branch delivery and if the job been advertised yet. Ms. Melo explained that the current vacancy is for a 20 hour Library Assistant and that position of van driver has to be submitted as an enhancement in the FY18 budget. Mr. Cruz asked who was doing the mail delivery for the branches and Ms. Melo explained that the Branch Managers are doing their own branch drop off and pick up.

The Staff reports were unanimously approved.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Melo reported that due to the continuance of patron drug overdoses in the public restrooms of the main library, Department of Facilities and the Mayor's office finally approved the remodeling of the restrooms and slated to begin within a few days. Attempts have been made to resolve the issue of privacy in these restrooms and to eliminate the need for staff supervision, but recent events, highlighted the need to have the locks removed from the doors and privacy stalls installed in both restrooms. Library staff functions should not include handling overdose situations on a weekly basis and getting these restrooms re-fitted to eliminate the privacy element will cut down on inappropriate use of this library space.

The Personnel department was notified of Ms. Vernon's retirement effective March 4th and initiation of recruitment for a new Branch Manager at Howland Green had begun. The position was posted on the city's web page and there is one candidate to date interested. This candidate had applied previously for another Branch vacancy and was interviewed by the Personnel committee. He will be re-interviewed by the Personnel committee to determine his eligibility for this current opening.

Ms. Melo submitted to the CFO's office the FY18 budget with personnel enhancements. The next FY18 budget meeting will be held on March 16th.

The Director's report was unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Art:** Dr. Fletcher, Chair – Dr. Fletcher announced that the Art Committee met on January 17th to finalize the portrait unveiling program of the Manuel E. Costa portrait. Mr. Cruz said the unveiling of the Manuel E. Costa portrait held on Feb 25th was well attended with 80 people in attendance. Mr. Cruz announced this was the first painting accepted to the collection done by an African American artist.

Dr. Fletcher asked opened the floor to Ms. Hodson at this point. Ms. Hodson was in attendance to present a second request from the Buffalo Bill Center of the West for the loan of *Sunset Near the Platte River* for a joint exhibit - *Albert Bierstadt: Witness to a changing West* at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West in Cody, Wyoming and the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa. She also updated the Board on the status

of the Center's original loan request for the Albert Bierstadt painting, *Sunset Light, Wind River Range of the Rocky Mountains* for the same exhibit.

Ms. Fraga reiterated her concerns over the loan duration, May 2018 through February 2019, as too long of a period. Very Reverend Bebis and Father Harrington also expressed concern over lending the piece. Ms. Arsenault asked that before the Library Board continue with their deliberations over this loan request that she inform the Mayor of it. Ms. Henry tabled this matter until Ms. Arsenault discusses the loan with the Mayor.

Also discussed was the status of the Lameroux portrait which was still unclear to the Art Committee as the status of the fundraising was still not forthcoming from Jim Barton. Ms. Hodson informed the Board that Mr. Barton had called her after the Art Committee meeting to let her know the family did not want the portrait done of Mrs. Lameroux. A letter to be sent to Mr. Barton, with a copy to the Lameroux family was being drafted. The letter stated that unless funds were raised by Mr. Barton's committee, the project could not proceed; that the project had been presented to and accepted by the Trustees based on the understanding that funds had been secured; and reiterating that the Trustees do not commission portraits, nor fundraise for their creation. After Mr. Barton's phone call, the letter was not sent to him.

Mr. Cruz called for a vote for the final draft of the Art Policy. Dr. Fletcher made a motion to accept the final draft of the Special Collections Scope of Collecting Guidelines: Art Collection; it was seconded by Ms. Fraga and unanimously approved.

2. **Bookmobile:** Ms. Rogers, Chair – Ms. Rogers said the bookmobile is back on the road.
3. **Building:** Ms. Horton-Simms, Chair – Nothing to report.
4. **Finance:** Ms. Fraga, Chair – Nothing to report.
5. **Gifts:** Father Harrington, Chair – Nothing to report.
6. **Personnel:** Ms. Rogers, Chair – Meeting will be scheduled to review application for the Howland-Green vacancy.
7. **Policy: Ms. Blake, Chair** – Meeting will be held to review the wedding photography and donation policy once it has been received back from Solicitor's office.
8. **Scholarships:** Mr. Cruz, Chair – Nothing to report.
9. **Security:** Very Rev. Fr. Bebis, Chair – Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Melo said the final draft of the strategic plan has been finalized and is with the Mayor for review. It's a much more comprehensive plan than what we have had in the past and will provide us with an action plan over the next five years.

A request to the CFO for a transfer of \$10,000 from Salaries to capital was submitted. The company which installed the rug at the main library, Capitol Flooring, provided an estimate on the project and it came under \$10,000 and if this fund transfer is approved, the rug project at Wilks can start. The rug selected is the same used in the main library children's room.

Ms. Melo said the library fell short again this fiscal year of meeting the Municipal Appropriation Requirement by \$37,000 and we needed to apply for a waiver. Appearing before the Board of Library

Commissioners to petition for the waiver was not necessary as the amount was below the 5% threshold. We will be receiving our first allotment of the State Aid grant in March for a total of \$76,094.00 which is used towards materials and upgrading technology throughout the system.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Melo said the FY18 budget had to be submitted at level funding. Ms Melo will be meeting with the Mayor and Ari Sky, CFO to discuss the FY18 library budget and enhancements on March 16th.

Ken Blanchard and Mark Champagne, from DFFM informed Ms. Melo of the project plan for the main library 1st floor restrooms. Ms. Melo had requested of the Mayor's office to move the restroom project up the list as it could not be put on hold any longer. The need to remove the locks from the doors has become imperative and installing the privacy partitions is the only option left. In order to comply with ADA, the exterior restroom wall will have to be bumped up 1 foot and an additional sink will be installed. DFFM is handling the project including putting up proper signage everywhere in the main library to inform the public that the 1st floor restrooms are being renovated and patrons will be directed to use the City Hall restrooms. In the evening after 4pm when City Hall closes, the 2nd floor restrooms will be open to the public under supervision of the evening custodian. To be within ADA requirements during construction, the children's restroom was retro fitted with an adult size toilet and handicap bars were installed at a higher level. These will be returned back to the original once the project is complete.

Ms. Melo added DFFM will renovate the children's restroom walls and flooring once the public restroom project is completed.

COMMUNICATION

Mr. Cruz asked the Board if they would approve the naming the History Room to the Paul Cyr History and Genealogy Room in memory of the late Paul Cyr. Board members agreed wholeheartedly and Mr. Cruz made the motion; it was seconded by Dr. Fletcher and unanimously approved.

Mr. Cruz said the NBFPL Board is interested in joining the Massachusetts Library Trustees Association (MLTA) and asked for Ms. Melo to register the Board for its membership.

Ms. Melo said six professional library staff members will be accompanying her to the State House for Library Legislative Day on Tuesday. The New Bedford team will be joining forces with other librarians in the Sails Library Network in advocating for continued support of state funding to communities.

NEXT MEETING:

Regular meeting: Tuesday, March 28 at 3:30pm at the Main Library.

Dr. Fletcher made a motion to adjourn, it was seconded by The Very Rev. Bebis and passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.

Clerk,
Lee Blake