

**TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY**  
**Meeting of February 19, 2015**

**Present:** Ms. Burnham, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Mr. Rowe, Mr. Morin, Mr. Rowe, Ms. Sheirer, Mr. Twarog. **Also Present:** Kristine Bissell, Northampton City Treasurer; Peter Kobel, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Brian Tabor, representative of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA). **Absent:** Ms. Moulding.

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 PM in the Watson Room.

**Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**Secretary's Report**

Ms. Hess moved that the Secretary's Report of January 22, 2015 be accepted and placed on file. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

**City Treasurer**

Mr. Morin introduced Kristine Bissell, the new Northampton City Treasurer. Ms. Bissell gave Mr. Morin the Clarke & Earle fund distribution of approximately \$11,000. She said that the projected distribution for 2016 is slightly higher based on the 2.5% value as of December 31, 2014 as agreed upon. Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Bissell for a summary of the funds' value, and Ms. Bissell asked the Trustees to send her an example of what they received before, and she will provide something similar. The Trustees thanked Ms. Bissell for attending the meeting.

**Treasurer's Report**

Mr. Morin presented the Treasurer's Report of January 31, 2015. The Aid Fund closed the month with a deficit of \$41,600, a reduction of \$17,000 from December's deficit of \$58,600. The main reason for the deficit is December was the 2<sup>nd</sup> three pay period month of FY15. Labor and Repairs is still over-spent by \$9,000. Electricity is over-budget by \$2,000, however the January invoice was \$500 under budget. Building insurance and worker's compensation were pre-paid for the year which is why those categories are over-budget. Heating gas is \$2,400 over-budget this month, but under budget for the year. This account may become over-budget when all the winter month's bills are paid. The initial state aid check of \$19,300 was received. The Book Fund has a \$7,500 surplus for January. The expenses are \$3,000 under budget this month, and income is \$2,000 under budget. A check for \$2,000 was received from the Friends for programming. A transfer of \$5,000 will be done in February from the monies collected from the parking meters. A check for \$2,000 was received from Anonymous for the Outreach Fund. An insurance payment of \$23,400 was received for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Cleanup Fund, bringing the balance in that fund to a deficit of \$423.

In response to a question from Mr. Twarog, Mr. Morin said that Forbes was on the city's electricity plan through National Grid, and that the city had instructed Forbes to budget 9.5% more for electricity in FY16. In response to a question from Mr. Morin, Ms. Downing said that there is one remaining invoice from the second floor clean-up that is being negotiated with the insurance company.

Mr. Rowe moved that the Treasurer's Report of January 31 be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

**Administrative Report** (Ms. Downing)

Ms. Downing reported that Ms. Moulding went out for minor surgery on January 29. She plans to stay off her feet for a few weeks but has been in touch by phone and email.

In December, Forbes held its 25<sup>th</sup> annual Giving Tree. The library partnered with community agencies to collect and distribute toys. For the first time the United Way did not participate and instead the library worked with First Call and Community Action to identify eligible families. This year 28 local families representing 40-50 kids were served. One item that was not given away in this program is a very fancy dollhouse with several sets of furnishings. Children's librarian Jude McGowan is planning to raffle this off in March to raise money for craft supplies for the Children's Department.

Lilly Sundell-Thomas from the Information Services staff was chosen to participate in a new leadership initiative by the Massachusetts Library System. The program is intended for up-and-coming librarians and will provide mentoring as well as opportunities to network with others from across the state.

The Williamstown Art Conservation Center has reported that the gilt beneath the bronze paint on the frame of *Orpheus and Eurydice* is in acceptable condition and warrants the removal of the paint. They have been given approval to take this step and once it is done the frame will have a warm reflective quality. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing said there is no date set yet for the painting's return, but that she hopes it will be back in about a month.

Food for Fines was offered from January 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup>. During this time, overdue fines could be paid for with canned goods or healthy non-perishable food items. All food collected was given to the Northampton Survival Center for distribution to those in need in the community.

The Trustees Award will be presented to Susan Stinson on Saturday, May 30 at 2:00 PM in the Coolidge Museum. Ms. Stinson has agreed to do a brief reading from her work. Diana M. Gordon, the first Writer in Residence at Forbes Library will also give a reading.

The upgrade to the audio-visual system in the Community Room has been scheduled for early March and should take two days.

Ms. Downing attended Senator Rosenberg's legislative district's library advocacy breakfast along with Julie Bartlett-Nelson and Martha McCormick at the new South Hadley Public Library. Senator Rosenberg acknowledged the "bump in the road" for the state's fiscal picture, but is confident that it can be overcome by strategically addressing spending as well as revenue.

All Hamptons Read has begun distributing copies of the *Maltese Falcon* for the community wide read starting in early March. Anyone who participates in a book discussion will be given a ticket to see the Humphrey Bogart film adaption at the Academy of Music on April 19 at 4:00 PM.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve the Administrative Report and place it on file. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

### **Friends of Forbes Meeting**

Ms. Hess attended the February 4 meeting of the Friends of Forbes and reported that there were several prospective board members in attendance and that the Friends' Treasurer, Tim Umbach, gave a detailed presentation of the Friends' finances. The special events committee reported on the basket raffles and plans for the Friends' 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. The Friends' annual meeting is in April and will include a program about the Coolidges and a tie-in to the Big Read. They are also planning an antiques appraisal event on April 25. They received notice from Florence Savings Bank that they will receive a Customer's Choice Community Grant award on March 4.

### **Next Meetings**

The next regular meeting of the Trustees was scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, 2015 at 4:00 PM in the Coolidge Room. The Trustees scheduled meetings for the remainder of 2015 on Thursdays at 4:00 PM for the following dates: April 23, May 21, June 18, July 30, September 24, October 22, November 19, and December 17.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held Wednesday, March 4 at 6:30 PM. Mr. Rowe will attend on behalf of the Trustees.

The Coolidge Advisory Committee will be meeting in 2015 at 4:00 PM on Mondays, March 2, June 1, September 14, and December 7. Ms. Burnham will attend the March 2 meeting on behalf of the Trustees. Ms. Hess will attend the June 1 meeting, Mr. Rowe will attend the September 14 meeting, and Mr. Carrier will attend the December 7 meeting.

### **Communications**

Ms. Downing received updates from the Massachusetts Library Trustees Association (MLTA) which she distributed to the Trustees.

### **FY16 Budget**

A preliminary FY16 budget was submitted to the city earlier this month with a 2.75% increase (\$31,999) over last year as instructed. This budget leaves an \$11,000 gap with level services, accounting for inflation and contractual increases to personnel and operating expenses. Budget discussions between departments and the city will take place in March. The Trustees will discuss the FY16 budget with Ms. Moulding when she returns.

### **Elevator Project**

The first construction meeting was held on January 30, and a tentative timetable for the project was discussed. The site preparation will begin in mid-March and the project will wrap up in July. The front entrance will be usable for much of this time although it will not be handicapped-accessible. Mr. Carrier said that there is very little wiggle room in the design for the elevator. The exact measurements will be taken and fabrication begun after the hole for the elevator is excavated. Regular construction meetings will begin on Fridays at 1:00 PM.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to appoint Mr. Rowe as an alternate to attend construction meetings and sign documents on behalf of the Trustees if Mr. Carrier is absent. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

At 4:35 PM, Ms. Bissell left the meeting.

### **Director's Evaluation & Contract & Job Requirements**

Mr. Rowe compiled the individual Trustees' evaluations of the Director into one document and distributed copies to the Trustees. The Trustees will familiarize themselves with the results, and discuss them at the next Trustees' meeting. Mr. Rowe said there is great value in the work Ms. Moulding did in providing a detailed description of her position and duties.

### **Gifts, Bequests, Sales, etc.**

The following designated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$2,000 from Anonymous, to be deposited in the Outreach Fund.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the allocation of the designated gift as proposed by Ms. Moulding. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

### **LSTA Grant Report**

The screen reading software that was purchased will be installed this month and training is being planned for April. Lighted magnifying glasses and white boards were also purchased to aid in use of the library and with communication. A panel presentation is being planned for April where staff will have the opportunity to hear firsthand accounts from people living with a disability. Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Downing to report back to the Trustees on these events.

### **Reports on workshops/meetings/activities**

A staff meeting was held on January 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss ways to safely and effectively serve vulnerable patrons including those in shelters or who are homeless and those with medical or mental health issues. There was a panel presentation with representatives from the Northampton Police Department and the Department of Mental Health. The program was organized by Peg Keller who is the Housing Planner for the city. Staff from Lilly Library and Smith College were also invited to attend. A follow up session is planned in March with representatives from the shelter staff as well as the Veteran's Administration. Ms. Downing said that Forbes is now on the police department's roster for parks and walks, which is an initiative for the police to be more visible in the community. In response to a question from Mr. Rowe, Ms. Downing said that there have been more homeless people in the library as a result of the colder weather, but that there haven't been any problems.

### **Other Business**

Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Downing about staff morale and if there were things the Trustees could do for staff aside from higher wages. Ms. Downing said she was hesitant to speak for everyone, but that overall she thought communication was good, and that generally the staff were concerned about the elevator project and their upcoming contract negotiations. Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Downing to inquire with staff what they might like to improve morale. Ms. Downing will report back to the Trustees.

Mr. Carrier asked the Trustees who are up for re-election in October if they would be running for another term. Ms. Burnham said that she will not be running. Mr. Twarog and Mr. Rowe said they had not yet decided.

Mr. Rowe asked if there was a role for the Trustees in helping Historic Northampton. He said he would be meeting with Kiki Smith, the president of their board of directors.

**Other Business** (continued)

Ms. Downing announced two staffing changes. Jennie Lamour is expecting and will be on leave beginning in July and Jason Myers is leaving and relocating to North Carolina.

At 5:00 PM Ms. Hess moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM.