

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Meeting of October 21, 2014

Present: Ms. Burnham, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Mr. Rowe, Ms. Moulding, Ms. Sheirer, Mr. Twarog. **Also Present:** Lyn Heady, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Ben Kalish, representative of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA); Irvine Sobelman; Attorney Bill Newman. **Absent:** Mr. Morin.

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM in the Watson Room in Forbes Library.

Security Cameras

Attorney Newman addressed the trustees about the proposed installation of security cameras at Forbes. He said the decision should not be driven by fear as a result of the July fire, but should be made logically on the basis of data. He said that data shows that security cameras do not reduce crime, but rather it moves crime to other locations. He asked if the security cameras would in fact solve the problem the Trustees are trying to address or merely provide a false sense of safety. He said that while it is understandable that library staff want to feel safe, he believes there are other solutions that will provide increased safety such as an emergency notification system that would send a signal directly to the police department. He said that if the Trustees decide to go ahead with the security cameras there are many issues that they will need to address surrounding storage, access, and retention of the files. There followed a brief discussion with the Trustees about staff safety and security, whether the cameras would prevent incidents, and the role of the cameras in apprehending suspects after the fact.

The Trustees thanked Attorney Newman, who left the meeting at 4:30 PM.

Public Comments

Ms. Sobelman read a statement from Marty Nathan, a local physician, against installing security cameras in Forbes Library. She then read her own statement against the security cameras. She said they are incompatible with the core value of libraries to uphold privacy and confidentiality, and would be a deterrent to library use.

Ms. Sobelman left the meeting at 4:35 PM.

Secretary's Report

Mr. Rowe moved that the Secretary's Report of September 18, 2014 be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Scott Morin was out of town and unable to attend this meeting. He will present the FY14 year-end report at the November Trustees' meeting. Mr. Morin supplied copies of the Treasurer's Report of August 31, 2014 and September 30, 2014.

August closed with a deficit of \$21,000 in the Aid Fund due to July being a 3 pay period month; the variance on the wages category is \$25,000 this month. Building insurance has been pre-paid for the year. The Book Fund has a \$6,800 deficit in August. This deficit was eliminated in September when the annual Garvey income from the endowment was received. Mr. Morin created the 2nd Floor Cleanup Project fund to track the finances for repairing the 2nd floor fire damage. The balance in August was \$283.

Treasurer's Report (continued)

Ms. Burnham moved that the Treasurer's Report of August 31, 2014 be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

September closed with a deficit of \$32,000 in the Aid Fund, mainly due to the payment for repairs on the elevator and a payment of unused leave time to an employee who retired recently. The City sent a check in October in reimbursement for part of the unused sick time. The Book Fund has a \$27,000 surplus in September. The annual Garvey income was deposited, as was \$25,000 from the Book Fund in the endowment to cover the cost of art acquisitions. \$2,500 was received from the Friends of Forbes for staff development. A \$5,000 transfer was sent to the Garvey Book & Media fund in the endowment from the monies collected from the parking meters. A \$10,000 transfer was deposited to the Stahl fund from the endowment per the request of the Trustees. An insurance payment of \$75,000 was deposited in the 2nd Floor Cleanup fund.

In response to questions from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said that the elevator received more than usual usage while the stairs were closed after the fire. The City reimbursed Forbes \$4,000 for the employee sick time, and shelving for special collections has been ordered to use up the remaining funds in the 2011 Annual Fund.

Ms. Hess moved that the Treasurer's Report of September 30, 2014 be accepted and placed on file. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Administrative Report (Ms. Moulding & Ms. Downing)

Ms. Moulding reported that the Friends of Forbes wine tasting event was held Friday, September 26. Once again it was a lovely event, well attended and well received. The Friends made over \$5,000 for the evening which included sponsors, ticket sales, and a raffle. There were about 150 attendees.

The large oil painting which was hung on the second landing of the main staircase was sent to the Williamstown Art Conservation Center for restoration work. An assessment of the work needed has not yet been received.

Forbes Library and NCTV partnered to show the movie ET on the west lawn on Wednesday, October 8. Although it had been postponed from the previous week due to rain and the weather being cold, there was an appreciative crowd of over 100 enjoying the experience.

Forbes Library is hosting *A Genius for Place: American Landscapes of the Country Place Era*, an exhibition from the Library of American Landscape History until November 24 on the Mezzanine. *A Genius for Place* traces the development of an important movement in American landscape design through a selection of seven estate landscapes designed between 1905 and 1950. The exhibit presents large panels with photos of seven particularly significant estates from the period -- Gwinn by Warren H. Manning, Charles A. Platt, and Ellen Shipman, Cleveland, Ohio; Stan Hywet by Warren H. Manning and Ellen Shipman, Akron, Ohio; Dumbarton Oaks by Beatrix Farrand, Washington, D.C.; Winterthur by Marian Coffin, Winterthur, Delaware; Ford House by Jens Jensen, Grosse Pointe Shores, Michigan; Val Verde by Lockwood DeForest, Santa Barbara, California; and Naumkeag by Fletcher Steele, Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

The Paradise City Cultural District, an initiative of the Massachusetts Cultural Commission, has been established. Forbes is a member and Arts &

Administrative Report (continued)

Music librarian Faith Kaufmann is on the Northampton committee. A sign has been designed which will mark the boundaries of the district. A copy of the sign was distributed to the Trustees. The Massachusetts Cultural Commission will do advertising and support a website promoting the state's cultural districts.

Ms. Hess moved that the Administrative Report of September 18 be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Friends of Forbes Meeting

Ms. Moulding attended the October 1 meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library and reported that the Friends are discussing replacing the carpet in the Community Room. She will bring some samples to the next Trustees meeting.

Next Meetings

The next regular meetings of the Trustees are scheduled for Wednesday, November 19, 2014; Wednesday, December 17, 2014; and Thursday, January 15, 2015, all at 4:00 PM in the Watson Room.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held Wednesday, November 5 at 6:30 PM. Mr. Rowe will attend on behalf of the Trustees.

The Coolidge Advisory Committee will be meeting in 2014 at 4:00 PM on Monday, December 1. Ms. Burnham will attend on behalf of the Trustees.

Communications

The Trustees received a letter dated October 3, 2014 from Susan Stinson, writer-in-residence at Forbes Library thanking Ms. Moulding, the Trustees, and the Friends of Forbes for the \$2,000 honorarium. Ms. Stinson will step down from the role of writer-in-residence at the end of this fiscal year. She has done the Local History/Local Novelists program for 5 years, and has done a fantastic job of promoting and running it.

Mr. Moulding received an email on October 21, 2014 from Norma Akamatsu expressing her objections to the proposed installation of security cameras at Forbes Library.

Mr. Carrier received a letter from Serena Smith of the Friends of Forbes, thanking the Trustees for their participation and contributions to the wine tasting event on September 26.

First Quarter Operating Budget Report

Ms. Moulding distributed a spread sheet with the amounts spent in the first quarter of FY15 from the library's operating budget. There is also a projection of what will be spent for the entire year. The projection at this time is for a nearly \$3,000 shortfall which is due mainly to a projected \$5,000 shortfall in the electricity line item. During the budget process in the spring of this year, Ms. Moulding was instructed by City Hall to reduce the library's electricity line item by \$7,000 because of changes in the vendor contracts. However, after only one quarter, it is impossible to predict with any accuracy how the year's budget will actually turn out.

Security Cameras

Ms. Moulding distributed relevant written discussions of privacy and confidentiality questions from the American Library Association website and a proposed security camera policy for Forbes Library. The proposed security

Security Cameras (continued)

camera policy says "In order to help insure a safe and secure environment for patrons and staff of Forbes Library and to protect the library building and collections, security cameras are installed at entrances and exits to the building. To protect the privacy of library users: Recordings from these cameras will not be viewed except as a response to a specific incident at Forbes Library. Recordings from these cameras will be kept for one week unless an incident occurs that requires holding the recording longer. Recordings from these cameras will only be made available to law enforcement through a legal subpoena or warrant or because of a specific incident at Forbes Library."

Ms. Hess asked that before discussing the details of the policy, that the Trustees vote on whether or not the security cameras should be installed. She said she does not believe they are necessary or appropriate for the library, and will not be a deterrent especially to people who are unstable. She said they would provide a false sense of safety to staff and there are other ways of getting help from the police more quickly, such as an emergency notification system. In surveys conducted by the library with patrons, no one mentioned that they felt unsafe in the library. Many people described the library as safe, quiet, and welcoming, and Ms. Hess believes that the security cameras are not consistent with that atmosphere. Cameras placed at the entrance to the library would be able to pick up titles of books as patrons came and left the building. Ms. Hess said that librarians have been at the forefront of privacy issues, defending the right to read, and treat as confidential any private information supplied by patrons. The mere threat of disclosure will deter innocent people from research.

Ms. Moulding shared images of the security cameras installed at Jones Library in Amherst, and said that she spoke to several library directors who had installed security cameras, and they were all very happy with them. In some libraries they are directed on specific collections, such as DVDs, to deter theft. Mr. Carrier said that many of the library's rarest books have been stolen, or the expensive color plates have been cut out with a razor. In response to a question from Mr. Rowe, Ms. Moulding said that had security cameras been installed when the arsonist struck at Forbes in July, the police would have recognized him immediately as a person of interest, and he would have been apprehended more quickly. Mr. Carrier said that the security cameras would make it easier to identify and prosecute suspects who behave inappropriately and make staff uncomfortable in the library. Mr. Twarog noted that this is after the fact and does not provide immediate assistance. Ms. Hess said a buzzer or whistle might help make people feel safer, especially if it connects to the police department. Ms. Downing said that staff have been hesitant to call the police in the past for a variety of reasons. They don't want to involve the police or escalate a situation to the level where there might be repercussions, and they want to try and handle it themselves. Ms. Moulding raised a question of lost children who sometimes become separated from their parents, in which security cameras would be of assistance. Mr. Carrier said that times have changed and child safety has become of more concern to parents. He asked that the record show that he believes the security cameras are a good idea. Ms. Burnham asked if staff were in favor of the cameras, and Ms. Moulding said that some were and some weren't. Ms. Burnham said she would like to know more about the alternatives, including the emergency button to notify police. Mr. Twarog moved that Forbes not install security cameras. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which passed with Mr. Twarog, Ms. Hess, and Mr. Rowe voting in favor, and Ms. Burnham and Mr. Carrier opposed.

Old School Commons Deposit

Originally in 1983, when library land was leased to the Old School Commons for 99 years, the Trustees decided to deposit the annual payment of \$1,500 in the Cutter Book Fund. Since then, it has often been deposited in other funds when there seemed to be a need. Since thanks to the Garvey Book Fund, the Book and Media Fund is one of the healthiest funds in the library's endowment, Ms. Moulding requested that the Old School Commons annual check be deposited regularly into the Stahl Halberstadt Fund to help insure that the library will always have support for its technology needs.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to deposit the Old School Commons annual payment of \$1,500 in the Stahl Halberstadt Fund. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Director's Evaluation

Ms. Moulding will distribute copies of the form to be used for the Director's evaluation at the next Trustees' meeting.

Gifts, Bequests, Sales, etc.

The following undesignated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$300 from Anonymous to be deposited in the Edward Morin Fund; \$100 from Nicolas Gross, Northampton, to be deposited in the Edward Morin Fund; \$25 from Alexander George, Amherst, to be deposited in the Edward Morin Fund.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the allocation of the undesignated gifts as proposed by Ms. Moulding. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

The following receipts from sales/rents was received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$52 from NEBA for sale of books to be deposited in the Special Collections Fund.

Mr. Rowe made a motion to approve the allocation of the receipt from sales/rents as proposed by Ms. Moulding. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Elevator Project

The accessible elevator project went out to bid on October 15. Filed sub-bids are due November 12 and final bids are due November 19. The contract will be awarded within a week from then and the project is scheduled to start on December 15.

Fire and Restoration

The front stairs opened on October 7, with new carpeting and a restored banister. Hugh Glover, the wood restorer from the Williamstown Art Conservation Center, did a beautiful job with perfectly hand carved balusters created by Don Kelly of Blueberry Woodworkers in Plainfield and dentals and a replacement newel post fabricated by JohnCarlo Woodworkers of Chicopee. The painters are due to start on Thursday, October 17, and will paint the walls and ceilings of the art gallery, Arts & Music periodicals reading room, the staircase, and the lobby. They will also paint the walls of the front room of the Arts & Music department. When the painters have finished, the library's art work will be rehung.

LSTA Grant Report

Forbes' grant to improve library services to people with disabilities has begun by contacting supporting agencies to discuss collaborations. In addition there has been press coverage and a pre-grant survey has been launched. During the next month there will be visits to libraries and institutions to see best practices. Forbes has also been asked to present information to the city's Commission on Disability about the grant. Based on this feedback and research, decisions will be made on equipment purchases for assistive technology, public computer software, and pursuing an improved AV system for the Community Room.

Ben Kalish left the meeting at 5:40 PM.

ARIS Report

The library submitted its annual statistical summary to the state and a copy was distributed to the Trustees. Highlights were presented and questions answered at the meeting. The biggest changes were in ebooks, with half of the library's holdings now being ebooks, an increase of 38% over last year and 70% over two years ago. The library is also now counting Wi-Fi sessions, including people who bring their own devices, logging about 70 sessions per day. Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Downing to send copies of the report to the Mayor.

Capital Improvement Requests

Jason Petcen and Ms. Moulding presented the library's capital improvement requests to the City Capital Improvement Committee on October 8. Ms. Hess attended the meeting in support of the library. As in the past, Forbes requested funding for three projects; replacing the handicap lift, replacing the windows in the building, and installing a separate climate control system for the special collections rooms. The committee members asked a few questions and seemed to accept that these were good projects, but made no promises about funding. Copies of the requests were distributed to the Trustees.

Reports on workshops/meetings/activities

Smith College Community Breakfast (Janet Moulding) Ms. Moulding attended the Smith College Community Breakfast on October 1, 2014. College President, Kathleen McCartney, spoke about college initiatives and announced a \$4,000,000 donation. CFO Ruth Constantine, who will be retiring in December, explained building plans for the campus. A handout about Smith's contributions to Northampton was distributed to the Trustees. Mr. Carrier suggested that Mr. Rowe speak with Ruth Constantine's replacement to familiarize them with the historical relationship between Forbes and Smith.

WMLA Annual Meeting (Janet Moulding) Ms. Downing and Ms. Moulding attended the Western Massachusetts Library Advocates Annual Meeting at the new Granby Free Public Library on October 8. Celeste Bruno of the MBLC gave an interesting presentation about marketing public libraries.

At 5:50 PM Ms. Hess moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 PM.