

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Meeting of November 19, 2015

Present: Ms. Burnham, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Mr. Rowe, Mr. Morin, Ms. Moulding, Ms. Sheirer, Mr. Twarog. **Also Present:** Serena Smith, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Jason Petcen, representative of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA); Jude McGowan, Children's Department Librarian; Katie Wight, Trustee-elect; Elaine Reall, Trustee-elect; Susan Enz.

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

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Secretary's Report

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

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Morin presented the Treasurer's Report of October 31, 2015. The Aid Fund closed the month with a deficit of \$44,000, an increase from \$41,000 in September, due to a \$5,000 electrical repair bill payment. Electricity, Labor & Repairs, and General Supplies are all over-budget. Building insurance has been prepaid for the year. The Book Fund has an \$18,000 surplus, from the Garvey annual income and the Friends of Forbes annual gift. The Bak-Kirby Fund and the 2011 Annual Fund was removed from the October and subsequent reports. \$132,000 was paid to Kurtz Inc. from the Elevator Construction Project Fund. The Kurtz payment reduced the overall cash balance by 47% since September. The deficit balance in the elevator construction fund of \$224,000 is close to the surplus balance in the 2nd Century Fund of \$229,000. The fund balances will be closely monitored and reported to the Trustees as needed for future cash flow requirements. A \$5,000 transfer was made from the monies collected from the parking meters to the Garvey Book & Media Fund in the endowment and will appear on the November report. A \$9,203 transfer will be deposited to the Halberstadt Fund for the Coolidge Room AV system.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to give Mr. Morin authority to transfer funds out of the MacFarlane and O'Connor certificates of deposit at the Florence Savings Bank and into the cash account if need be. Mr. Morin will notify the Trustees by email if this becomes necessary. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Morin said that he will explore new formats for the Treasurer's Report that are available through QuickBooks. Mr. Morin has filed for an extension and the library's Form 990 will be due in the spring.

Mr. Twarog moved that the Treasurer's Report of October 31, 2015 be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Investment Policy

Mr. Morin distributed copies of the Forbes' Investment Policy approved by the Trustees in 2009, and a sample investment policy provided to him by Bartholomew, Inc. Mr. Morin will summarize both policies in easy-to-understand terms and make a recommendation to the Trustees at their December meeting.

Children's and Young Adult Department Report

Jude McGowan reported on the status of the Children's and Young Adult Department. It has been a very busy year with new staff and expanded programming. The Summer Reading program had 128 active weekly participants and there were four Family Summer Entertainment events. The library collected donations from local businesses for the weekly raffle where every child is a winner. There was lots of recurring programming for children of all ages from infants and toddlers to tweens and teens. The department continues to be a very busy place where kids and families come for books, movies, playtime, homework help, Reader's Advisory, entertainment and fun. The staff is very dedicated and works hard to give outstanding service. Mr. Carrier thanked Ms. McGowan for her report and asked her about the department's future needs. Ms. McGowan said that more staffing is the most pressing need, and that the specialized computers designed for children with disabilities were beginning to require maintenance. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said that new computers could be purchased with funds from the Halberstadt Technology fund. In response to a question from Ms. Hess, Ms. Downing said that the LSTA accessibility grant includes improvements for both children and adults. Ms. McGowan described a new video and handout being made for children who are fearful of new places and experiences that prepares them for a trip to the library. Mr. Carrier encouraged Ms. McGowan to think about and let the Trustees know of departmental needs in the future. He also suggested that a banner or poster be created and prominently displayed that thanks all the local businesses who contributed to the prizes for the Summer Reading program.

Administrative Report (Ms. Moulding & Ms. Downing)

Ms. Moulding reported that Mr. Twarog was reelected as Trustee in the November 3 election. Elaine Reall and Katy Wight were elected to replace Ms. Burnham and Mr. Rowe. The names of the two new members will be added to the MLTA membership form, which will be returned in December.

Ms. Moulding distributed an updated contact list for the Trustees, which includes the two new Trustees. The Trustees were asked to check it over carefully to make sure all the information is correct, add a cell phone number if wished, and to send that information to Ms. Sheirer who will update the list.

Ms. Downing reported that plans are moving ahead for a multi-town community read of *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande. This best-selling book addresses topics of aging, death and advanced care planning in a way that is very accessible and thought provoking. Libraries are partnering with Cooley Dickinson Hospital, Hospice and VNA to provide facilitated discussions and related events in as many communities in the hospital's service area as possible. This collaborative project is being called "Discussing Mortality" and will take place in February through April of 2016.

Ms. Moulding described an example of why Forbes Library is so important. Julie Nelson, Archivist and Information Services Librarian, said she got what she thought was an ordinary genealogy request. However, when she called the patron with the information, the patron was overjoyed, shaking and crying. "That was the final piece of the documentation I need on my dad so I can apply for US citizenship. You just changed my life forever in the best way."

Ms. Moulding reported that the lamppost by the front door was reinstalled yesterday. It had become rotten and was knocked over by the elevator construction crew. Library Legislative Day will be Tuesday, March 8. Western Massachusetts Library Association (WMLA) will provide a bus again this year

Administrative Report (continued)

that will go to the state house in Boston where library representatives can meet with legislators. They also suggest that each library recruit 20 people to send post cards in support of libraries to their state representatives.

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

Friends of Forbes Meeting

Ms. Hess attended the November 4 meeting of the Friends of Forbes and reported that \$5,000 net was made from the wine tasting event. The Friends are beginning planning for next year's event including new ideas for publicity and corporate sponsorships. Barry Deitz will be the speaker at the Friends' annual meeting in April. His talk will be "When the Road Came Through" about the impact of Rt. 91 on the area. Ms. Moulding and Ms. McCormick attended a Chamber of Commerce event at the hospital. Advantages of joining the Chamber include help finding sponsors, access to mailing lists, advertising on their website, and holding "Arrive at Five" events at the library. The Friends voted to join for one year at a cost of \$390. New member benefits include a free banner on the Chamber's website for six months and eight free "Arrive at Five" tickets. The Friends newsletter will go in their membership mailing, which is going out this week. The mailing will also include the Florence Savings Bank ballot for the Community Service Grant Awards. The Friends voted to join Amazon Smiles, which donates a percentage of purchases to the Friends. Ms. Hess questioned whether it is necessary to report on the Friends meetings in the Trustees' minutes since the Friends minutes are also distributed to the Trustees. The Trustees discussed it and decided that since the Trustees' minutes are part of the library's permanent record and the Friends' minutes are not, the Trustees' minutes should include a brief summary of the Friends' meetings.

Next Meetings

The next regular meeting of the Trustees is scheduled for Thursday, December 17, 2015 at 4:00 PM in the Watson Room.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held Wednesday, December 2 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 Monday, December 7. Mr. Carrier will attend on behalf of the Trustees.

Communications

Ms. Moulding received an email on November 13, 2015 from Susan Wright, Finance Director of the City of Northampton, notifying her that Forbes will be receiving a bequest of \$2,092.32 from Ms. Hanna Hop.

Meeting between Mayor and Mr. Carrier

Mr. Carrier met with Mayor Narkewicz to discuss outstanding issues relating to the library. He said it was a very positive and valuable meeting. Mr. Carrier emphasized the library's value to the community aside from books and internet access including services such as reference, fine arts, the Coolidge Museum, local history and genealogy, programming for all ages, and meeting rooms. Ms. Enz said that Forbes is an investment in the community. It is accessible to everyone regardless of socioeconomic status, and the staff is always polite and extremely helpful.

Mr. Carrier discussed with the mayor issues including the disbursement of the Clarke & Earle funds, utility expenses such as water, sewer, and drainage,

Meeting between Mayor and Mr. Carrier (continued)

and the FY15 deficit in the library's budget. Mayor Narkewicz said he thought Forbes could withdraw more than the current 2.5% per year from the Clarke & Earle funds, and that the payments should be made earlier in the fiscal year. He said that he opposed the library having to pay for water, sewer, and drainage independently of the city, but the decision about the drainage fee was made by the city council, and he cannot overturn it. The Trustees could talk to the city council about having that decision reconsidered. The mayor expressed concern about the city not having control over the heat, HVAC, and electricity in the building if they were to pay those items directly. Ms. Moulding clarified that the city already has electronic monitoring access to the library's systems. Mr. Petcen said that the city controls the building temperature except for the Coolidge Museum and Special Collections, which must be controlled separately because of preservation concerns. Mr. Carrier said that the mayor agreed to fund the library's FY15 deficit in the amount of \$11,785 and he asked the library to let him know of impending deficits in a timely way.

Mr. Carrier and the mayor also discussed a more permanent plan for dealing with building maintenance deficits. He summarized what the library has done in complying with city suggestions for vendors, bids for building costs, and using city services when possible, and said that the library is happy to explore further suggestions. He spoke about the library's transparency in following the open meeting laws even though it is not required, and posting minutes and annual reports online. The mayor expressed concern with raising the building maintenance budget for Forbes since the library has autonomy over its own budget. The mayor has asked the city solicitor to look into the issue of who owns the Forbes building and land, and once this is clarified, then a meeting can be arranged to work out a formalized building maintenance agreement. Regardless, the city has an insurable interest in the building and is therefore responsible for its maintenance. He said that the city has a multi-year elevator maintenance contract and when it comes up for renewal, the two elevators in Forbes can be rolled into it.

At 5:16 PM, Ms. Enz and Ms. Smith left the meeting.

The Trustees discussed the conversation and said that more clarity and specificity is needed on what the library would like to see changed in its fiscal relationship to the city so that the Trustees can better present their position when approaching the city council. Mr. Carrier said that his conversation was a good start, and once these issues are resolved, the library will be in a better position to address the issues of outreach and Saturday closings.

Gifts, Bequests, Sales, etc.

There were no designated gifts or receipts from sales this month. The following undesignated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$150 from Bonnie Druschel, Holyoke, in memory of Laura Singleton, to be deposited in the Lyman Special Collections Fund; \$200 from Donald Reutener, Florence, in memory of Laura Singleton, to be deposited in the Lyman Special Collections Fund; \$100 from Richard Cobb, Saint Louis, MO, in memory of Laura Singleton, to be deposited in the Lyman Special Collections Fund.

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

Elevator Project

Ms. Moulding reported that the temporary wall around the new elevator construction was removed in late October. Other than some minor finish work, the elevator needs only for the electrician to complete the wiring. The inspection will be requested when the work is completed. The contractor said that inspections generally happen within two to three weeks. The doors at the top of the stairs are still on back order, but the contractor hopes they will be replaced by mid-December. Mr. Petcen said that he has been attempting to put pressure on the elevator company to complete its work.

LSTA Grant Report

Ms. Downing reported that the grant is moving along, although it is difficult to draw attention to the smaller improvements when the elevator is still not completed. She plans to have an informational table in the lobby in December promoting some of the less visible improvements made so far including new large print, high contrast floor maps and brochures.

Tree/Landscaping Committee

Ms. Moulding reported that the city Public Shade Tree Commission, chaired by Lilly Lombard, met on Wednesday, November 4, with the library's tree committee, whose members are Mr. Rowe, Mr. Burnham, Lyn Heady, Mr. Petcen, and Ms. Moulding. The city's Tree Warden, Richard Parasiliti also attended the meeting. A tentative plan was developed to remove the two worst pin oaks on the west lawn, the ones closest to the exit driveway. They would be replaced by three to four new trees. It is unclear who would be responsible for the new trees. The removal will be done by the DPW and the trees have been tagged. They will need to hire a bucket loader since they don't have anything tall enough. It was suggested that to take down all the trees in front of the library at one time would be too drastic a change. It would be better to do it section by section. The tree committee would like the trees on the west lawn to be set in farther than the current ones so they do not interfere with the power lines. The tree committee is going to create a list of tree varieties they would recommend to replace the pin oaks.

Outreach

Ms. Moulding reported that the Outreach subcommittee met on October 28. The committee finalized the volunteer coordinator job description and decided to call the program the "Delivery Program" to avoid confusion with the existing "Outreach Program," and decide how to proceed with instigating the project. The committee consists of Trustees Mr. Rowe and Ms. Hess, Friends Board members Peter Kobel and Scott Kennedy, and Ms. Moulding and Ms. Downing. Margaret Lamb, an interested patron, joined the committee. The job description was posted in the library on October 30 and out to the public on November 12. So far, there are 10 applicants including one internal candidate, and review of the applications will begin the first week in December.

Reports on workshops/meetings/activities

None this month.

Other Business

On behalf of the Trustees, Mr. Carrier congratulated Mr. Twarog on his re-election, and Ms. Reall and Ms. Wight on their election as Trustees.

At 5:38 PM, Ms. Hess moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:38 PM.