

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Thursday, April 25, 2019

Present: Ms. Buckhout, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss, Mr. Twarog, Ms. Reall, Ms. Sheirer, Ms. Wight. **Also Present:** Mr. Brian Jamros and Mr. Joshua Paul, representatives of Bartholomew Inc.; Martha McCormick, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Kat Janeczek, representative of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA); Paula Elliott, Head of Technical Services **Absent:** None.

The meeting was called to order at 3:46 PM in the Watson Room.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Endowment Report

Mr. Jamros distributed copies of the Forbes Portfolio Review as of March 31, 2019. The value of the portfolio as of March 31 was \$5,057,211.46. Last time they visited in January, the market had been down significantly in December, but now 3 months later it has stabilized and rebounded. There is still the possibility of a trade war with China but it is impossible to know what effect that will have on the economy until further down the road. So far the portfolio is up 8 or 9% year to date, but there are still 8 months left to go this year. They will continue to monitor the portfolio allocations to make sure it is in line to meet Forbes' spending requirements and the Trustees risk tolerance. Mr. Paul pointed out that the total gain since they took over the portfolio in 2009 is just shy of \$3 million and it has performed well against the bench marks. He said that 38% of the assets are in domestic equities and 22.5% in international equities. The remainder of the portfolio is in bonds and stabilizes the account. In response to questions from the Trustees, Mr. Paul said it does not appear that the ESG mandate and divesting from fossil fuels has negatively affected the performance. Mr. Jamros said that in the future they will bring a comparison report. Ms. Hess said that the new investment policy has gained community support.

Mr. Carrier thanked Mr. Paul and Mr. Jamros who left the meeting at 4:05 PM.

Secretary's Report

Ms. Hess moved that the Secretary's Report of March 26, 2019 and the Secretary's Report of the Special Meeting of April 19, 2019 be accepted and placed on file with a few minor corrections. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Buckhout presented the Treasurer's Report of March 31, 2019. The General Aid Fund had negative net activity for the month of \$39,632 and a cumulative balance of \$39,902. The Book & Media Fund closed with positive net activity of \$2,672, and a cumulative balance of \$17,330. The Civic Hub Grant fund had negative net activity of \$767 and now has a balance of \$4,411. The Community Engagement Fund had positive net activity of \$1,935 and a balance of \$2,450. The Garvey Book & Media Fund had negative net activity of \$3,830 due to a \$5,000 transfer to the endowment and now has a balance of \$2,376. The Halberstadt Technology Fund had negative net activity of \$5,991 and has a deficit of \$411. The Morin Fund had positive net activity of \$670 and a balance of \$89,245. The RCCR Centennial Fund had positive net activity of \$520 and a balance of \$1,678. The Staff Development Fund had positive net activity of \$3,517 and a balance of \$3,427. The Watson Copier Fund had negative net activity of \$1,680 and a balance of \$689.

Treasurer's Report (continued)

Ms. Buckhout said that the Halberstadt and Watson Funds are a bit under water, but she and Ms. Downing are monitoring them closely, and no transfers are needed at this time. Ms. Buckhout reported that an engagement letter from the new auditors Downey, Pieciak, and Fitzgerald has been received and reviewed. The letter was signed and will be returned.

Ms. Hess moved that the Treasurer's Report of March 31, 2019 be accepted and placed on file. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

Gifts, Donations, and Bequests, etc.

Ms. Downing submitted a list of recent donations of designated, undesignated, and gifts received as a result of "Library Giving Day." The following donation was received since the last Trustees' meeting: two digitally overlaid photographs of Forbes Library by Ellen Augarten. There were no receipts from sales/rents. Ms. Downing noted that Jesse Adams very generously donated the balance of his campaign fund, and "Library Giving Day" was a huge success raising a total of \$15,444.

Ms. Wight made a motion to approve the undesignated, designated, and gifts received from "Library Giving Day" as proposed by Ms. Downing, with the gifts received for Library Giving Day divided evenly between the Adult Programming Fund and the Children's & Young Adult Programming Fund. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Third Quarter Budget Report

Ms. Downing presented the Third Quarter Budget Report as of March 31, 2019, showing the budgeted amounts, year-to-date totals, and variances (surpluses and deficits). She said there were no surprises, and the State Aid check has arrived. The new HVAC system is using more electricity than anticipated resulting in a \$3,000 overage. Labor and repairs is also overspent, but that was expected. Supplies and housekeeping supplies are also over budget and she will allocate more in the future.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve the Third Quarter Budget Report. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. Ms. Downing will share the report with the mayor's office. Ms. Moss said that the Third Quarter Book & Media Budget also looks fine and she will bring the report to the next Trustees' meeting.

Ms. Buckhout left the meeting at 4:15 PM.

Technical Services Annual Report

Ms. Elliott presented the annual Technical Services Department Report. Projects completed include working with the Children's Department on location codes to clarify where materials are shelved; rods were attached to the periodical shelving units which were also repaired; and games and puzzles were added to the circulating collection. Ongoing projects include the library wide weeding project. Since March last year, 13,656 items were deleted from the database and 12,812 have been added. As of April 5, 2019 there are 177,903 items in the database. New periodicals have been added and 20 were cancelled or stopped publishing. Bar codes are being added to any materials that are returned without them to help facilitate the use of the self-check machines. Steven Stover continues to do the Far Out Films program and the Zine Club. The Cutter Committee is working on revising the Q section to move the psychiatry books out of the B section into the Qs. New projects include outsourcing the covering of new books to Ingram, resulting in books

Technical Services Annual Report (continued)

circulating to patrons much faster. They are in the process of switching to W.T. Cox Subscription Service for the periodicals collection. They are now responsible for sorting and deciding which gift materials to keep for the main collection. They are working with the Children's Department to revise the Easy Readers section to make it easier to find materials. They are reclassifying the box sets of CDs so they can be interfiled with regular CDs. Brian Marchese helped make and stars in the video for "Library Giving Day." Staffing changes include the departure of Ryan Duffy to accept a job in the Worcester Public Library system and the addition of Steven Stover who also works in Circulation and Interlibrary Loan. He did the Living Books program in March which was a great success.

Ms. Elliott said ongoing issues include the office lighting which is inadequate, and the office is in need of a new coat of paint and new carpet. Ms. Downing said these items are included in the FY19 facilities plan. The Trustees thanked Ms. Elliott, who left the meeting at 4:21 PM.

Friends of Forbes

Ms. Hess attended the Friends of Forbes business meeting on April 3 and reported that they are participating in the Florence Bank Community Choice grant award program. They are planning for the wine tasting event and contacting sponsors. They agreed to purchase 2 passes to Look Park for \$75, and have been asked by the Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) to donate a gift basket for a raffle. They discussed the proposal to update the young adult space. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), which oversees library construction projects, recently visited the space to make recommendations. The Friends agreed to fund \$5,000 towards the new fabric panels for the Hosmer Gallery. The Edible Book event raised \$540. They changed the date of their next meeting from May 1 to May 8, 2019.

Administrative Report

Ms. Downing reported that Senator Comerford's visit to the library with the Trustees on April 19 provided a wonderful opportunity to showcase services and discuss state funding for libraries. She provided follow up on specific information to advocate for the state budget, and said it is important to contact representatives even if you already know they are supportive, so they can say how many constituents have contacted them.

The Trustees Award ceremony honoring Daria D'Arienzo and the late Dr. George Snook on April 3 was a success. The evening was combined with the Friends annual meeting again this year and it worked out very well in terms of shared publicity, costs and work. The Friends were especially generous in providing home baked goods along with lovely flowers and decorations. Julie Bartlett Nelson's talk about Grace Coolidge was very well received to an audience of about 45.

Ewan Hill has left their position in the Children's & Young Adult Department. We are sad to see them leave and will miss their creativity and excellent design work. They have been instrumental in recharging our teen programming. Callie Sieh has been hired as their replacement and is bringing her experience with the department as well as great technology skills.

The Friends have purchased two Look Park passes for the library to circulate. The passes provide free vehicle entry into the park and are sure to be a popular addition.

Administrative Report (continued)

In anticipation of increasing library hours, there have been orientations to the public services departments for staff. Staff were asked to attend the basic training for departments that they are less familiar with so that they can fill in as needed for departmental meetings, breaks and unanticipated gaps in the schedule due to staff calling out.

Gregory Wilson has been collecting and selling Northampton area postcards and trade cards for decades. In 2017 the Gutterman-Pohlman family purchased 1,500 cards from Wilson to donate to the Forbes Library Special Collections. Mr. Wilson will give an illustrated talk about the history and collecting of local postcards and show highlights of the collection on April 27 at 2:00 PM. For the month of April a selection from the Gregory Wilson Northampton Area Vintage Postcards/Trade cards Collection will be on display in the Hosmer Gallery. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing said that the donor has been thanked.

An unfortunate incident took place at the library on Thursday, March 28 when a patron refused to leave the library upon request by staff and police, and it resulted in the use of pepper spray by the police in the front elevator. The incident was very disruptive and was covered in the Daily Hampshire Gazette.

Ms. Downing said she records and shares feedback from patrons as a way to track how the library is doing and to identify areas needing improvement. Recently she had a comment from a parent visiting the Children's & Young Adult Department with her 8-month old that was complementary about the atmosphere in the department: "I have to tell you this: he usually takes a while to get warmed up and feel comfortable somewhere... But here- we've only been here once before when he was awake, and today he looked around and was crawling around/smiling happily straight away! So, good job creating a welcoming space." Ms. Downing commended the staff for their great work as well as the Trustees and Friends for supporting the creation of this special and welcoming space.

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

Next Meetings

The next regular meeting of the Trustees is scheduled for Thursday, May 23 at 4:00 PM. The following meetings for the rest of the year were previously scheduled: Thursday, June 20; Thursday, July 25; Thursday, September 19; Thursday, October 24; Tuesday, November 19; and Thursday, December 19.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held Wednesday, May 8 at 6:30 PM. Ms. Wight will attend on behalf of the Trustees.

A meeting of the Facilities Committee including Mr. Carrier, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Downing was scheduled for May 7, at 9:00 AM.

Communications

Ms. Downing and Ms. Nelson received an email from Daria D'Arienzo on April 4 expressing her appreciation for receiving the Trustees' award and for the celebration.

Ms. Downing received an email on April 16 from Lynn Barclay congratulating the Trustees on divesting from fossil fuel investments.

Communications (continued)

Mr. Carrier received an email from Susan Hogan on April 17 describing an unpleasant experience in the library at closing time with staff rushing to leave the building. Ms. Downing explained that while retail establishments have "soft" closings, most municipal offices and facilities have "hard" closings, meaning staff are only paid up until closing time when the building closes and lights are turned off. She said it takes 30-45 minutes to close the building. One staff member stays at the circulation desk until 5:15, but other service points close promptly at 5:00 PM. She said that regardless, staff should always treat patrons respectfully and she has spoken with them about this incident.

Mr. Carrier received a letter dated April 5, 2019 from the MBLC announcing the second state aid to public libraries distribution. Forbes will receive \$21,207.86.

Ms. Downing received a letter dated April 3, 2019 from the Northampton Survival Center thanking Forbes for its gift of 595 pounds of food.

Mr. Carrier received a letter dated April 22, 2019 from the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA) requesting that negotiations be opened for the 2019 contract.

Meeting Room Policy

Ms. Moss reported that the Leadership Team has reviewed the current meeting room policy with the goal of making it more concise and accurate. The library's current and proposed revised policies were distributed to the Trustees. Ms. Moss said she is using the language from the state attorney general's office about political groups not being allowed to distribute campaign materials. Each request is mediated by Ms. Moss who sometimes consults with Ms. Downing about the group's eligibility. In response to suggestions from the Trustees, Ms. Moss will move the sentence about the library reserving the right to cancel if the policy is violated to the end of the section so that it references everything above. In response to questions from Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss said that information about the library's meeting spaces, including technology, and how to reserve spaces is on the library's website.

Ms. Reall made a motion to approve the revised Meeting Room Policy as amended. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Hosmer Gallery Panels

Ms. Downing reported that the display panels in the Hosmer Gallery were installed in 2001 and have been used by hundreds of artists. The monthly shows featuring local artists are a huge draw and the gallery has been described as one of the most desirable in Northampton. The fabric covering the inset panels is showing its age. It is delaminating in places that is creating air bubbles and has rips and stains. The original fabric manufacturer has been identified and she obtained a quote to refurbish the panels by the library's regular woodworker, Johncarlo Woodworking. The Friends approved \$5,000 towards the total cost of \$9,916. The Trustees were asked to approve funding the balance of \$4,916 from the Morin Fund.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve funding \$4,916 from the Morin fund to replace the fabric panels in the Hosmer Gallery. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Hampshire County Courthouse

Ms. Downing reported that the future use of the Hampshire County Courthouse building is uncertain at this time due to the perilous financial situation of the Hampshire Council of Governments who owns the building. The state is reviewing the situation and a plan is being developed. When Senator Comerford visited on April 19 this topic came up, as well as the potential for the courthouse to be a future home for the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum. The Trustees discussed this idea and whether or not to send Senator Comerford a letter expressing interest in pursuing this possibility.

Mr. Carrier said that Senator Rosenberg brought the idea up many years ago, but it wasn't the right time to pursue it. It's come up now because the old courthouse is back in the news. If the Trustees are interested in pursuing this possibility, time is of the essence. Mr. Carrier said it should be a 21st century museum experience, and be able to accommodate more researchers and students. It could serve as a platform for discussing politics and civics. He said it is worth talking about to raise awareness of the museum collection and bring it to the attention of leaders at the state level. He said it needs to be clear that Forbes would want to retain ownership, but does not have the funds to move the collection and to house it appropriately. He also said it would only be done if it benefitted the collection in some way. Ms. Wight said the Coolidge Committee has said that the collection should always be part of the library even if it not housed in the building.

Ms. Wight moved that Ms. Downing draft an exploratory letter to Senator Comerford expressing the Trustees' interest and requesting a tour of the building, and to run the letter past the Coolidge Committee. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Window Restoration Update

Ms. Downing reported that several general contractors attended the walk through earlier this month. The window project general bids will be opened Friday, April 26.

Special Collections HVAC Update

Ms. Downing reported that the architect at Jones Whitsett is working to bring parties on the project together to solve an impasse between Johnson Controls & others so that the contract can be closed. She has also alerted the city that now is the time to install the pump while it is in between the heating and cooling seasons.

FY20 Budget Meeting

Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss, and Ms. Downing met with Mayor Narkewicz and Finance Director Wright on April 8 to discuss the FY20 budget which calls for a 3% appropriation increase. Ms. Downing began by thanking the city for all of their support and collaborations this year and announced the plans to expand hours. It was discussed that the FY20 budget continues to keep pace with minimum wage increases but in a minimal way that does not address wage compression. The Mayor talked about a partial reclassification project that was done for three unions and Ms. Wright shared information about the consulting firm that was hired to conduct the survey. The status of the HVAC and windows projects were also discussed as was the growing relationship with the DPW and the crumbling front patio specifically. The Mayor said he would follow up with the head of the DPW. The sustainability of the Book & Media budget was also discussed along with a letter that Forbes sent earlier in the year to the Mayor stating that Forbes anticipates needing financial support to meet the state mandated minimum spending requirement in the coming years.

FY20 Budget Meeting (continued)

Mr. Carrier addressed the discussions opened with the Charter Commission about filling Trustee vacancies and the Mayor stated that he thought the commission's proposal to have it be a joint vote by the city council and library board made sense.

Strategic Plan Quarterly Update

Ms. Downing reported that the vast majority of the action items for this fiscal year have been accomplished. A full report will be given at the end of the year. The focus this quarter is on identifying core competencies for staff, distributing welcome packets to families of new babies, and continuing to work on grant funded projects.

Community Engagement

Ms. Moss reported that Forbes Library participated in this year's Edible Books contest, which had 22 entries and was enjoyed by all. She distributed a list of recent and upcoming community engagement events. She also reminded the Trustees about the annual Pride parade on May 4.

Development Committee

Mr. Carrier reported that \$15,444 was raised on Library Giving Day from 137 donors, including a \$6,500 match from the Friends of Forbes Library. Bread Euphoria hosted an art opening and fundraising evening for the library that was well attended and raised \$256. The development committee met on April 22 and one of the items was discussion of the teen space renovation project. Sarah Johnson and Kat Janeczek from the Children's & Young Adult Department visited the Woburn Library along with Ms. Moss and Jason Petcen. The original library is a Richardson building and was very recently renovated and a large addition was constructed that houses the children's and young adult spaces. The visit helped clarify the goals and desired scope of the project and their thinking now is to include a programming space that would be used for all ages of youth and alleviate demand for the Community Room. Ms. Janeczek advocated by saying that teens need a space carved out for them, and that we can do better by them. Mr. Carrier said that the window replacement project needs to be completed first and that the Development Committee is also working on a plan to encourage legacy giving.

CCPLM Standing Committee

Ms. Downing reported that the Standing Committee recommends the President appoint Beth Myers and Scott Mahar to the committee. Ms. Myers is the head of special collections at Smith College and Mr. Mahar is a social studies teacher at Northampton High School. Mr. Carrier will make the appointments.

Contract Negotiations

At 5:20 PM, Mr. Twarog moved that the Trustees go into executive session to discuss contract negotiations because negotiation in open session would be detrimental to the library's bargaining position. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously, with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Reall, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor. The Trustees invited Ms. Downing, Ms. Moss and Ms. Sheirer to remain as guests at the executive session. Ms. McCormick and Ms. Janeczek left the meeting at 5:20 PM. Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss, Ms. Reall, Ms. Sheirer, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight were present during the executive session. No votes were taken during the executive session.

At 5:36 PM, Ms. Reall moved that the executive session be ended and the regular meeting reconvened. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed

Contract Negotiations (continued)

unanimously, with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Reall, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Mr. Carrier announced that the Trustees will enter into contract negotiations with FLEA. He and Ms. Reall will schedule a meeting with the FLEA representatives.

Ms. Wight made a motion to approve the wording proposed by Mayor Narkewicz to the city charter for filling vacancies on the board of trustees outside of the regular election schedule. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

At 5:37 PM, Ms. Hess moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:37 PM.