

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Thursday, May 23, 2019

Present: Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss, Mr. Twarog, Ms. Reall, Ms. Sheirer, Ms. Wight. **Also Present:** Owen Wormser and Heather Cupo; Joellen Mackenzie, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Jason Petcen, representative of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA). **Absent:** Ms. Buckhout.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM in the Library Director's office.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Garden Design

Owen Wormser of Local Harmony landscaping and Heather Cupo of Plant Euphoria were invited by Peggy MacLeod of Western Mass Pollinators Network to discuss garden and landscape design with the Trustees. Mr. Wormser said that Local Harmony is a non-profit dedicated to building gardens in public places with a focus on stewardship, conservation, education, and building community. His group did the recent work on the Hungry Ghost bakery on State Street. He said that they use volunteers to do the work, and bring in landscaping designers to come up with the design plan. Ms. Cupo has a degree in landscape architecture and many years of design experience, including the Housatonic River Walk in Great Barrington. She has also done smaller scale projects with minimally skilled workers after the initial design was agreed upon. She has worked with school children and adults, and is dedicated to creating pollinator friendly gardens.

In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing said that initially, for the short term, the Trustees are looking at redoing the gardens near the back entrance and the front entrance near the Children's Department entrance. For the long term, Forbes is early on in the process of developing a comprehensive landscape plan for the entire property. The plan needs to take into account the outside use of the grounds for movies and events and create spaces that allow for interaction, while being sustainable, low maintenance, and in-keeping with the history of Forbes.

In response to a question from Mr. Carrier about maintenance, Ms. Cupo said that she strongly agreed that creating something that is sustainable and easily maintained is a priority. She said the two spaces identified today are fairly small and contained and will not add much to the current maintenance. Mr. Petcen currently maintains the grounds with help from volunteers. Ms. Downing said that she has offered the option to staff to use small amounts of their time to help maintain the edible garden as a wellness activity and way to connect with the library on a different level. Mr. Wormser said that his criteria for success includes community involvement, beautiful and sustainable gardens, and an integrated process that is transparent. Ms. Cupo said the design must fit in with the vision of the library and it is important not to rush the process.

In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Mr. Wormser said this meeting was meant to be an introduction and an opportunity to make it clear what they can bring to the table. On the short term, they can make the two garden spots happen, but are also very much interested in the bigger picture and continuing the conversation. On behalf of the Trustees, Mr. Carrier thanked

Garden Design (continued)

Mr. Wormser and Ms. Cupo for coming to the meeting and said he looks forward to seeing them again.

Mr. Wormser and Ms. Cupo left the meeting at 4:21 PM.

Secretary's Report

Ms. Wight moved that the Secretary's Report of April 25, 2019 and the Secretary's Report of the Executive Session of April 25, 2019 be accepted and placed on file with a few minor corrections. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

The Trustees reviewed the Treasurer's Report of April 30, 2019 prepared by Ms. Buckhout. The General Aid Fund had positive net activity for the month of \$6,821 with an ending balance of \$46,723. The Book & Media Fund had positive net activity of \$6,117 and a balance of \$23,446. The Civic Hub Grant had negative net activity of \$771 with a balance of \$3,640. The Doland Fund had negative net activity of \$901 and a balance of \$6,367. The Garvey Book & Media Fund had positive net activity of \$517 and balance of \$2,893. The Lyman Special Collections Fund had negative net activity of \$707 and a balance of \$1,144. The Morin Fund had positive net activity of \$588 and a balance of \$89,832. The Programming Fund/Adult had positive net activity of \$1,405 and a balance of \$6,837. The Programming Fund/Children had positive net activity of \$3,005 and a balance of \$9,179. The RCCR Development Fund had negative net activity of \$560 and a balance of \$9,179. The Staff Development Fund had negative net activity of \$1,924 and a balance of \$1,503. The Summer Learning Expanded Grant was established with a grant of \$900. Ms. Downing said it is getting late into the fiscal year and she is closely monitoring the budget.

Ms. Wight made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report of April 30, 2019. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Gifts, Donations, and Bequests, etc.

The following undesignated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$10,000 from Melvin Hershkowitz Trust, Northampton, MA to the Morin Fund; \$250 from Claire Lobdell, Northampton, MA to the Morin Fund; \$237.35 from Bread Euphoria, Haydenvilla, MA to the Morin Fund; \$100 from Katherine Robertson, Conway, MA in honor of Peter Rowe to the Morin Fund; \$66 from Russell Carrier & Andrew Dausch in honor of Library Giving Day to be split between the Children's & Young Adult Programming Fund and the Adult Programming Fund; \$50 from Annabel Link, Greensboro, NC from the annual fund appeal to the Morin Fund; \$50 from Richard T. Moulding, Northampton, MA to the Morin Fund; \$50 from Lisa Piquette in honor of Library Giving Day to be split between the Children's & Young Adult Programming Fund and the Adult Programming Fund; \$25 from Nicole Sibley, Amherst, MA to the Morin Fund. The Trustees and Ms. Downing said the large gift from Dr. Hershkowitz is very much appreciated.

The following designated gift was received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$11.35 from Cheri Buckhout, Granby, MA for postage expenses.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the undesignated and designated gifts as proposed by Ms. Downing. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

There were no receipts from sales/rents since the last Trustees' meeting.

Third Quarter Book & Media Report

Ms. Moss presented the Third Quarter Book & Media Report as of March 31, 2019, showing budgeted amounts, year-to-date totals, and variances (surpluses and deficits). The budget is on track for the year.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the Third Quarter Book & Media Report. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Friends of Forbes

Ms. Hess attended the May 8 meeting of the Friends of Forbes and reported that the value of their endowment as of April 30 was \$423,000 and they have \$40,000 in the Greenfield Bank. The Finance Committee reported that they met with Bartholomew Inc. to determine what amount from the endowment they could put aside for expenses each year. They want to follow the same guidelines as the library, but do not yet have 20 trailing quarters to determine the withdrawal rate. They have decided for now to make \$10,000 available to add to the Friends operating budget and will review it annually. The Special Events Committee is working on the wine tasting, and have received \$2,000 in pledges so far. The Garden Tour is coming up on June 8 and the Friends will sell tickets Friday and Saturday. The Friends have prepared a June mailing and newsletter to go out the end of May. Ms. Downing relayed to the Friends the message from Senator Comerford that it is important to contact representatives even if you know they support libraries so they can document community interest and response. Names of new supporters are being entered into the database and will receive future emails about events.

Mr. Carrier welcomed and thanked JoEllen Mackenzie for stepping into her new role as President of the Friends.

Administrative Report

Ms. Downing reported that expanded hours began on April 29 and several patrons have commented about how appreciative they are. One noted how nice it will be to come during regular business hours and find the library open. Even after many years of being closed on Tuesday and Thursday morning it was still an unpleasant surprise to walk up and find the doors closed. The new hours are beginning to be discovered although it is anticipated that utilization will continue to grow over time.

Stories and memories are being collected about the library for a time capsule that will be stored and opened in 2044, Forbes' 150th anniversary. A paper form was distributed and Trustees were encouraged to participate.

Tours of the grounds and the building were conducted this month in conjunction with Forbes' 125th Anniversary. Laurie Sanders from Historic Northampton gave a tour of the property that provided information starting with the geologic history. The tour was very well received and attended. Elise Bernier-Feeley provided an architectural tour to nearly 50 people after hours during Arts Night Out. There was so much demand that a repeat performance is scheduled for October.

Ms. Downing discovered that Forbes is not eligible to host a summer meals program. This is based on census data. Meals will be offered in July and August at Ryan Road and Meadowbrook Apartments and Forbes will be in communication with the organizers to see if there is a way to partner to provide library programming at these sites.

Administrative Report (continued)

Ms. Downing reminded the Trustees to submit a copy of the completion certificate for the Online Conflict of Interest Law Training. This is something that is not required but was recommended by Attorney Lucentini that the board and library staff complete. The "Online Program for Municipal Employees" is linked from <http://www.mass.gov/ethics/education-and-training-resources/implementation-procedures/>.

The letter to Senator Jo Comerford approved last month regarding the Council of Governments building was sent, as well as copies to the Mayor's office and Representative Lindsay Sabadosa. A reply has not yet been received. Staff attended portions of the Massachusetts Library Conference, May 20-22 in Framingham. Ms. Moss was on "A Force for Good" panel presentation about the Civic Hub grant, and Alene Moroni presented "Readers' Advisory 101: How Does it Work?" and "Readers' Advisory 101: Interactive Session." Ms. Downing joined a strategic planning committee for CW MARS. The network is creating a three-year plan based largely on input from its 146 member libraries.

Ms. Downing distributed copies of the 2018 Annual Report and thanked Ms. Moss and Ms. Hess for their help with the report.

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

Next Meetings

The next regular meeting of the Trustees is scheduled for Thursday, June 20 at 4:00 PM. The following meetings for the rest of the year were previously scheduled: 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, June 5 at 6:30 PM. Ms. Reall will attend on behalf of the Trustees.

Communications

Ms. Moss received a comment on May 7 from Leslie Chalmers expressing disappointment at the decision to no longer allow dogs on the premises.

FY20 Facilities Projects

Ms. Moss distributed a list of projects and equipment proposed for purchase along with funding sources. The list was developed by Ms. Downing, Ms. Moss and Jason Petcen, and was reviewed by Mr. Carrier and Mr. Twarog. It was built with input by the Leadership Team. The list includes Labor & Repairs: removal of electric stovetop and replacement of counter for \$400; new lighting for the front portico, main staircase, cataloging department and craft area outside of the community room, estimate forthcoming; installation of an air return for technical services for \$950; new Honda push mower for \$600; Hoover commercial vacuum and compressor for \$15,00. Printing-Aid Fund: updating signage in Children's and YA department for \$600. Morin Fund: replacement and purchase of new Adirondack chairs for \$700; furnishings including artificial plants, floor lamps, carpeting, artwork, study table for quiet study areas for \$6,000 (half to be requested of the Friends); painting of children's entrance for \$710; outside wall of Hampshire Room for \$280; director's office for \$240; and Technical Services department for \$3,000; task chairs for the Hampshire Room and Archivist for \$1,500; new carpeting for \$2,500; book drops for \$11,000 (\$2,000 to be requested of the Friends); standing desks, anti-fatigue floor mats, and book cart for Interlibrary Loan for \$4,000. Capital Improvement Projects Fund: drainage system in parking

FY20 Facilities Projects (continued)

lot, \$50,000 for design and \$250,000 for the work. RCCR Fund: multi-media display for Coolidge Museum, new touch screen monitor and software for \$1,500.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the Facilities Projects as proposed. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Carrier said to feel free to start moving forward on these projects and not to wait until July 1.

Children's & Young Adult Renovation Committee

Ms. Downing reported that the development committee recommends the formation of a Children's & Young Adult Renovation Committee to work on a plan for the renovation that was discussed at last month's board meeting. One of the major components of the plan is to create a new programming space for use by children and young adults. Once a plan is developed, the Development Committee will work on fundraising.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve the formation of a Children's & Young Adult Renovation Committee including Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Downing, Ms. Moss, Mr. Petcen, Sarah Johnson, and Martha McCormick. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Letter about Window & HVAC Funding

Ms. Downing reported that Mayor Narkewicz proposed \$167,000 in funding to the City Council on May 2 for the gap needed to allow Forbes to renovate all of the library's windows as well as money to add pumps to support the special collections HVAC system. The council unanimously approved the funding measures and held both readings in the same night so that work can begin on these time sensitive projects. Ms. Downing prepared a draft of a letter to send to the Mayor and City Council President on behalf of the Trustees.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to send a letter to the Mayor and City Council President thanking them for their support in funding the window replacement and HVAC projects. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Grace Coolidge Portrait Loan

Ms. Downing reported that Forbes was approached by the National Portrait Gallery about the possibility of loaning its Christy portrait of Grace Coolidge for a show called "Every Eye is Upon Me" about First Ladies that is taking place from November 2020 through May 2021 and expected to attract millions of visitors. The National Portrait Gallery would cover shipping and insurance costs. Should the loan be approved Ms. Nelson said that Forbes would seek to borrow a painting from the Clarke School or another institution to have on display while its portrait was on loan. The Coolidge Standing Committee reviewed this request and recommends that the board approve loaning the Christy portrait of Grace Coolidge to the National Portrait Gallery. In response from a question from Ms. Hess, Ms. Downing said the portrait will be displayed with a sign saying that it is on loan from Forbes Library.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve the recommendation of the Coolidge Committee to loan the portrait of Grace Coolidge to the National Portrait Gallery for the show about first ladies. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Window Restoration Sign

Ms. Downing reported that at the pre-construction meeting for the window restoration project she was asked if Forbes wanted a project sign posted. This is generally an outdoor sign that gives project information such as the architect, general contractor and funding source. In response to a question by Ms. Reall, Mr. Carrier said they have not had a request for a sign such as this before. The Trustees discussed the signs.

Ms. Reall made a motion to authorize a sign for the architect and contractor that prominently displays the Forbes logo. The design for the sign must be approved by the Trustees before installation. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Ms. Wight made a motion to authorize a second sign, also featuring the Forbes logo, that thanks the Community Preservation Committee and City of Northampton for funding the project. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Window Restoration Update

Ms. Downing reported that there were two bids for the window restoration project and the contract was awarded to Renaissance Builders out of Turners Falls, MA for a total project cost of \$587,041. This project is being funded by a combination of capital funds from the City of Northampton and \$100,000 in Community Preservation Act funds. This allows for all of the library's 150+ original windows and all of the woodwork to be restored and repainted. The project will begin before the end of the month and is expected to be completed by the end of September.

Special Collections HVAC Update

Ms. Downing reported that funding for a replacement and a back-up pump for the special collections HVAC system was approved this month by the City Council and now allows the next and final phase to begin, ideally before the weather gets too warm.

City Charter Commission

Ms. Downing reported that she and Mr. Carrier attended the City Charter Commission meeting on May 7 where the language that was approved by the board last month was presented. The discussion was very cordial and there was agreement with intent. Language that was proposed by the Mayor's office was reviewed by Attorney Sandra Lucentini. The City Charter Commission discussed and voted on the following change regarding Trustee vacancies at their May 21 meeting.

Section 5-2 (Trustees under the will of Charles E. Forbes): Five members shall be elected by and from the voters of the city at large for a term of four years, so arranged that all members are not elected at the same time. Whenever a vacancy occurs on the board of trustees under the will of Charles E. Forbes, the president of the board shall declare a vacancy and, within 30 days following the date of the vacancy, call a meeting of the trustees to fill the vacancy. The board of trustees shall choose a person to fill the vacancy from among the voters entitled to vote for the office. Persons appointed by the trustees to fill a vacancy shall serve only until the next regular city election, when the office shall be filled by the voters. The candidate elected to an office filled by appointment prior to the election shall be sworn to the office immediately, and shall serve for the unexpired term of the seat to which such candidate was elected. If the seat to

City Charter Commission (continued)

which the candidate was elected would have been on the ballot for the next regular city election notwithstanding the vacancy, such candidate shall be elected for a full four-year term. No vacancy shall be filled under this section if a regular city election is to be held within 120 days following the date the vacancy is declared to exist. Persons appointed by the trustees to fill a vacancy under this section shall not be entitled to have the words "candidate for reelection" printed with that person's name on the election ballot.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the wording as approved by the Charter Commission. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

In response to a question from Ms. Wight, Mr. Carrier said this wording will eventually become part of the Forbes' By-Laws after it has gone through the charter approval process.

Massachusetts Paid Family Medical Leave

Ms. Downing reported that the Massachusetts Paid Family Medical Leave Act (MA PFML) takes effect on July 1 when employers with 25 or more employees will begin making payroll deductions to fund the employee share of contributions. As of January 2021, paid family leave benefits will be available to support workers who take leave in order to bond with a new child and to address needs relating to a family member who is a covered service member of the armed forces, or support workers who take leave as a result of personal serious health conditions. As of July 1, 2021, funds will be available for the care for any family member with a serious health condition. The City of Northampton has opted out and is able to do so as a municipality. This is a fairly complex law with details still emerging. It is anticipated that the cost for next year will be \$7,700. Forbes has the option to pass along about half of that cost to employees via payroll deductions. Funding for MA PFML was not anticipated in the FY20 budget proposal and a plan is now being developed to address this additional expense. Ms. Downing said that private insurers are in the process of developing competitive products, but they will not be in place by July 1. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier about the process, Ms. Downing said that employees apply to the state for PFML and the state requests information from Forbes, then makes a determination. In response to a question from Ms. Hess, Ms. Downing said that the Family Medical Leave Act allows for 12 weeks of unpaid leave after benefited time has been used.

Community Engagement

Ms. Moss reported that Forbes provided a tour to students from the Center for New Americans and several wrote thank you letters afterwards. A letter from Ms. Carla Henriquez was distributed to the Trustees. Ms. Moss said it was a great day for the Pride Parade, and the Forbes contingent enjoyed, as always, hearing shouts of "We love the library!" as they marched along. Ms. Moss distributed a list of recent and upcoming community engagement events. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moss said that after a purge by CWMARS in 2017, the library has about 15,000 card holders.

Reports on subcommittee meetings/activities

CCPLM Standing Committee - Ms. Downing reported that a Facebook page for the Coolidge Museum was started this month. The Trustees were encouraged to "like" the page which is linked from the museum page on the library website.

FLEA Contract Negotiations

At 5:10 PM, Mr. Twarog moved that the Trustees go into executive session to discuss contract negotiations with FLEA because negotiation in open session would be detrimental to the library's bargaining position. Ms. Wight 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. Mackenzie and Mr. Petcen left the meeting at 5:10 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 5:33 PM, Mr. Twarog moved that the executive session be ended and the regular meeting reconvened. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously, with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Reall, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

At 5:33 PM Ms. Hess moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:33 PM.