

**TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY**  
**Thursday, July 30, 2020**

**Present:** Ms. Buckhout, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, Ms. Sheirer, Ms. Wight. **Also Present:** JoEllen MacKenzie and Maxine Schmidt, observers for the Friends of Forbes Library.  
**Absent:** None.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's Emergency Order Modifying the State's Open Meeting Law issued March 12, 2020, this meeting was held using remote participation via Zoom teleconferencing.

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 PM.

**Bills & Warrants**

Ms. Downing distributed copies of 2 bills and warrants for the trustees' approval, one for FY20 and one for FY21. She said she is exploring software to gather electronic signatures and hopes to have it in place for September. She will contact the trustees about scheduling individual times for them to come in and physically sign all of the warrants that have been approved virtually.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve the 2 bills and warrants. Ms. Hess seconded the motion which was passed with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

**Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**Secretary's Report**

Ms. Prabhaker moved that the Secretary's reports of June 18, 2020; the executive session of June 18, 2020; and the Special Meeting of July 17, 2020 be accepted and placed on file with a few minor corrections. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

**Treasurer's Reports**

Ms. Downing reported that Ms. Buckhout has been very busy with the auditors. She presented the preliminary Treasurer's Report for the months ending June 30, 2020. There are additional possible adjustments due to analysis and recommendations of the auditors, especially around the recognition of grant revenue. Research is being done around the PPP loan which could be forgiven under the 8-week analysis (instead of the 24 week) which would also be grant revenue if forgiven. A final report will be brought back to the Trustees for final review and approval.

The General Aid Fund had negative net activity for the month of \$40,087 and has a cumulative balance of \$27,345. The endowment distribution for April-June was not taken. Income overall is \$3,197 higher than expected largely due to State Aid income being higher than projected. The under-budget spending for auditing services of \$2,000 will hit the final FY20 treasurer's report in FY21. The net payroll surplus of \$23,831 combined with the savings in Worker's Compensation of \$4,837 account for the overall surplus. The Book & Media fund closed with negative net activity of \$4,597 and has a zero balance due to a requested final distribution from the endowment, with \$7,000 coming from the Cutter Fund and \$6,217 from the Forbes Book Fund. Due to not disbursing monthly funds for April-June, overall endowment funding is less than budgeted by \$12,883 and other funding is over budget by \$4,382. Overall

**Treasurer's Reports** (continued)

spending is \$7,422 less than budgeted. The Auxiliary Services Fund had negative net activity of \$556 and has a deficit of \$1,014. The BayState Hotel Music History Fund had no activity for the month and has a deficit of \$822. Another grant has been awarded of \$1,250 and will cover this deficit in FY21. The Civil War Grant Fund and the Coming to America Fund had no activity for the month and have a zero balance. They will be closed and not appear in FY21 reporting. The Cutter Fund had no activity for the month and has a balance of \$8,290. The Doland Reference Room Fund had negative activity for the month of \$866 and balance of \$3,221. The Early Literacy Everywhere Grant Fund had negative net activity of \$1,000 and now has a balance of zero. It will be closed and will not appear in FY21 reports. The Externally Financed Transaction Fund had positive activity of \$2,023 and a balance of \$1,063. The Garvey Book & Media Fund had negative net activity of \$800 and a balance of \$3,563. The Halberstadt Technology Fund had negative net activity of \$1,957 and a deficit of \$339. The Mass Humanities Grant had negative net activity of \$724 and a balance of \$2,176. The Morin Fund had positive net activity of \$915 and a balance of \$119,555. The Moving Memories IMLS Grant Fund has a deficit of \$4,676, which may be eliminated due to the accounting recognition of revenue for these expenditures, making the balance zero. The terms of the grant are being looked at more closely. The Programming-Adult Fund had positive net activity of \$160 and a balance of \$7,556. The Programming Fund-Children had negative net activity of \$3,088 and a balance of \$3,099. The Summer Learning Expanded Grant had positive net activity of \$2,000 and a balance of \$2,000. The Watson Copier Fund expenses will be transferred to the general Aid Fund due to staff usage of networked copiers and will have a zero balance. The balance in the endowment as of June 30 was \$5,281,493.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve the preliminary Treasurer's Report of June 30, 2020 and place it on file. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

**Gifts, Donations, and Bequests, etc.**

The following undesignated gifts totaling \$585 were received since the last trustees' meeting to be deposited in the Morin Fund: \$206 from Margaret Lucey, Northampton, MA; \$100 from Karen Saakvitne, Florene, MA; \$100 from anonymous; \$100 from Mary and Stephen Harding, Florence, MA; \$30 from Nicole Sibley, Amherst, MA; \$25 from Susan Enz, Northampton, MA; \$14 from Barbara Skubiszewski, Northampton, MA; and \$10 from Morgan Brown, Northampton, MA.

Ms. Prabhaker made a motion to approve the undesignated gifts as proposed by Ms. Downing. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

There were no designated gifts, donations, or receipts from sales/rents this month.

**FY2020 Year End**

Ms. Downing reported that there were additional expenses as well as substantial savings as a result of Covid-19 resulting in a surplus balance in the General Aid Fund which is what was expected. There are additional expenses that haven't yet come in for FY20 so the final budget report won't be presented to the city until after the September trustees' meeting.

The Book & Media budget is under \$13,318.52 in income, due in part to not taking the endowment distributions in April, May, and June for \$8700 for each

**FY2020 Year End** (continued)

month, a total of \$26,100. Ms. Moss recommended that a final FY20 disbursement be taken from the endowment of \$7,000 from the Cutter Fund and \$6,318.52 from the Forbes Fund to balance the FY20 Book & Media budget.

Ms. Hess made a motion to transfer \$1,014 from the Morin Fund to the Auxiliary Services Fund. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to transfer \$513.93 from general office supplies in the General Aid Fund to the Watson Copier Fund to zero out the balance for the start of the new fiscal year. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Ms. Prabhaker made a motion to transfer \$7,000 from the Cutter Fund and \$6,318.52 from the Forbes Fund in the endowment to the operating account to balance the FY20 Book & Media budget. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

**FY2020 City Indirects**

Ms. Downing reported that the city has summarized the indirect contributions to the library last fiscal year which included substantial investments in capital projects. This information is requested by Forbes annually as part of the audit and filings. The trustees are grateful for this funding.

**FY2020 Friends Contributions**

Ms. Moss reported that the Friends also summarized their contributions to the library as part of the year end audit and filing. She said Forbes is so fortunate to have this level of financial support annually which makes a significant impact on collections and services.

**Friends of Forbes**

The Friends of Forbes did not meet in July. Their next meeting is September 9 at 6:30 PM. Ms. Downing reported that they are moving ahead with planning for a virtual event in October. Ms. MacKenzie said the tentative date is October 23, and that it may be in the evening or an all-day event. The Friends are very excited about the event which will include a variety of activities including local authors and celebrities reading and making recommendations about their favorite books and/or wines, reading and photo contests, etc. Tickets will be sold starting at \$15 which is the amount to become a Friend and which will increase membership. The Friends are meeting next week to discuss sponsorships, publicity, and core activities for the event.

Ms. Wight joined the meeting at 4:26 PM.

**Administrative Report**

Ms. Downing reported that the HVAC system was down for over 2 weeks resulting in very warm and humid conditions in the library including Special Collections. The city had an equipment failure that impacted the computer programming for the library and it took some time for the company to reprogram the system. It came back on Saturday.

The Friends received a bequest from Jean Holden for \$10,000. Jean was a longtime resident and library patron. This generous gift comes at a time when

**Administrative Report** (continued)

the Friends have cancelled their 2 major fundraisers this year as a result of Covid-19.

Dylan Gaffney posted a photograph on the library's Facebook page by Richard Carpenter from the Daily Hampshire Gazette Archives titled Cucumber Picking from August 8, 1986. The image is of Edwin Matuszko checking for missed cukes behind a picking crew on the 'biplane' at the Twin Oaks Farm in Hadley. The picture received over 27,000 views and 4,200 engagements. This was one of Forbes' largest responses to a Throwback Thursday image.

Forbes has received notification of 2 grants this month from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). One is for \$15,000 for a two year grant project "Outside Voices: Oral History and Community Collections," which will focus on deepening and complicating the local history collection through oral history, community digitization, and the recording of library programming, including a focus on turn-of-the-twenty-first-century music history in Northampton and the Northampton Pride Parade. The other is for \$2,350 to support Virtual Programming for Distance Learning this fall including two anti-racism webinars with Tiffany Jewell, author of *This Book is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on how to Wake Up, Take Action, and Do the Work*. One will be intended for youth ages 11-16 and will be titled "Wake Up, Take Action, and Do the Work: Be Anti-Racist" and one will be geared towards adults (including parents, caregivers, and educators) and will be titled "Supporting Antiracist Youth." Callie Sieh, Heather Diaz and Dylan Gaffney worked on the grant applications. The trustees asked Ms. Downing to convey their appreciation for this important work.

Forbes also received a Google Ads Grant that provides free advertisement space for links to library resources that will appear based on keyword searches in Google results for users in the local geographic area. Ben Kalish secured the grant and created three initial campaigns about the library's electronic resources, summer reading and reader's advisory.

This month marks the 100th anniversary of Coolidge's notification that he was a vice presidential candidate at an event that took place in Northampton. The library has an extensive collection of photographs from that event that have been assembled into a digital exhibit. An article describing the event from the Springfield Republican was distributed to the trustees.

Mr. Twarog moved that the Administrative Report be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

**Next Meetings**

The next regular meeting of the trustees is scheduled for Thursday, September 17 at 4:00 PM. The trustees previously scheduled the following additional meetings for 2020: Thursday, October 22; Thursday, November 19; Thursday, December 17. The meetings will be at 4:00 PM unless the representatives of Bartholomew are invited, in which case the meeting will begin at 3:45 PM.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held Wednesday, September 9, at 6:30 PM. Ms. Hess will attend on behalf of the trustees.

**Communications**

There were no communications this month.

### **Administrative Contract Renewal**

Ms. Downing reported that updated contracts for herself, Ms. Moss and Ms. Lamour have been reviewed by Mr. Carrier and Ms. Prabhaker and are ready for approval. The updated contracts and accompanying job descriptions were distributed to the trustees. Minor changes were made to standardize the contract length and some of the language. The one major change is to impose a limit of 5 weeks of vacation carryover at the end of the year beginning at the end of 2021. A provision was discussed to allow up to 3 weeks of vacation payout as a one-time offer to assist in reducing the excessive vacation time that has accumulated due to a variety of factors.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the new administrative contracts. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Ms. Downing will include the contracts with the other documents that the trustees need to physically sign and schedule individual times for them to come in and sign them.

### **Book Drops Project**

Ms. Downing reported that the numbers have been finalized for the project that was discussed last month to replace the library's outdoor book drops and widen the adjacent driveway. The project cost includes work to protect and restore the large oak tree near where the work will take place. The proposed budget includes: \$18,656 for the book drops (\$2,000 which has already been approved by the Friends and \$16,656 from the Morin Fund); \$16,000 for road widening and concrete work (\$10,000 from the Aldrich Fund and \$6,000 from the Morin Fund) for a total cost of \$34,656. Ms. Downing said that the new book drop will be made of stainless steel and will last for decades. There is no bottom to rot out, and a rubber cart with wheels will fit inside to hold the books. Since it is larger than the old book drop, staff will no longer need to come in on Sundays to empty it, resulting in personnel savings.

Ms. Wight made a motion to approve the book drop project and road widening with the budget proposed by Ms. Downing. Ms. Prabhaker seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

### **Antique Clocks Tune Up**

Ms. Downing reported that she was contacted by Richard Bates about the five antique clocks in the building with a reminder that they are due for their 5-year tune up. The estimate is for \$1,500-\$1,800 for the Howard Company-Astronomical Regulator, \$875-\$975 for the English Dial Clock, \$900-\$1,200 for the English Fusee Dial Clock, and \$900-\$1,200 for the 2 Seth Thomas Wall Clocks. Ms. Downing proposed that the Howard Company-Astrological Regulator, the English Dial Clock, and one of the Seth Thomas wall clocks be tuned this year, and the English Fusee Dial Clock and the other Seth Thomas wall clock be tuned next fiscal year, all to be funded from the Morin Fund. The tune up process is extensive and the clocks will be gone for several months. Mr. Carrier said that the large clock in the lobby came from Judge Forbes' collection. The other clocks are in keeping with Forbes' interest in clocks.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve up to \$4,500 from the Morin Fund to service the three clocks as recommended by Ms. Downing. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

### **CCPLM Standing Committee Annual Meeting**

Ms. Downing reported that the standing committee recommends funding of up to \$500 to cover the cost of a speaker for their annual meeting and publicity for the event. They plan to invite Barbara Berenson, author of *Massachusetts in the Woman Suffrage Movement: Revolutionary Reformers* for a virtual event on the evening of Wednesday, September 30, 2020.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve funding up to \$500 for a speaker and publicity for the annual meeting of the CCPLM Standing Committee from the RCCR Fund. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

### **Phased Reopening Plan**

Ms. Downing reported that curbside and drive-up delivery service has proven very popular. The library is now serving up to 11 patrons an hour for 8 hours during the week and 4 hours on Saturdays. The service has received many accolades from patrons who appreciate having access to library materials again. The demand is stretching this service model and is not convenient for all patrons so the reopening committee is devising a plan to allow for self-service holds retrieval and check out in the Reference Room beginning at some point in August. This service will be offered at certain times of the day and week and the curbside and drive up service will continue to be offered the rest of the time. The reopening committee is also planning for limited in-person browsing potentially to begin after Labor Day assuming that the number of cases in the local area continues to remain low. Ms. Downing provided more detail about the plan for pickup of holds in the Reference Room. Patrons will be invited inside the building two at a time. A staff person will be stationed at the door to monitor the line and explain the process. People will come in one side of the entrance way, proceed to the reference room to pick up their materials, then proceed to the self-checkout area in front of the service desk. A staff member will be stationed behind the self-checkout machines to assist and answer questions. Patrons will be required to wear masks, and will not be allowed into any other area of the library. Masks and hand sanitizer will be provided by the library. Ms. Downing will share the plan with staff tomorrow, and then adjust it as needed before implementing it. Ms. Downing said that when the library moves to stage C of the library's reopening plan, the building could hold up to 50 people at a time including staff. Ms. Downing also asked the trustees to consider bathroom access, and when and how it may be offered in the future.

### **Community Engagement**

Ms. Moss distributed a list of recent and upcoming community engagement events and activities. She said that Forbes is participating in the Great Egg Hunt by hosting an egg and is collaborating with Arts Night Out. The Hosmer Gallery is offering a virtual reception.

### **Reports on Subcommittee Meetings/Activities**

CCPLM Standing Committee - Ms. Downing reported that the standing committee has decided to resume its Presidential Book Club monthly discussions via Zoom. The committee is also responding to the library's anti-racism statement by discussing additional information to post on the museum's portion of the website. Ms. Downing said that the programming sub-committee met and she shared the Racial and Social Justice statement with them. It will be used as an inspiration to present an honest portrayal of the issues that are part of Coolidge's record. Ms. Wight added that the committee would like one of its members to serve on the library's advisory committee on racial and social

**Reports on Subcommittee Meetings/Activities** (continued)

justice. Mr. Carrier expressed frustration that the virus has inhibited the progress being made to raise the level of the CCPLM content.

Racial and Social Justice Committee - Ms. Hess reported that the ad with the library's statement on racial and social justice was run in the Gazette, though not in color. Ms. Downing will check with the Gazette to see what happened and to make sure that next time it runs it will be in color. The committee discussed the proposed advisory committee and discussed its charge and composition.

United for Libraries - Ms. Hess reported receiving an email from the MBLC about new free membership in the United for Libraries project, which is offered by the American Library Association (ALA). She registered and signed up for one of the offered webinars. The trustees were encouraged to register to have access to the workshops and content.

**FY21 Contract Negotiations with Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA)**

At 5:06 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. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously, with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor. The trustees invited Ms. Buckhout, Ms. Downing, Ms. Moss and Ms. Sheirer to remain as guests at the executive session. Ms. MacKenzie and Ms. Schmidt left the meeting at 5:06 PM. Ms. Buckhout, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss, Ms. Prabhaker, Ms. Sheirer, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight were present during the executive session. No votes were taken during the executive session.

At 5:11 PM, Ms. Hess moved that the executive session be ended and the regular meeting reconvened. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously, with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the new contract with the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA) retroactive to the beginning of the fiscal year. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

**Other Business**

Development Committee - Ms. Wight asked about the status of the offer to hire and share a development position with the Center for New Americans. Ms. Downing said that the Development Committee discussed it and are interested, but that now is not the right time with everything else going on with the pandemic. She has spoken with the director of the Center for New Americans, who said they will likely move forward with hiring a 25-hour week position. Forbes would like to revisit this at some point in the future.

At 5:15 PM Ms. Hess moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Prabhaker seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM.