

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Thursday, October 21, 2021

Present: Ms. Buckhout, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss, Ms. Prabhaker, Ms. Sheirer, Mr. Twarog, Ms. Wight. **Also Present:** Mr. Brian Jamros, Susan Kelley, and Ms. Kathleen Glowacki, representatives of Bartholomew Inc.; Maxine Schmidt and JoEllen Mackenzie, observers for the Friends of Forbes Library; Jason Petcen, representative of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA); Debin Bruce, candidate for trustee; Stan Sherer, candidate for trustee; Alene Moroni, Head of Reference. **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 3:47 PM.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Bills & Warrants

Ms. Hess made a motion to verbally approve the warrant dated October 21, 2021. 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. Ms. Downing will wait until there are a few more months of warrants and then schedule a time for the trustees to come in and physically sign them.

Endowment Report

Mr. Jamros introduced Susan Kelley who has been with Bartholomew for a little over a year and a half and has experience as a banker and investment advisor. He then presented a review of the endowment portfolio. The balance as of June 30 was \$6,523.550, representing a 164% increase after fees since inception. The Forbes portfolio performed well against a 50/50 equity/bond benchmark increasing 21.51% in the last year (compared to 20.24% for the benchmark), and 10.09% over 3 years (compared to 10.12% for the benchmark), and 8.67% over 5 years (compared to 9.13% for the benchmark). September was a volatile month due to the politics around raising the debt ceiling limit. As of yesterday, the balance was \$6,513.715. Ms. Glowacki said that Forbes' withdrawal rate of 3-4% is a comfortable amount to continue to allow for growth while taking inflation into account. Ms. Glowacki explained Forbes' "Environmental, Social, Governance" (ESG) approach which includes the holdings of companies that are environmentally responsible, who give back socially, and have diverse representation on the boards and good audit practices. During the month of September, Forbes' ESG portfolio slightly outperformed a traditional non-ESG portfolio, although there is no guarantee that this will always be the case. Ms. Glowacki said that she expects more volatility in the future due to uncertainties, but overall Forbes is well-positioned. It can be challenging finding alternatives for an ESG portfolio, but the Blackstone Real Estate holding has done well since being added to the portfolio a little over a year ago. They are now focusing on rebalancing the portfolio, capturing gains, and reinvesting in other segments of the market.

Mr. Carrier asked if they had any recommendations in terms of policy changes or changes in direction and Ms. Glowacki said no and that the portfolio aligns with the trustees' goals. Mr. Jamros said they have already shifted to a 50/50 stock/equity mix and are pleased with how the portfolio has performed. Ms. Glowacki said that since they have discretionary capacity,

Endowment Report (continued)

they are able to react quickly to changes in individual holdings when needed, but will let the trustees know if larger changes are needed.

Mr. Carrier said that he had been involved in other boards that decided to invest a small portion of their endowment locally in socially responsible ways, such as local housing, etc. in order to give back to the community. Mr. Jamros and Ms. Glowacki said that they don't have any direct experience with this beyond investing in State bonds, and said that they would look into it further and get back to the trustees.

The trustees thanked the bankers for their report, and Mr. Jamros, Ms. Glowacki and Ms. Kelley left the meeting at 4:10 PM.

Secretary's Report

Ms. Hess moved that the Secretary's Report of September 15, 2021 be accepted and placed on file with a few minor corrections. 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.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Buckhout presented the Treasurer's report of September 30, 2021. The General Aid Fund had positive net activity of \$7,632 and a balance of \$44,008. The Book & Media Fund had positive net activity of \$25,387 and a balance of \$8,453. The Externally Financed Transactions Fund had negative net activity of \$10,399 and a deficit of \$336. The Garvey Book & Media Fund had positive net activity of \$421 and a balance of \$421. The Go Local (Outside Voices) Grant fund had negative net activity of \$2,179 and a balance of \$1,956. The Google Ads Grant had zero net activity and has a balance of zero. The Halberstadt Technology Fund had positive net activity of \$10,947 and a balance of \$13,119. The Marie Hershkowitz Memorial Children's Book Fund had no activity and has a balance of \$2,100 which will be transferred to the endowment in October. The Morin Fund had negative net activity of \$8,737 and has a balance of \$91,015. The Moving Memories IMLS Grant had negative net activity of \$545 and has a deficit of \$2,461. The Programming Fund-Adult had negative net activity of \$800 and a balance of \$6,837. The Staff Development Fund had positive net activity of \$1,261 and a balance of \$3,510. The balance in the endowment as of September 30, 2021 was \$6,504,873.03.

Ms. Buckhout said that she changed the way that balances are carried over from prior fiscal years by creating a separate line item in order to make it easier to see how the budget balances for the current fiscal year. The trustees, Ms. Downing, and Ms. Moss agreed with this change. Ms. Downing said that the surplus from last year should remain in the operating budget in order to pay for the overage in Labors & Repairs this fiscal year. Ms. Moss said that the amount taken from the endowment for the Book & Media Fund was reduced this year by the amount of the surplus carried over from last year.

Ms. Prabhaker made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report of September 30, 2021 and place it on file. 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. Buckhout presented the Treasurer's Report dated June 30, 2021 and said there were no significant changes from the preliminary report presented last month. The General Aid Fund had negative net activity of \$66,494 and a balance of \$8,312. Significant overspending in payroll, labor and repairs,

Treasurer's Report (continued)

supplies and electricity were offset by small underspending in other areas but largely due to the forgiveness of the PPP loan and receiving higher than expected state aid funding. The Book & Media Fund had negative net activity of \$16,712 and a balance of \$13,600. Revenue was less than expected from the Friends of Forbes by \$5,706 and from library fines of \$4,309, but was offset by underspending in almost all areas, with spending being \$22,659 less than budgeted. The balances in these funds have been zeroed out due to a new line added to assist with balanced budget reporting in the next fiscal year. The Auxiliary Services Fund had negative net activity of \$7 and a deficit of \$344. The COVID Fund had \$222 positive net activity and now has a zero balance. The Digital Capacity Grant had negative net activity due to the reclassification of the funds received to comply with accounting standards. The fund has a zero balance but unspent grant funds of \$4,499 are in a liability account. The Externally Financed Transactions Fund had positive net activity of \$13,506 and a balance of \$10,063. The Gertrude P. Smith Fund had zero net activity and a balance of zero, due to the receipt of \$100,000 from PPP Loan funds that were then moved to the new endowment fund. The Go Local (Outside Voices) Grant fund had negative net activity of \$827 and a balance of \$4,872. The Lyman Special Collections Fund had negative net activity of \$9,616 and a balance of \$8,972. The Morin Fund had positive net activity of \$28,758 and a balance of \$98,522. The Moving Memories IMLS Grant fund had positive net activity of \$7,401 and has a zero balance. The Programming Fund-Children had negative net activity of \$664 and a balance of \$1,482. The RCCR Centennial Fund had positive net activity of \$712 and a balance of \$637. The Staff Development Fund had negative net activity of \$604 and a balance of \$2,712. The Watson Copier Fund had positive net activity of \$3,343 and after reclassification to the General Aid Fund now has a balance of zero.

Ms. Prabhaker made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report of June 30, 2021 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.

Ms. Downing said that there is a meeting next week with the new City Finance Director, Charlene Nardi, at which time the final FY21 report can be presented in addition to discussions about other accounting related topics.

Gifts, Donations, and Bequests, etc.

The following undesignated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting: a total of \$3,133.08 from multiple people to the Book and Media Fund; \$1,422.00 to the Morin Fund; \$675 to the Lyman Special Collections Fund; and \$18.54 to the Marie Hershkowitz Memorial Children's Book Fund.

Ms. Downing said that donations have met the fundraising obligation for the Book & Media Fund early in the year and that future donations will now go to the Morin Fund. Ms. Moss said that as of this time last year \$6,700 had been raised, while so far this year donations are just under \$10,000.

The following designated gift was received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$1,000 from the Narkewicz Campaign Committee to the Lyman Special Collections Fund to support work being done for the mayoral portrait project; \$150 to the Lyman Special Collections Endowment Fund.

The following donations were received since the last trustees' meeting: Brian Turner Collection of Local Arts Publications (1979-2001) from Brian Turner; Mother of Voices Arts Magazines 1968 from Nick Stone; Origin of Smith's Ferry

Gifts, Donations, and Bequests, etc. (continued)

Collection from Gail Waterman; Florence Photographs from the Family of Paul Gaffney; International Silver Account Book from the Family of Edwin Addis; Florence Obituaries from Barbara Pelissier; and Circle Players Poster from Barbara Jenkins.

Ms. Wight made a motion to approve the designated and undesignated gifts and donations 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 receipts from sales/rents this month.

Financial Report: First Quarter Report

Ms. Downing reported that the General Aid Fund is largely on track with the exception of Labor & Repairs, which has already exceeded the annual budgeted amount due to a payment of \$11,935 for electrical work. This overage is largely offset by the balance being brought forward from last year. The Personnel budget is doing well due to several vacancies. The Book & Media Fund is also on track.

Department Report: Reference Department

Ms. Downing recognized and thanked Ms. Moroni for the amazing efforts of her and the reference department staff including Ben Kalish and Heather Diaz. She said Ms. Moroni had participated in the Reopening Committee, having tough conversations and making tough decisions. Ms. Moroni and the reference department staff have been incredibly supportive and innovative in adapting library services to be accessible during the pandemic. Most recently Ms. Moroni has implemented a new scheduling model for public services staff that brings clarity, brings staff together, and breaks down traditional library department lines.

Ms. Moroni said she was grateful to be able to be of service and to bring some of her past experiences to serve the current needs. She said that the number one thing she is proud of is the implementation of the online chat information service on the library's website. When the system is being staffed, users will get a pop-up asking if they need help. Reference staff love it as a way to answer quick questions. She said that they are in the process of interviewing to fill a vacancy in interlibrary loan. In response to the question of how the trustees can help support the reference department, Ms. Moroni said that there are two old computers in reference that cannot be updated to Windows 10 and need to be replaced. She said that there is an old computer in reference that has files of the Daily Hampshire Gazette that can only be viewed on that computer. Ben Kalish has come up with a way to extract those files to make them available on the website and the library is in the process of working out the details with the Daily Hampshire Gazette in terms of copyright and ownership. Additionally she would like the trustees' support in implementing "Pay What You Can Printing". She said that some people just need to print out 2 pages and don't have any change. While the cost seems small, it can be an impediment. She, Ms. Downing, and Ms. Moss will look at the numbers and come up with a proposal of how this can be implemented and the cost.

The trustees thanked Ms. Moroni for her report and her service, and she left the meeting at 4:37 PM.

Friends of Forbes

Ms. Hess attended the Friends of Forbes meeting of October 6 and reported that there was considerable interest in the Neighborhood Free Libraries. The Treasurer reported that the endowment was down about \$20,000 to \$560,000. The Membership Committee reported that their mailing will go out after Thanksgiving with their newsletter. The Special Events committee is planning a wine tasting. Provisions will do a fundraiser for Forbes from October 15-31. The Friends are working on items for sale including Friends tee shirts. The Finance Committee reported that the bequest the Friends received has changed their financial outlook and they want to be responsible in how it is used. The goal is to maintain the principal and not exceed 4% of endowment in distributions, which would be about \$22,000. They have been giving about \$11,000 a year to the library and discussed if that should be increased and if they should be more aggressive on a yearly distribution or continue to handle requests on an ad hoc basis as they come up. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing said that she will be included in the conversation. She said that there are some bigger projects coming up in the next few years and that the Friends' help will be very important for these larger projects.

Administrative Report

Ms. Downing reported that there will be a special trustees' meeting at 3:45 PM next month to amend the bylaws to incorporate the new city charter language about filling board vacancies mid-term. The current bylaws require that changes take place at a special meeting and this will also be revised so that they can be changed at a regular meeting.

Everyone is so sad about the passing of Mary Harding who will be remembered for her outstanding service as library trustee and generous friend of the library. Mr. Carrier said that she was an exceptionally dedicated trustee and worked very hard for the library.

The Northampton Arts Council voted to cancel the Visual Arts and Poetry biennial the night before it was scheduled in the Hosmer Gallery. The gallery remained empty until Faith Kaufmann mounted a light hearted Halloween themed exhibit.

Jennie Lamour arranged for two new employee benefits that were recommended by the employer's association. Charge provides Zoom access to licensed Registered Dietitians that are covered by the health insurance plan most of the benefitted staff carry. She also connected Forbes with Cambridge Credit Counseling that has experts in personal finances as well as credit counseling services at no or low cost to employees. Both services do not have any direct costs to the library. Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Downing to thank Ms. Lamour for taking these initiatives.

Ms. Downing and Ms. Moss are pleased to announce that Julia Cornick will be joining Forbes as a full time Children's and Young Adult Library Assistant in November. She recently graduated from Smith College and has a high level of proficiency in Spanish. She impressed the search committee with her outstanding people skills, energy, creativity and experience. She hopes to be a children's librarian someday.

Congratulations to Alene Moroni who has been selected to serve on a panel titled "Antiracist service to leisure readers" at the Public Library Association conference in March.

Administrative Report (continued)

The Hot Chocolate Run is back this year, with both in person and virtual events. Ben Kalish is organizing a Forbes Library team. Please consider joining and helping to support Safe Passage, the local support agency for victims/survivors of domestic violence,
<https://p2p.onecause.com/hcr2021/team/forbes-library>

Phased Reopening Plan Update

Ms. Downing reported that Hampshire County recently improved from the highest category of COVID-19 cases down to the next highest, but as of today has returned to the highest category. The vaccination rate remains steady and it is hoped that the vaccine for 5-11 year-olds will be approved soon. No new changes to the library's service model have been implemented during the past month. It is hoped that in person programming and group use of meeting rooms will resume early in the new year. MassHire Franklin Hampshire Career Center is making a site visit this week in preparation for some of their services to resume at Forbes later this month.

In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing said that staff have access to sick leave that can and should be used for COVID related illnesses as well as testing and quarantining after possible COVID exposure. She said that staff are encouraged to stay home if not feeling well especially going into cold and flu season. The Board of Health guidelines say it is not necessary for asymptomatic vaccinated people to quarantine after possible COVID exposure. So far, no one on staff has come down with COVID, but should that happen, there will be contact tracing to identify close contacts. Additionally staff are required to wear masks at all times in the building and to social distance.

Ms. Prabhaker moved that the Administrative Report including the Phased Reopening Plan Update be accepted and placed on file. 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.

Next Meetings

A special meeting of the trustees to revise the by-laws is scheduled for Thursday, November 18 at 3:45 PM, followed by the regular trustees' meeting at 4 PM. The December meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 16 at 4 PM.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held Wednesday, November 3, at 6:30 PM. Mr. Twarog will attend on behalf of the trustees.

The Coolidge Standing Committee Annual Meeting is Tuesday, November 16 at 7 PM.

Communications

The trustees received an email from the Massachusetts Library Trustee Association announcing their annual meeting on October 23 at 10:30 AM. The program is a panel discussion of "What COVID Taught Me About Library Service."

David W. Shearer Memorial Periodicals Endowment Fund

Ms. Downing reported that the library received a significant donation of \$300,000 to support the periodicals collection in memory of David W. Shearer. The fund will offset the cost of periodicals in both current and future formats. This is a very meaningful donation and will do much to address the concern around the sustainability of the Book & Media Fund. Due to the

David W. Shearer Memorial Periodicals Endowment Fund (continued)

Municipal Appropriations Requirement (MAR) in order to receive state aid to public libraries, the Book & Media budget goes up every year, this year by \$8,000. The trustees were asked to establish the David W. Shearer Memorial Periodicals endowment fund with the following description:

The David W. Shearer Memorial Periodicals endowment fund was established by the trustees in 2021 through a family gift of \$300,000 in memory of David W. Shearer, former trustee and longtime library patron. An annual yield in keeping with our investment policy will be used to purchase periodicals and other serials in print, digital and other appropriate formats.

The trustees were asked to transfer the gifts received in David Shearer's memory totaling \$4,045.50 and an additional \$954.50 from the Morin Fund to the newly established David W. Shearer Memorial Periodicals endowment fund.

Ms. Hess made a motion to establish The David W. Shearer Memorial Periodicals endowment fund with the \$300,000 bequest from the Shearer family and to transfer the gifts received in David Shearer's memory totaling \$4,045.50 and an additional \$954.50 from the Morin Fund to the newly established 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.

Treasurer Search Committee

Ms. Downing reported that Cheri Buckhout has announced her intention to resign as Treasurer. She has served exemplarily in this role for 5 years and has offered to be flexible with her end date to help the library through the transition to a new treasurer.

The trustees were asked to approve the job posting and description that have been updated with Ms. Buckhout's input. Mr. Carrier said that the library's accounting has become significantly more complicated in the past ten years as the library has grown, in addition to new accounting standards that must be adhered to. He said that it may not be necessary for the Treasurer to attend every trustees' meeting, and that perhaps they could attend quarterly or via Zoom. He suggested also looking at some tasks that could be performed by other staff in-house. Ms. Buckhout estimates 5-7 hours per week with an annual salary of \$7,000-\$9,000.

Ms. Prabhaker made a motion to approve the Treasurer's job description and posting. 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. Moss said the posting will go out on Monday and run through November 15. Mr. Carrier appointed a search committee composed of Mr. Carrier, Ms. Wight, Ms. Downing, Ms. Moss, and Ms. Lamour.

Lighting Project Change Orders

Ms. Downing reported that the main staircase lighting project requires several change orders to the original contract to improve the lighting levels and performance. The original contract was followed but after installation has proven not to be sufficient. She requested approval of the following change orders totaling \$8,760.95 from the Morin Fund: Change Order No. 1 for \$2,380 to add a pendant light to the lower landing of the main staircase; Change Order No. 2 for \$5,919 to replace the pendant light on the upper landing of the main staircase with one that is larger; Change Order No. 3 for \$461.95 to add

Lighting Project Change Orders (continued)

frosted lens covers on the wall sconces to shield people from their glare. In response to a question from Mr. Twarog, Mr. Petcen clarified that the London pendant, not the Dublin pendant, will be used on the front stairwell between the 1st and 2nd floors in Change Order No. 2.

Ms. Wight made a motion to approve the three change orders totaling \$8,760.95 for the main staircase lighting project. 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.

Meeting Rooms & Ground Use Policy

Ms. Downing asked the trustees to approve the revised Meeting Rooms & Ground Use Policy that incorporates the suggestions offered at last month's meeting. Ms. Wight suggested adding "political candidate" to "political party or political group" that may use space at Forbes under certain conditions.

Ms. Prabhaker made a motion to approve the revised Meeting Rooms & Ground Use Policy. 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.

Mask Policy

The Leadership Team and Reopening Committee recommends a revision to the current mask policy that improves the clarity of the policy around accommodations for people unable or unwilling to wear a mask. The current mask policy is:

It is important that the library is a safe space for everyone. Young children and their families are daily visitors at our library. Because most children are not yet eligible to be vaccinated, we require that ALL patrons and staff continue to wear masks when inside the library regardless of vaccination status. Anyone who is unable or unwilling to follow this policy can borrow library materials through our curbside, drive up or home delivery services and be helped with reference questions via phone or email but may not enter the library.

The Proposed Revision of Forbes Library Mask Policy is:

It is important that the library is a safe space for everyone. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, we require that ALL patrons (2 years of age or older) and staff wear masks when inside the library regardless of vaccination status. Anyone who is unable or unwilling to follow this policy may not enter the library and will be offered alternatives, including curbside or home delivery of library materials; phone, email or chat assistance by staff; virtual tours; and outdoor access to materials.

Ms. Wight made a motion to approve the proposed revision to the Forbes Library Mask Policy. 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.

Employee Appreciation

Ms. Downing reported that last year the board approved \$50 Downtown Northampton gift cards to staff to show appreciation and recognition of the difficult year. The staff were very grateful for this gift. Ms. Downing would like the trustees to offer the staff \$50 Downtown Northampton gift cards again this year or the option of customized clothing with a Forbes logo

Employee Appreciation (continued)

valued up to \$50 from Pacific Printing in Northampton. The staff continue to be the library's greatest asset and receive so many compliments and notes of appreciation from patrons and donors. The trustees were asked to approve \$2,250 from the Morin Fund for appreciation gifts for all benefitted and active IPT staff.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve \$2,250 from the Morin Fund for appreciation gifts for all benefitted and active IPT staff. 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.

Annual Statistical Report

Ms. Moss presented a summary of the FY21 ARIS report. The library's statistics continue to be affected by the pandemic. The Reference Room and lobby were opened in August 2020 for limited use and the Reading Room opened in May 2021. Mostly full building use returned on June 14, with the Children's & Young Adult Department continuing with reduced hours. The library was open for 97 public service hours in FY21 compared to 1,900 in FY20 and 2,409 in FY19, according to the restrictive definition of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). The collection size has again increased. Overall print holdings are steady and the largest increase was in electronic serial subscriptions which increased by 2,053% from 148 to 3,187 followed by eAudio which increased 81.6% from 27,222 to 49,438. Total circulation decreased in all areas except in electronic content with eBook and eAudio increasing by 27.5% and 14.6% respectively. Interlibrary loan had a large 27.7% increase in materials received and a 24.8% increase in materials loaned to other libraries. Attendance in the library decreased dramatically 80% to 43,691. The meeting rooms were not used last year. All programming continued to be virtual except for one in person program. There were 856 take-home art and activity kits, 52 virtual story times uploaded to Facebook, 24 Zoom book clubs, and 12 story walks on the library lawn. Registered borrowers decreased slightly by 1% to 16,845, which continues to be 74% of the population assigned to Forbes by the MBLC.

Hotspots

Ms. Moss said that Forbes is now offering 20 circulating WiFi hotspots, each one allowing up to 10 devices to connect. Hotspots are available to check out for three weeks at a time from the Main Desk during open hours. There are 10 checked out on long term loans through community partners, and the other 10 are currently all checked out with a small waiting list. Thanks to Paula Elliott for processing and Ben Kalish for technical support in getting them ready to circulate. The MBLC has distributed over 3,000 hotspots to approximately 220 public libraries for loan to library users. Funded through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the hotspot lending program focuses on IMLS' primary goal for these funds, digital inclusion.

Mayoral Portrait Project

Ms. Downing said that Forbes is working with Mayor David Narkewicz to create a display of portraits of each of Northampton's Mayors going back to the first, Benjamin E. Cook, Jr. in 1883 through David Narkewicz, the 44th mayor. Dylan Gaffney has been working on tracking down some of the portraits that have proven very difficult to find. It is the Mayor's desire to have them on display in the Mayor's office and to be added to as new Mayor's come into office. Each portrait will be printed and framed individually and the library is working with Pivot Media in Florence for the scanning and printing. The

Mayoral Portrait Project (continued)

Mayor has donated \$1,000 in remaining campaign funds to offset all expenses incurred by the library on this project with library staff time being given in kind.

Racial & Social Justice

Ms. Moss said that a recording/video of the MBLC Watch Party can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/613078327>. The [Isabel Wilkerson](#) "Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents" video can also be viewed online. This title will be discussed next month as part of the Friday Afternoon Book Discussion on November 19. Ms. Moss distributed a list of recent and upcoming Racial & Social Justice activities. She said that next month she and Ms. Downing will be bringing to the trustees an update on the library's action plan which will consist largely of racial and social justice initiatives. Since these activities will be reported on in the action plan, they will not need to be reported on separately in the agenda.

Reports on Subcommittee and Other Meetings

Development Committee - Mr. Carrier reported that the response to the fall appeal has been very positive. There will be a follow up with email and social media postings.

Racial & Social Justice Committee - Ms. Hess reported that the committee discussed reviewing the library's mission statement and needs to develop a process for doing so. They also discussed policing and libraries and possible action steps that the advisory group reviewed. She said that in response to the editorial in the Daily Hampshire Gazette by Andrea Ayvazian about the book "White Racism: How Progressive White People Perpetuate Racial Harm" by Robin DiAngelo, she spoke with Ms. Ayvazian about possibly using the book for the next Northampton Reads program.

Racial & Social Justice Advisory Group - Ms. Prabhaker reported that the group discussed the library's current practices around calling the police and alternative resources and Ms. Downing will follow up to provide more guidance to the staff. The group also discussed a proposal to offer stipends to volunteers serving on committees that will be recommended to the committee at their next meeting. Ms. Prabhaker said it was a very thoughtful and nuanced discussion.

BIPOC Art Committee - Mr. Carrier reported that the committee agreed on selection criteria and each member was asked to recommend up to 3 artists to purchase for display in the Children's & Young Adults Department and up to 3 artists to purchase for display elsewhere in the library.

Coolidge Standing Committee - Ms. Wight reported that the annual meeting will be held on Tuesday November 16 at 7:00 PM on Zoom with the presentation, "Northampton's President: Calvin Coolidge as remembered by his Northampton friends." Selections with Northampton ties from 1935 *Good Housekeeping* articles titled "The Real Calvin Coolidge" edited with comment by Grace Coolidge will be presented. Committee members were asked to serve on a committee to develop a historian in residence program for FY23 and another to discuss and work on museum decolonization and reparative language in cataloging and exhibition labels centered around our stewardship of objects gifted to Coolidge by Native American tribes. Ms. Wight said that there is some frustration over the slow progress of the committee, and that it hasn't been a priority of the trustees. Mr. Carrier said that the focus recently has been on racial and social justice issues, and that the trustees should think

Reports on Subcommittee and Other Meetings (continued)

more about how the board can prioritize the Coolidge museum. In response to a question from Mr. Twarog, Mr. Carrier said that it is difficult to get federal funding now with the elimination of congressional "earmarks." He said there may be some federal funds for specific projects, and there may also be some state funds.

Other Business

None

At 5:35 PM Ms. Wight moved to adjourn the meeting. 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 meeting was adjourned at 5:35 PM.