

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Tuesday, April 26, 2022

Present: Ms. Debin Bruce, Mr. Russell Carrier, Ms. Lisa Downing, Ms. Molly Moss, Ms. Emily Prabhaker, Ms. Elizabeth Sheirer, Mr. Joseph Twarog, Ms. Katy Wight. **Present via Zoom:** Cheri Buckhout, Bill Breitbart, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Jason Petcen, representative of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA); Mr. Brian Jamros and Mr. Alex Bartholomew, representatives of Bartholomew Inc. **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 for some participants as indicated.

The meeting was called to order at 3:46 PM.

Mr. Carrier noted that this was the first in-person meeting of the trustees since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020. He thanked Ms. Downing and Ms. Moss for setting up the OWL technology to make this hybrid meeting possible.

Bills & Warrants

The trustees signed the warrant dated April 26, 2022 and the previously verbally approved warrants.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Bartholomew Quarterly Report

Mr. Jamros introduced Alex Bartholomew, Senior Vice President and Chief Investment Officer for Bartholomew Inc. In response to questions from Mr. Carrier, Mr. Bartholomew said that the exposure to Russian markets is mainly through emerging markets equities, and that since the Forbes portfolio has divested of fossil fuels, its exposure is very little. Since the Russian stock market has shut down, the value of that exposure is at or near zero. Investment managers will act in the best financial interest of clients and unwind the Russian exposure completely at the right time and will monitor the situation closely. In regards to interest rates going up, Mr. Bartholomew said that the federal reserve is looking at six more rate hikes in 2022. Their goal is to bring down demand to level off inflation without bringing the country into a recession. There are some indicators that a recession is coming, but it may not be as severe as before since the labor market is strong. He said it is a challenging economic and geopolitical environment for investors right now with both equities and bonds suffering due partially to rising interest rates. Stocks that are performing well right now are in energy and commodities.

In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Mr. Bartholomew said that they are not recommending any change in investment strategy or the ratio between stocks and bonds at this time. He said that decisions the trustees make about risk and asset allocation should be based on the long term and spending projections. Forbes has been taking approximately a 3.4% withdrawal from the endowment over the last ten years. That combined with a 2-3% inflation rate means that the portfolio would need to earn 6% a year in order to break even. So far, the returns have been keeping pace, but either a lower withdrawal amount, or a higher risk allocation may be considered in the future. Forbes takes its withdrawals based on averaging of the latest 20 trailing quarters, which smooths out the disbursement amounts and makes it more predictable.

Bartholomew Quarterly Report (continued)

The value in the portfolio as of close yesterday was \$6,239,863.93, down 11% this fiscal year, which is comparable to 50/50 equity/bond benchmarks. The alternatives in the Forbes portfolio have done well, including the Blackstone Real Estate and gold through iShares, and have been positive contributors to performance. They make up about 5% of the holdings. Mr. Bartholomew said that he is confident that Forbes will get through this and by keeping eyes on the long term will be able to provide the income the library needs going forward. He said that at some point inflation will subside - the federal reserve will make sure of it - and a clearer picture will emerge by the end of the 3rd or 4th quarter this year.

Mr. Bartholomew and Mr. Jamros said to let them know if the trustees had any other questions or if they needed anything else. The trustees thanked them for their report and they left the meeting at 4:17 PM.

Ms. Buckhout said that she will ask Bartholomew Inc. to provide the twenty trailing quarters report each month to include in the Treasurer's report. She said that having this information will allow the trustees to see as the year progresses if they should be cutting back on expenses that could be delayed if there is a significant change.

Secretary's Report

Ms. Bruce moved that the Secretary's report of March 24, 2022 be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Ms. Bruce, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Buckhout presented the Treasurer's report of March 31, 2022. The General Aid Fund had positive net activity for the month of \$134 and closed with a balance of \$23,293. The Book & Media Fund had negative net activity of \$2,408 and has a balance of \$13,676. The BIPOC Art Fund had negative net activity of \$2,525 and has a balance of \$1,440. The Doland Reference Room Fund had negative net activity of \$3,287 and has a deficit of \$1,816. The Externally Financed Transactions Fund had zero net activity and has a balance of \$1,352. The Google Ads Grant had zero net activity and has a zero balance. The Halberstadt Technology Fund had negative net activity of \$5,171 and has a balance of \$2,529. The Hosmer Art Gallery Fund had positive net activity of \$589 and has a balance of \$1,578. The Morin Fund had positive net activity of \$1,445 and has a balance of \$79,550. The Moving Memories IMLS Grant had negative net activity of \$3,968 and has a deficit of \$3,968. The Outreach Fund had positive net activity of \$1,130 and has a balance of \$6,983. The Watson Copier Fund had negative net activity of \$1,389 and has a deficit of \$1,980. The balance in the endowment as of March 31, 2022 was \$6,515,677.57.

Ms. Buckhout said that she will bring more detailed information to the trustees' meeting in May about where the budget stands and whether there will or will not be any surplus. Mr. Carrier said to be mindful of any bills that are due late in the fiscal year for the following year. He said that if there is any surplus, it could go towards the electricity costs for FY23.

Ms. Wight made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report of March 31, 2022 and place it on file. Ms. Bruce seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Ms. Bruce, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Treasurer's Report (continued)

Ms. Downing requested a transfer of \$3,000 from the Doland Fund in the endowment to the operating account to cover the current deficit of \$1,816 from the purchase of the new content management system, and to provide a cushion for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to transfer \$3,000 from the Doland Fund in the endowment to the Doland Fund in the operating account. Ms. Prabhaker seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Ms. Bruce, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Gifts, Donations, and Bequests, etc.

Ms. Downing said that the library had a fantastic response on Library Giving Day, and that much of the credit goes to Ms. Moss who did a huge amount of work on it. She said that many donors expressed gratitude and appreciation for the library and its staff. If a trustee recognizes a name from the list of donors, they should feel free to reach out and thank them personally. Mr. Carrier said that this was the first of the library's two main fundraising events this year. The second one will be the annual appeal letter in the Fall.

The following undesignated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$50.15 to the Morin Fund from several small donations; \$1,248 to the Outreach Fund from the Community Foundation of Western Mass., Springfield, MA on behalf of the Lucey Family Endowment Fund; and a total of \$20,261.12 from 205 donations on Library Giving Day to be divided as \$13,135.17 to the Morin Fund, \$2,014.15 to the Outreach Fund, \$2,045 to Children's Programming, \$2,028.30 to the Marie Hershkowitz Memorial Children's Book Endowment Fund, \$257.50 to the Hosmer Art Gallery Fund, and \$125 to the Lyman Special Collections Endowment Fund.

The following designated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$206 Stephen Hathaway, Northampton MA, to the Marie Hershkowitz Memorial Children's Book Fund In Memory of Marie Hershkowitz, and in Honor of Dr. Melvin Hershkowitz; \$150 Russ Carrier and Andrew Dausch, Florence MA, to the Lyman Special Collections Endowment Fund.

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

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

FY23 Budget Update

Ms. Downing reported that the revised budget proposal containing a 3.1% increase (\$44,743) for a total appropriation request of \$1,477,724 was accepted by the Mayor's office and will be presented to the City Council for approval at some point. This is a reduction of \$14,104 from the initial request and it was achieved by increasing the yield from the Forbes Aid and the Clarke and Earle endowment funds to 4%, and by reducing expenses. The operating budget is almost exclusively fixed expenses but some savings were found by planning to increase the set point of the air conditioning in the summer and a plan to skip carpet cleaning next year. The biggest changes were to the personnel budget. Wage increases were reduced for hourly substitute workers, the salary was revised and the longevity payment was eliminated for the Head of Borrower Services position in light of the retirement news, and some of the work study costs were moved out of the city budget. Income from

FY23 Budget Update (continued)

the State Aid line was reduced based on the latest information available. \$52,000 has been budgeted but it seems likely it will be closer to \$50,000. A large part of the budgetary strain is the 33% increase in electricity. It is hoped that this was an anomaly but it can't be predicted. There are a couple of changes that can be made to infrastructure that will reduce energy consumption including re-insulating the attic and to a lesser extent, looking at more LED lighting conversion projects. Ms. Downing will plan to follow up with the new head of Central Services about these projects in the near future.

Mr. Carrier said that the city council still needs to approve the budget before it becomes final. Ms. Bruce thanked Ms. Downing and Ms. Moss for their efforts in reconciling the budget with the city. Ms. Downing said that overall state aid had grown, but that due to Northampton's demographics and economics, its percentage increase was not as much as anticipated. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moss said that she had already included the hotspots in the budget and that other line items that might count towards the Municipal Appropriations Requirement (MAR) in the future include some percentage of programming.

3rd Quarter Report

Ms. Downing anticipates ending the fiscal year very close to budget. The year started with a surplus that was intended for safety lighting upgrades that have been completed. Neither the huge increase in electricity costs nor a lower state aid number were anticipated. Ms. Downing will continue to monitor the budget with Ms. Buckhout's assistance.

Ms. Wight made a motion to accept the Financial Report and place it on file. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Ms. Bruce, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Ms. Buckhout left the meeting at 4:35 PM.

Friends of Forbes

Ms. Bruce attended the April 6 meeting of the Friends of Forbes and reported that the meeting was held via Zoom with 9 in attendance. The Friends thanked Serena Smith, who is leaving the board, for her years of service. The Treasurer reported that the taxes for last year were filed. No notable changes were reported. Membership reported that they were getting ready for the June mailing. Martha McCormick agreed to do the Friends' newsletter with interviews from Ms. Smith and Brian Tabor. Special Events reported that despite not holding the wine tasting, sponsors have continued to support the library. There was discussion of a craft arts fair on October 2, 2022. Chris Hannon and Ms. McCormick will hold a special events meeting to plan for it. Ms. Downing provided updates on library activities including a change to the mask policy, resumed indoor programming, library giving day, planning for the outdoor performance stage, circulation, and BIPOC art purchases. She also thanked the Friends for the staff treats and for their funding support. She said she anticipates a budget request of \$25,279. She explained a plan to upgrade the Story Walk reading stations, and the Friends approved funding for supplies to rebuild the stations.

Administrative Report

Ms. Downing reported that a campaign has begun to increase outreach and services for Spanish speaking members of the community. Spanish speakers are the largest group of non-English or bilingual speakers in the community and there are now two benefitted staff members with strong Spanish language

Administrative Report (continued)

skills. This initiative was given high priority by the Racial and Social Justice Advisory Group. A button has been added to the library's homepage labeled "Espanol" that provides a welcome and links to key pages including registering for a library card in Spanish. Work has begun on providing other information in Spanish including a welcome brochure, application form, and signage. For the first time ever, the summer reading program materials will be offered in both Spanish and English. There has been increased circulation of Spanish language materials from the Neighborhood Free Book Boxes and over time the aim is to increase use of other library resources and services.

Word was received of the second and final state aid payment for this year. In total Forbes will receive \$48,847.53 which is less than was budgeted for but still a significant contribution towards the FY22 budget.

Alene Moroni, Tex Teghtsoonian, and Ms. Moss represented the library at the Northampton Education Foundation's first virtual trivia bee under the team name, "The Library has all the answers" and came in 5th place in a field of 39 teams. Congratulations!

Library Giving Day was a record breaking success with 203 gifts and the hard work and coordination of the Development Committee, Friends of Forbes, and Ben Kalish. In addition to the amazing generosity, all were blown away by the outpouring of appreciation for the library, the staff, and services.

Julie Nelson appeared on WWLP's daytime show, [Mass Appeal](#), during National Library Week to talk about the Coolidge Museum as part of a weeklong series showcasing unique features of area libraries.

Congratulations to Martha McCormick for her appointment as Vice-President of the Friends. The library is so fortunate to have her experience and dedication in this key role. This post was vacated when Serena Smith left the board after many years of service. Her organization of the annual wine tasting made it such a huge success. She will be sorely missed.

Forbes participated in the region's virtual legislative day event that included Senator Comerford on the program. A key takeaway is how important it is for our legislators to hear from us to understand our needs. Now is the time to reach out to Senator Comerford and Representative Sabadosa to ask for their support of the library's legislative agenda. This year's focus is on increasing State Aid to Local Libraries and State Aid to Regional Libraries which fund the interlibrary loan delivery service that is critical to operations.

Covid Safety Update

Ms. Downing reported that unfortunately cases have been steadily increasing in Northampton. As a result, the library has been holding tight with the existing room capacity limits. Indoor children's programming including story time returned this month and the career center has returned on Wednesdays with their Job Readiness workshops. Ms. Downing and Ms. Moss are pleased that an additional booster has been made available to eligible people and several of the library staff have already received one.

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

Next Meetings

The next regular meeting of the trustees is scheduled for Thursday, May 19 at 3:45 PM, and the auditors will attend the meeting. The following meetings for the rest of 2022 were previously scheduled: Thursday, June 16 at 4 PM; Thursday, July 21 at 4 PM; Thursday, September 22, at 4 PM; Thursday, October 20 at 3:45 PM; Thursday, November 17 at 4 PM; Tuesday, December 20 at 4 PM.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held via Zoom on Wednesday, May 4 at 6:30 PM. Ms. Prabhaker will attend on behalf of the trustees.

Communications

Ms. Downing received a letter dated April 6, 2022 from the Northampton Survival Center thanking Forbes for its donation of 88 pounds of food and toiletries.

Discussion Topic: Intellectual Freedom and Censorship

Ms. Downing distributed information and articles on the subject of intellectual freedom and censorship, as well as a third piece about the misconception of libraries being neutral. She said that book banning has received national attention recently due to an unfortunate trend of objections about books often with a focus on LGBTQ+ content in school libraries. She said that intellectual freedom and censorship is continuously on the minds of staff as they make many, many decisions about collections over the course of a month. Purchase decisions are divided up amongst staff according to different subject areas. Recently there have been objections to right leaning titles featured in the weekly Wowbrary newsletter. Wowbrary is a third party service that Forbes subscribes to that helps connect patrons with new acquisitions at the library. The newsletter uses an automated algorithm based on national sales to determine which books are highlighted and Forbes staff was able to explain that to the patrons and add clearer language about how featured books are picked in the weekly newsletter. Thinking about intellectual freedom and censorship is being expanded to include programs, exhibitions, and more, an effort being led by Faith Kaufmann. The plan is to expand current procedures for handling objections so that it can incorporate these other areas. Ms. Downing distributed the library's current "Objection to Library Materials" policy, which includes a link to the "Statement of Concern About Library Resources Form."

The trustees discussed collection decisions and the importance of balance and presenting both sides of an issue while remaining factually accurate. Mr. Carrier expressed concern that the library not limit access to conservative viewpoints. Ms. Moss said that collection decisions are partially based on patron demand and circulation so that the collection reflects the community's interests. She said that staff refer to lists and reviews from the New York Times, Publisher's Weekly, Library Journal, and National Public Radio among others. Ms. Downing said that the library relies heavily on Interlibrary Loan since it cannot purchase every title. Mr. Carrier said it is important for the library to have a range of material available on the shelf for the serendipitous discovery by patrons who come in to browse or pick up a book. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moss said there is a process in place whereby patrons can request that the library purchase a book if it's not already in the collection, and that 90% of those requests are filled. Ms. Prabhaker asked if the current Collection Development Policy is robust and supportive enough to help not only with purchase decisions but also community requests and objections. Ms. Moss said that it was but that it was last updated in 2015 and should be reviewed. The discussion then turned towards digital content and its availability to reach people in different ways.

Discussion Topic: Intellectual Freedom and Censorship (continued)

Ms. Moss is involved in a group looking at racial and social justice access issues with CWMars. The trustees agreed that this is an important and difficult discussion to have periodically.

Reconsideration of Library Resources

Ms. Downing distributed a draft of a proposal prepared by Faith Kaufmann to expand the current procedures for handling objections to incorporate programs, exhibitions and more. This has been under consideration since the Community Art Show was cancelled last Fall by the Northampton Arts Council. The process has also been updated to require that the requesting individual be a member of the greater Northampton community served by the Library (in line with the collection development policy 'community interests') and that any resource reconsidered under this procedure will not be the subject of a review again for a period of three years from the date of the Library Director's receipt of the initial objection form.

Ms. Prabhaker made a motion to approve the proposed Reconsideration of Library Resources statement and form. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Ms. Bruce, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Door and Lock Repairs

Ms. Downing distributed a proposal received by Jason Petcen from NSA Commercial Door & Hardware for repairs that will improve safety and security including adding new door locks to the single stall bathrooms that will indicate if they are vacant or occupied. The only way to find out now is to try the handle or knock on the door and this is a frequent source of frustration and embarrassment for patrons. The proposal will also seek to improve security for the non-public area of the building by adding a lock to an existing door and by fixing the children's entrance so that it is more secure. The estimate is for \$8634.94, with \$4,000 to be paid from the Aid Fund and \$4,634.94 from the Morin Fund.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve \$8,634.94, \$4,000 from the Aid Fund and \$4,634.94 from the Morin Fund for adding new door locks. Ms. Bruce seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Ms. Bruce, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

CCPLM Bylaws Change and Secretary Appointment

Ms. Downing reported that the Coolidge Standing Committee recommends the following amendment to the Trustees Bylaws.

Current: The Committee Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Coolidge Standing Committee meetings, circulate minutes to members in a timely manner, give all required notices of meetings and keep a list of members and their contact information.

Proposed: The Secretary, or their designee, shall attend all meetings of the Coolidge Standing Committee and shall keep full, true and accurate minutes of all business transacted at each such meeting. The Secretary is a non voting member unless appointed as a member of the Coolidge Standing Committee by the Board of Trustees.

The Coolidge Standing Committee upon the approval of the bylaw change by the Board of Trustees recommends the appointment of Alene Moroni as secretary without voting rights.

CCPLM Bylaws Change and Secretary Appointment (continued)

Ms. Bruce moved to approve the amendment to the Trustees Bylaws as proposed by the Coolidge Standing Committee and to appoint Alene Moroni as secretary. Ms. Prabhaker seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Ms. Bruce, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

BIPOC Art Committee Purchase Recommendation

Ms. Downing reported that The BIPOC Art committee met yesterday and recommends the purchase of two prints by Anthony Melting Tallow called *Fractured Flight* and *Endian*. The artist is an enrolled member of the Siksikaitsitapi Blackfoot Nation and currently lives in Western MA. He is a visual artist, public speaker, Indigenous social justice advocate, and land and water defender. Ms. Wight said that these prints are digitally created and therefore do not pollute the environment.

Ms. Prabhaker moved to approve the purchase of two prints by Anthony Melting Tallow for \$1,790 to be paid from the BIPOC Art Fund. Ms. Bruce seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Ms. Bruce, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Strategic Planning Update

Ms. Downing reported that the first meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee will be this week and they will be sharing the proposed timeline, overview of the process, and discuss the three areas of data collection (survey, stakeholder interviews/focus groups, existing data). In addition to Ms. Wight, Ms. Downing, and Ms. Moss, Nicole Sibley from the Friends and Ben Kalish, Dylan Gaffney, and Sarah Johnson have agreed to serve on this working committee. Ms. Downing said that the group is working with a consultant and will bring back plans to the trustees next month.

Remote Meeting Participation

Ms. Downing reported that the Governor's emergency order allowing for remote public meetings has been extended through July, but it is unknown what the policy will be after that. The trustee's bylaws have a section addressing remote meeting participation but it was based on the state guidelines pre-COVID when remote meetings were uncommon. Ms. Downing provided the relevant section from the trustees' bylaws. The State may be updating their guidelines, so the trustees agreed by consensus to wait and see what the state does before they update their bylaws.

Racial & Social Justice Committee

After considering multiple factors, Ms. Downing said that she has determined that it does not make sense to merge the Racial & Social Justice Committee (Committee) with the Racial & Social Justice Advisory Committee (Advisory Group). Currently Mr. Twarog is serving on the Committee along with Ms. Downing, Ms. Moss, Ms. Moroni, and Heather Diaz. Ms. Prabhaker is currently serving on the Advisory Group and said that she wants to make sure that the structure makes sense to amplify the voices of the people of color on the Advisory Group and create a more direct pathway for their concerns and advice to reach the trustees. Mr. Twarog said that the Advisory Group was formed when the Committee felt that it had too many white members and needed more input from the BIPOC community, but it has also created a cumbersome and confusing bureaucratic structure. Mr. Twarog suggested doing away with the Committee and having the Advisory Group report directly to the trustees.

Racial & Social Justice Committee (continued)

Mr. Twarog made a motion to disband the Racial & Social Justice Committee. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Ms. Bruce, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Ms. Prabhaker said she would be happy to do more as liaison to the Advisory Group and bring their interests and concerns to the trustees. Currently Ms. Downing and Jose Adastra are co-chairs of the Advisory Group. Ms. Downing will discuss with Mr. Prabhaker whether she should replace her as co-chair or remain as a liaison.

Library Use Statistics

Ms. Moss reported that March 2022 marks a full two years of COVID-19's impact on library operations, library staff, and the broader community. For this reason, she is looking back to March 2019 for baseline comparisons. Many changes from the past two years are dramatic. For example, while in-house circulation statistics for March 2019 and March 2022 are very similar, OverDrive circulations have increased by 79% from 2019 to 2022, and eAudiobook circulations have doubled. If this means that patrons have found a new format that is easy, safe, and convenient for them, she is thrilled! Combining in-house and OverDrive circulations, there is an overall growth in circulations of 6% between 2019 and 2022. Door counts are slowly increasing, although they have not returned to pre-COVID levels. As with so many aspects of life at present, it's hardly back to normal but there is certainly reason for optimism.

Reports on Subcommittee and Other Meetings

Racial and Social Justice Advisory Committee - Ms. Prabhaker reported that the Racial and Social Justice Advisory Committee met on Monday, March 28. Pam Acosta, Jose Adastra, Adrienne Andrews, Lisa Downing, Lucy Hartry, Emily Prabhaker, Tina Sanchez, Bill Scher, Maxine Schmidt, Jonathan Wynn were in attendance with Julia Cornick and Pam Acosta as special guests. During this meeting they briefly discussed the decision to keep the Racial and Social Justice Advisory Committee separate from the Racial and Social Justice Committee, particularly to maintain the great way this committee has worked thus far. Group members were excited about new purchases made by the BIPOC Art Committee and that Forbes has applied for funds from the City for automatic door openers, and to reduce the lip on the door threshold. As a group and with guidance from special guest staff members, Ms. Cornick and Ms. Acosta, they discussed ways the library is serving Spanish speaking community members and brainstormed new possibilities including translating the library's Facebook page into Spanish, having the StoryWalk in other languages, and advertising on Spanish-language radio stations. Members were interested in the idea of a mentorship program to pair people who are interested in running for trustee with a past trustee who could help them with the process.

Landscape & Grounds Committee - Ms. Bruce reported that The Landscape & Grounds Committee (Mr. Twarog, Ms. MacKenzie, Ms. Downing, Ms. Moss, Mr. Petcen and Ms. Bruce) met on April 7. They conducted a hybrid meeting format with the use of the new Owl equipment; three people were in-person at the library and three attended through Zoom. The agenda included an update of the performance stage design competition for the west lawn. Ms. Bruce said that they were running into cost issues and that the project will likely not happen this season. Ms. Downing reported on her recent conversation with the Western Massachusetts American Institutes of Architects and the advantage of their involvement as a co-sponsor. Mr. Petcen gave an update on plans to build a permanent arrangement for StoryWalk. The Friends of Forbes will support the supplies needed to build

Reports on Subcommittee and Other Meetings (continued)

the weather-resistant page holders. There are temporary signs in place to request that patrons not idle their vehicles in the parking lot. A more permanent "no idling" sign arrangement was discussed. There was no new business introduced and the next meeting was scheduled for June.

BIPOC Art Committee - Mr. Carrier reported that the committee met on Monday and recommended the purchase of two pieces by Anthony Melting Tallow that were approved earlier at this meeting. They are looking at three more artists and will likely exceed their \$20,000 budget to achieve the goal of diversifying the collection. The committee hopes to conclude their work soon.

Coolidge Standing Committee - Ms. Wight reported that the Coolidge Committee met on April 4. Ms. Moroni attended her first meeting as the new secretary. Ms. Nelson's Archivist's Report included updates on the migration to the new catalog system, hybrid meeting equipment in the museum, recent activities in the museum, as well as news and upcoming events related to Coolidge. The Programming subcommittee is working on plans for the 100th anniversary of Coolidge becoming president. A book about Truman was chosen for the June meeting of the Presidential Book Club. Beth Myers gave an update from the Exhibits subcommittee which has been discussing what the scope of the project should be initially. They've been discussing how the space is used, the best and worst features of the museum as it currently stands, as well as what is missing from the museum. The next meeting is May 9.

Jo Comerford's series on MA State grant opportunities - Ms. Bruce reported that she attended the better part of Jo Comerford's series on MA State grant opportunities. The first covered an overview of the Community One Step program (www.mass.gov/onestop) and dealt with housing and real estate. Several speakers spoke to different types of grants. They were from the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, and Mass Development. Ms. Bruce was happy to see Alan Wolf attending. She needs to do a lot more research, but the categories that she was most interested in were Commonwealth Places for neighborhood place making and Mass Downtown Initiative. The first step is Expression of Interest and the window for Fall applications is May 2 - June 3, 2022. She said that future topics include: Federal Highway Administration on April 26, Energy and Environmental on May 10, Mass Historic Institute and Mass Cultural Council on May 24, and Mass Broadband Institute and Ex Office of Tech Services and Securities (EOTSS) on June 7.

Other Business

The trustees discussed the use of OWL technology for this meeting and both in-person and remote participants said it was satisfactory.

Ms. Downing said there is a new Head of Central Services for the city, Patrick McCarthy, pending final approval from the city council.

Ms. Downing said that the Library will be closed Thursday morning for staff training. The Northampton Department of Community Care implementation director along with an officer from the Northampton Police Department will offer safety training for staff including fire, mold, and Narcan training.

At 6:03 PM Ms. Bruce moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Ms. Bruce, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:03 PM.