

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Meeting of July 23, 2014

Present: Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Mr. Rowe, Mr. Morin, Ms. Moulding, Ms. Sheirer, Mr. Twarog. **Also Present:** Mary Fagan, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Molly Moss, representative of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA). **Absent:** Ms. Burnham and Mr. Carrier.

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 PM in the Watson Room in Forbes Library.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Secretary's Report

Ms. Hess moved that the Secretary's Report of June 18, 2014 be accepted and placed on file with a minor correction. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Hess moved that the preliminary Treasurer's Report of June 30, 2014 be accepted and placed on file. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Morin reported that the June report is not final yet. Fund balances and activity will change on the final financial statement at the September meeting. Preliminary figures show the AID fund closing with a surplus of \$2,000. There is a budget shortfall of \$5,000 for total income, and a budget overage of \$7,800 for total expenses. The wages category is \$3,600 over-budget. This translates into a budget variance of only 0.36%. Heating gas, water/sewer, and work-study are the categories over-budget this fiscal year. The Book Fund has a \$15,500 deficit at the end of the fiscal year. There is a budget shortfall of \$760 for total income and a budget overage of \$3,000 for total expenses. The E.F.T. fund will have a zero balance and remaining balances will be transferred to an appropriate fund in the financials. The Doland Fund has a deficit of \$1,300 in the operating account. Mr. Morin transferred the elevator expenses out of the Second Century Fund into the Elevator Construction Fund, which he created to track all elevator construction payments. Mr. Morin also created a new Civil War Grant fund from money sent to Forbes by the state Veteran's Affairs division.

Mr. Morin reported that he corresponded with Mr. Joshua Paul of Bartholomew Inc. about the asset allocation of the Forbes portfolio in the endowment. Mr. Paul had previously suggested that Forbes consider adjusting the mix of stocks and bonds to be more conservative. Mr. Paul now recommends that with Forbes' current spend rate of 3%, adjusting 2-3% for inflation and adding a buffer of 1% which equals a desired rate of return of 5.5-6.5%, that Forbes retain the current portfolio asset allocation which is of moderate risk.

Administrative Report (Ms. Moulding & Ms. Downing)

Ms. Moulding reported that there was a fire on the front stairway Monday evening, July 14, which destroyed part of the stair's bannister and carpeting. The entire second floor and all the collections were covered with smoke, soot, and fire extinguisher dust. The fire was arson and a suspect was arrested. The library has insurance for the contents and the city has insurance for the building. ServiceMaster was hired to clean everything

Administrative Report (continued)

except the art, the Oriental rugs, and the antique clock. The Williamstown Art Conservation Center will clean the art work, artifacts, and sculpture that were affected. Work started on Thursday, July 17 and is expected to last about three weeks. Ms. Moulding said that it is hoped the stairway will be reopened by Monday, August 4. The Trustees thanked Ms. Moulding for her calm approach dealing with the fire and her thorough organization of the restoration process.

Jason Mazzotta produced another video for the library. This one, for the summer reading program is entitled "To the End of the Page - A Forbes Noir". It stars Lilly Sundell-Thomas, Dylan Gaffney, and Brian Marchese. The library itself, as filmed by Jason, is a dramatically authentic noir presence. The film is a treat and demonstrates how talented and creative Forbes' staff is.

An "Awesome Box" has been added to the circulation desk. If patrons have an item they think was "awesome" they can return it to the Awesome Box. Staff will then feature it in the online Awesome List and in other promotions throughout the library.

Forbes' annual lawn concert was held on Wednesday, June 25 with the Lissa Schneckenburger Band. The weather held off just long enough for the performance to be enjoyed by a crowd of 180 before there was a major rain storm.

Historic Northampton is hosting a series of "Jeffersonian Dinners" for community stakeholders to meet and talk. Dylan Gaffney represented Forbes at the first one. Julie Nelson will go to the next one on July 23 and Ms. Moulding and Ms. Hess will attend the one on August 14.

The Northampton Arts Council has announced the grant awards for the latest round. Forbes is very excited to be a collaborating partner for two award winning projects. Martha Ebner received a grant to assist with the costs of her show Lightness of Bone: Works on Paper. Elizabeth Foley received a grant towards the production costs of a video documentary about artist Jim Mias who works with objects that he finds like pieces of river-tempered wood and shards of pottery from the old Mills that come in his path as he makes his regular rounds of Leeds and Florence and Northampton on his bicycle. The documentary will be shown at the library in late October 2014.

Mr. Twarog moved that the Administrative report be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Friends of Forbes Meeting

The Friends of Forbes do not meet in July or August.

Next Meetings

The next regular meeting of the Trustees is scheduled for Thursday, September 18, 2014 at 4:00 PM in the Watson Room.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held Wednesday, September 3 at 6:30 PM. Ms. Hess will attend on behalf of the Trustees.

The Coolidge Advisory Committee will be meeting in 2014 at 4:00 PM on Mondays, September 8, and December 1. Mr. Rowe will attend the September 8 meeting on behalf of the Trustees.

Communications

There were no official communications this month, however, there was an outpouring of sympathy and support following the fire, and a few donations came in to help with the second floor restoration. In response to a question from the Trustees, Ms. Moulding said that the library's insurance will cover most of the cost, except for the \$1,000 deductible and a few miscellaneous clean-up supplies.

FY15 Budget

Ms. Moulding said that there is nothing new to report.

FLEA Contract

The Trustees signed the FY15 FLEA contract addendum. The contract stipulates step raises for all eligible employees, a 1.5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for all staff including intermittent part-time (IPT) workers, and an additional personal day. Ms. Moulding said that with the recent minimum wage law passed in Massachusetts, Forbes will need to increase the pay rate for IPT workers by 2016 in order to comply.

Gifts, Bequests, Sales, etc.

The following designated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$150, from Scott Morin, Florence, in memory of Edward Morin, to be deposited in the Edward Morin Fund; \$100, from Robert Weidhass, Easthampton, in memory of Barbara Lewis, to be deposited in the Edward Morin Fund; \$25 from Sally Edelstein, Northampton, in memory of Florence Bond, to be deposited in the Book & Media Fund; \$5,000 from The Friends of Forbes to be deposited in the Book & Media Fund; \$2,500 from The Friends of Forbes to be deposited in the Staff Development Fund; \$1,300 from The Friends of Forbes to be deposited in the Outreach Fund; \$35 from anonymous, in memory of Michael Labozzetta, to buy a book on Italian culture, to be deposited in the Book & Media Fund; \$1,000 from Karen Halttunen, Los Angeles, CA, "to support the invaluable work of the Hampshire Room for Local History and Special Collections", to be deposited in the Special Collections Fund.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve the allocation of the designated gifts as proposed by Ms. Moulding. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

The following undesignated gift was received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$100 from Bettie Farber, Northampton, to be deposited in the Edward Morin Fund

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the allocation of the undesignated gift as proposed by Ms. Moulding. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

The following *receipt from sales/rents* was received since the last Trustees' meeting: none this month.

Elevator Project

Mr. Carrier and Ms. Moulding will meet with Mayor Narkewicz on Thursday, July 31, to discuss funding for the accessible elevator project, and will report on the results of that meeting at the next Trustees' meeting in September.

Edible Garden Project

The Edible Garden continues to be cared for and people have been seen taking pieces of the plants. Quite a bit of positive feedback about the project has been received.

City Council Subcommittee

Ms. Hess, Ms. Moulding, and Ms. Downing met with the City Council Social Services, Veterans, Recreation, and Cultural Subcommittee on Monday, July 21, at the invitation of Chair Marianne LaBarge. The committee also includes Alisa Klein of Ward 7 and Gina Louise Sciarra from Ward 4. Ms. Moulding and Ms. Hess said that the group asked a lot of questions and that the library is well regarded. The meeting was video-taped and will be on NCTV.

Civil War Restoration Grant

Forbes Library received a grant for \$2,728 from the Massachusetts Sesquicentennial Commission of the American Civil War. The money will be used to inventory, preserve, scan, and produce finding aids for the library's collection of civil war and GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) records. The grant was written by Dylan Gaffney and Lilly Sundell-Thomas.

In response to a question from the Trustees, Ms. Moss said that the library owns photographs, physical artifacts, and records from the Civil War era when each city formed its own unit to send off to fight.

LSTA Disabilities Grant

Forbes has been awarded the two year "Serving People with Disabilities" LSTA grant for \$18,100 that was applied for this spring. The grant will start in October and include the purchase of technology to assist communication and enjoyment of library programs and services for patrons with disabilities, and staff training. The funds cannot be used for capital improvements.

Outreach Plan

As a result of Forbes receiving less than level-service funding in FY15, the library's Outreach program will be phased out over the next year. The car has been sold and the employee doing outreach is using his own car and charging the library mileage. He is going to deliver to 45 patrons at nursing homes on an every third week schedule. He is informing them that deliveries will end in June next year.

In response to questions from the Trustees, Ms. Moulding said that the program cannot be run solely by volunteers. The program is more than a delivery service and requires skills in helping outreach patrons select materials, and to check them out. A staff member is needed to oversee and organize the program. Patrons that are homebound can authorize a friend or family member to check out materials for them, but Forbes will no longer be able to deliver materials after this year.

Ms. Moulding and the Trustees expressed regret that Forbes is no longer able to offer outreach. Mr. Twarog will draft a letter to the editor of the Daily Hampshire Gazette explaining the situation and why it is happening. The Trustees will review the letter at their next meeting in September.

Reports on workshops/meetings/activities

None this month.

Visit by Naturalist Laurie Sanders

Ms. Moulding reported that naturalist Laurie Sanders led a program at Forbes recently about the history, geology and vegetation on the Forbes property.

At 4:55 PM Ms. Hess moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM.