

**TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY**  
**Meeting of February 17, 2016**

**Present:** Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Mr. Morin, Ms. Moulding, Ms. Sheirer, Mr. Twarog, Ms. Wight. **Also Present:** Faith Kaufmann, Arts & Music Librarian; Martha McCormick, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Brian Tabor, representative of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA); Jasper Lapienski. **Absent:** Ms. Reall.

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM in the Coolidge Museum.

**Public Comments**

Mr. Jasper Lapienski introduced himself and proposed that the Trustees consider installing a weather station. He said that Forbes is a good location because there isn't already a weather station in Northampton and therefore there isn't any accurate historical weather information. It is a good geographic location to record rain and snowfall, temperature, and humidity, although not wind. The data collected would be automatically uplinked to wunderground.com, pwsweather.com, or other weather aggregating service and would be of historical value to the library. There could be a link on the library website with current and historical weather data. The cost would be about \$300. Mr. Lapienski suggested that it could be located in the parking lot or on the west lawn. Mr. Carrier and Ms. Moulding suggested that Mr. Lapienski speak with Ms. Moulding to discuss practicalities, and then submit a written proposal by March 10 for the Trustees to consider at their next meeting on March 17.

Mr. Lapienski left the meeting at 4:15 PM.

**Secretary's Report**

Ms. Hess moved that the Secretary's Report of January 26, 2016 be accepted and placed on file with a few minor corrections. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report**

Mr. Morin presented the Treasurer's Report of January 31, 2016. The Aid Fund closed at the end of January with a deficit of \$34,090, a decrease from December's deficit of \$40,474. The worker's compensation insurance payment for the year was added to the employee wages category. Electricity is over budget by \$2,800. Labor & Repairs is over budget by \$1,300. General supplies are over budget by \$3,300. The Book Fund has a \$19,000 surplus in January. The income for the month is \$2,000 less than expenses this month. \$3,000 was received from the Friends for programming. \$77,900 was paid to Kurtz for the elevator project. \$3,000 was received from the Friends for the Outreach Fund. In February, Mr. Morin closed and transferred the O'Connor and MacFarlane certificates of deposits into the operating checking account at Florence Bank to help cover the payment to Kurtz made in January. The endowment fund at Bartholomew Inc. lost value in January due to the volatility in the stock market.

Mr. Twarog moved that the Treasurer's Report of January 31, 2016 be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Carrier asked Mr. Morin to make a \$5,000 transfer from the Richard Garvey Book & Media Fund in the operating account to the endowment. Mr. Carrier pointed out that the \$11,785 received from the city to cover the FY15 deficit came from the Clarke & Earle fund, not the city's general operating account.

**Departments Head Report: Arts & Music**

Ms. Kaufmann talked about programming highlights including the Torso Project, which consisted of body casts made by women affected by breast cancer and the Spirit of the Written Word reading. Forbes also participated in the Arts Council and Arts Night Out in October with Motion-Emotion, which included an outdoor sculpture and poetry reading. Other highlights included the Humans of Northampton project with the NHS Teen Advisory Group consisting of local people talking about the effects of the opioid epidemic, and an exhibit by Phyllis Kornfield with art made by people who are incarcerated. There are 32 exhibits planned in 2016-2017 chosen from 64 applications. Upcoming exhibits include the Cottage Street Art School, Zea Mays Printmaking, and the Senior Center Photo Group. The Well-Tempered Ukles are musicians in residence and performed four free concerts with a beginner lesson scheduled for this evening. Peter Biedermann performed a jazz guitar concert in October and the Gaslight Tinkers gave a lawn concert in June, which was opened by Beach Honey. The annual Holiday Singalong raised about \$400 for the Interfaith Cot Shelter program. Dylan Gaffney and Jason Mazzotta organized the Northampton Film Festival at the Academy of Music. There was weeding and shifting in the Art books, with the relocation of audio books and TV series DVDs. \$700 was made from the sale of vinyl records at RetroFaire in September. Forbes staff participated in the NEMLA conference at Smith in the fall. Ms. Kaufmann was on a panel about lending ukuleles, and has been receiving inquiries about the Forbes lending program from all over the country and Canada. Social media has been going well especially with the posting of historical photos by Dylan Gaffney. The library assisted CBS Sunday Morning with images and information for a short 2-minute almanac segment on Sylvester Graham. Mr. Gaffney also assisted with "Cookies with a Curator" programs on Lost Northampton and the Civil War grant from the Massachusetts Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission to preserve, digitize and create a finding aid for the Civil War related materials.

Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Kaufmann about the department's upcoming needs and Ms. Kaufmann said that the most important thing is new shelving in Special Collections, which is already in progress. She will let Ms. Moulding know if she thinks of anything else.

In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Kaufmann said that the deficit in the Hosmer Gallery fund is likely from the cost of wine and licensing for receptions and a slow-down in the sales of artwork.

Ms. Kaufmann left the meeting at 4:30 PM.

**Administrative Report** (Ms. Moulding & Ms. Downing)

Ms. Moulding reported that Library Legislative Day is scheduled for Tuesday, March 8, 2016 from 10:30-1:30 at the State House in Boston. The Western Massachusetts Library Association (WMLA) is offering a bus from Western Mass to the State House.

At the end of January, Forbes lent Lilly Library 52 large print books from the Forbes collection to be made available for Lilly's patrons to browse and borrow. Any books checked out will return to Forbes when they are checked back in and any that are not borrowed during the course of the month will be exchanged for a new selection. This idea was proposed by Lilly's new library director and former Forbes staff member Adam Novitt. With Mr. Novitt at Lilly, Forbes is happy to be able to find new ways to collaborate and to improve library service for Northampton.

**Administrative Report** (continued)

The staff room was emptied out the week of February 8 so the floors could be refinished and the furniture cleaned. The walls were repainted the previous week. A new (used) table and chairs were purchased on Craig's List from a person in Florence. The other upgrades including improved wireless connectivity and an under the sink water filter are in process. The Friends of Forbes are funding the refurbishing. The Friends of Forbes also filled the staff room with delicious treats and cheery decorations to celebrate Valentine's Day. The staff was very appreciative.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the Administrative Report and place it on file. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

**Friends of Forbes Meeting**

Ms. Wight attended the February 3 meeting of the Friends of Forbes and said that it was great to meet the Friends face to face. They received a donation of \$5,000, half of which is designated for outreach and have begun to receive sponsorships for the annual garden tour in June. They have held several raffles and made improvements to the staff room. On March 2, there will be an "arrive at five" event with the Chamber of Commerce at the Rockridge Retirement Community. The Friends are looking for more board members.

**Next Meetings**

The next regular meeting of the Trustees is scheduled for Thursday, March 17, 2016 at 4:00 PM in the Watson Room.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held Tuesday, March 1 at 6:30 PM. Ms. Hess will attend on behalf of the Trustees.

The Coolidge Advisory Committee will be meeting in 2016 at 4:00 PM on Mondays, March 7, June 6, September 12, and December 5. Ms. Hess will attend the March 7 meeting, Ms. Wight will attend the June 6 meeting, Ms. Reall will attend the September 12 meeting, and Mr. Carrier will attend the December 5 meeting.

**Communications**

Ms. Moulding received a notice from the Western Massachusetts Library Association (WMLA) about Library Legislative Day on Tuesday, March 8. There will be a bus from West Springfield to the Statehouse in Boston.

Mr. Carrier and Ms. Hess received notices from Florence Bank that Forbes has been awarded a Customer Choice Community Grant. The award recipients and amounts will be announced on March 9.

**MAR and Materials Expenditure Requirement**

At the request of the Trustees, Ms. Moulding distributed an explanation of the Municipal Appropriations Requirement (MAR) and Materials Expenditure Requirement for state library certification. The MAR states that a municipality must appropriate a figure of at least the average of the last 3 years' municipal appropriations to the library for operations, increased by 2.5%, in order to be certified for State Aid to Public Libraries. The Materials expenditure requirement states that Forbes must spend an amount equal to at least 13% of the amount of the city's appropriation on library materials. Mr. Carrier said that without the Garvey Book & Media fund, which is funded through the monies collected from the parking meters, Forbes would have a difficult time meeting this requirement. Mr. Morin said that about \$20,000 is collected every year from the parking meters. Mr. Carrier asked

**MAR and Materials Expenditure Requirement** (continued)

that Ms. Moulding write to Representative Peter Kocot and Senator Stan Rosenberg asking them to increase the amount of the annual 2.5% increase in the MAR. The 2.5% increase each year is inadequate as library expenses increase by more than 2.5%, resulting in more and more budget cuts and reductions in services each year.

**Meeting with Mayor**

Mr. Carrier and Ms. Moulding met for over an hour with Mayor Narkewicz on Thursday, February 4, 2016 to discuss the five issues raised in a letter of November 29, 2015 from Mr. Carrier to Mayor Narkewicz. The meeting was cordial, but little was settled. The city has not yet decided how it will figure out how much to give the library each year from the Clarke & Earle Funds but it may possibly be a rolling average of the most recent three years' income. Subsequent to the meeting, Ms. Moulding received an email from Susan Wright indicating an increase of approximately \$2,000. The Mayor said he could not remove the sewer and drainage charges from the library's budget because the city has to pay it one way or another and this was fairer because all city buildings were charged, just not in their individual budgets. Central Services pays the lump sum for all city buildings. The Mayor said he thought the fee would increase 2 to 2.5% next year and that the library would have its appropriation increased to cover any increases. He also said that if the building ownership question is settled, an adjustment to the drainage fees might be possible. The Mayor did not want to decide how to deal with the library's Labor & Repairs line item until the question of the building ownership was settled. The Mayor said the city's independent auditor, Tom Scanlon Jr., was looking into the "Library Fund" and the Trustees would be informed when the investigation was done. He said that the city would not take the \$100,000 away from the library but would perhaps use it to help defray the cost of replacing the library's windows when that project was done as part of the city's five-year capital improvements plan.

**FY17 Budget**

Ms. Moulding received an email from Susan Wright with instructions to create a preliminary budget for FY17. Clarke & Earle payments are to be increased by 17% to \$15,399 payable in July 2016. The city appropriation will be increased by 2.75% (\$32,935) to \$1,230,573. The email stresses that this is a preliminary number and may not be accurate, but a 2.75% increase will not be enough to cover current services. Ms. Moulding has not yet heard from Central Services on how much to budget for electricity next year or from the mayor on how much wage increases to offer employees. Ms. Moulding must submit the preliminary budget by February 26 and will meet with the mayor in March.

**CORI Check Policy**

Ms. Downing distributed a policy for the library's procedures to apply Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks to volunteers. The CORI Check Policy applies only to volunteer workers, not regular employees, because the volunteers will be working with the elderly and going into their homes. CORI check information will be stored online and will be kept confidential by Ms. Downing. Volunteers who do not pass the CORI check may be directed into other volunteer positions that do not involve access to the homes of elderly patrons. Since Forbes is a municipal agency, the fees will be waived. Mr. Twarog said that he would abstain from voting because in principal he does not approve of CORI checks.

**CORI Check Policy (continued)**

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the CORI check policy for volunteers. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, and Ms. Wight voting in favor, Mr. Twarog abstaining, and Ms. Reall not present.

**Ownership of Building**

A copy of the opinion of City Solicitor Alan Seewald concerning the ownership of the Forbes Library building was distributed. The Trustees discussed inviting the City Solicitor to a meeting to answer questions and interpret the implications of the document. The Trustees will discuss what questions to ask of Mr. Seewald at their meeting on March 17, and invite Mr. Seewald to attend the April 28 Trustees' meeting.

**Gifts, Bequests, Sales, etc.**

No designated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting. The following undesignated gift was received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$50 from Richard & Janet Moulding, Northampton, in memory of Charles Christopherson to be deposited in the Morin Fund. No receipts from sales/rents were received since the last Trustees' meeting.

Ms. Wight 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.

**Valley Gives Day**

The fundraising sub-committee, consisting of Mr. Carrier, Ms. Wight, Ms. Moulding and Ms. Downing, met just prior to this meeting at 3 PM, and decided that Forbes will participate in Valley Gives Day on May 3. The focus of the appeal this year will be on programming. There will be a promotional video, prizes and incentives. The Friends will be requested to offer a matching grant of \$6,000 split evenly between children and adult programming. Everyone who contributed in the past will be sent an email reminder with options to donate by check or online. If Forbes decides to do an annual fund in 2017, planning will begin in the fall of 2016.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve Forbes participating in Valley Gives Day on May 3. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

**Elevator Project**

The elevator is still awaiting completion of the punch list although it is completely operational. The library is still holding the final payment to the contractor. The celebration of the new elevator will be combined with the Trustees' Award on April 30 at 2:00 PM. The mayor and Tom Douglas are confirmed to attend, and Mr. Douglas will give a talk on historic elevators. All who donated to the project will be invited, and asked to RSVP. Chris Nolan of the Friends is helping with the planning. The celebration expenses will be paid from the Macomber Fund.

**LSTA Grant Report**

Ms. Downing reported that the "tech" series for blind patrons has been rescheduled. She is expecting a full house as it has been widely publicized. She has been contacted by the Valley Radio Reading Service, which will record the session.

**Outreach**

Maria Sperduti has started selecting and training volunteers for the Outreach Delivery Service. She will begin by serving the people on the patron wait list by the end of February and then start transitioning patrons currently being served by the Outreach program beginning in March. A public announcement about the program is anticipated next month as well.

**Trustees Award**

The Trustees Award in 2016 will be given to former Trustees Bonnie Burnham and Peter Rowe. The ceremony will be held Saturday, April 30, at 2:00 PM in conjunction with a celebration of the completion of handicap accessible elevator project.

**Discussions with FLEA**

Mr. Carrier and Ms. Hess have been meeting with representatives of FLEA to discuss ways of increasing revenue for the Library. Their next meeting is March 15 at 10:30 AM, and they will answer questions about the issues raised. Mr. Carrier will talk about the endowment and Ms. Moulding will talk about other funding sources. She will review the proposal made last year to have a tiered approach to employee wage increases.

**Open Meeting Law**

Information regarding the library's status concerning the state's Open Meeting Law was distributed.

**Reports on workshops/meetings/activities**

ALA Conference (Ellen Sulzycki) A report by Ellen Sulzycki on the ALA Midwinter Conference was distributed.

**Other Business**

Mr. Morin has not been able to meet with Ms. Reall to review the proposed investment policy from Bartholomew Inc. He will meet with her when she returns.

At 5:32 PM, Mr. Twarog moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:32 PM.