

**TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY**  
**Meeting of September 23, 2013**

**Present:** Ms. Burnham, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Mr. Rowe, Mr. Morin, Ms. Moulding, Ms. Sheirer, Mr. Twarog. **Also Present:** Martha McCormick, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Molly Moss, representative of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA); Julie Bartlett Nelson, Archivist. **Absent:** None.

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM in the Watson Room in Forbes Library.

**Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**Secretary's Report**

Mr. Rowe moved that the Secretary's Report of July 31, 2013 be accepted and placed on file with a minor correction. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report**

Ms. Burnham moved that the preliminary Treasurer's Report of August 31, 2013 be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Morin reported that the fiscal year opened with a deficit of \$3,200. July was 3 pay period month, explaining the unusually high employee wages expense. The beginning balance in the Aid fund may change once the FY13 financial report is finalized. The Book Fund has a deficit of \$2,700 for FY14. A transfer of \$7,600 was completed in FY13 to close out the Pleasant Street Video account. The following funds were closed out in FY13: Coolidge Room Grant, On The Same Page, Pleasant Street Video, and Time Enough Grant. Mr. Morin transferred \$10,000 for FY14 and \$1,000 for FY13 from Richard Garvey Book Fund in the endowment into the Book & Media Fund in the operating account. Mr. Morin will make another \$5,000 transfer from the monies collected from the parking meters into the Richard Garvey Book Fund in the endowment.

Ms. Moulding said that state aid funds received must be carried over to the library's budget for the following fiscal year, and cannot be returned to the City for other expenditures. Mr. Carrier asked her to file this information for future use. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said that she was not concerned at this time about the deficit in the Book & Media fund, and that she anticipated it would even out.

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

Ms. Moulding reported that Forbes opened again on Saturdays the weekend after Labor Day. Patrons have gratefully returned to their Saturday routines.

The Media Education Foundation gave Forbes Library 37 more DVDs, which, in combination with their previous donations, means that Forbes Library now has all of the MEF DVDs available for loan to the public. These documentaries are in demand by both individuals and teachers who use them regularly to raise awareness and stimulate dialogue in the classroom about mass media and its impact on our culture.

The Arts Council's Arts Night Out happened on Friday, September 4, with chalk art creations throughout town. A panel of judges awarded top prize to Clara Flynn, whose entry was on the Forbes Library front walk. The Arts Council's

**Administrative Report** (continued)

next event is *Be Here Now*, a juried exhibition of work interpreted freely by 2D, 3D, video, and performance artists. The exhibition is of works by artists living and working in Western Massachusetts and will be located at the Hosmer Gallery during the month of October 2013. The exhibition showcases the work of 22 different local artists, selected from a group of more than 60 artists who submitted over 100 works of art for consideration. The Arts Night Out reception will be held Friday, October 11, from 5:00 to 8:00 in the Hosmer Gallery. A solar powered sculpture will be on the Forbes lawn.

The David Brewster paintings are up in the Reference Room and Arts & Music Department. Since the space in Arts & Music was too large for Brewster's single painting, he donated its companion piece, "Behind Colrain Spire" to hang with it. The portrait of Gerald Stanley Lee is now in the Hampshire Room where his papers are archived.

Ms. Moulding distributed an article about the renovations at the New York Public Library and how the changing nature of services is causing a "culture clash". That is certainly true at Forbes too. Although at Forbes it is not as dramatic as a culture clash, there are patrons who miss the old library, its collections, and its atmosphere. One example is the changing formats of video and audio. Two years ago, Forbes got rid of most of its VHS video tapes which were replaced in many cases by DVDs from Pleasant Street Video. Now the audio books on tape have been deaccessioned, replaced by books on CD, Playaways, and downloadable audio files. Although books on tape hardly circulated anymore, there are a few patrons who still had functioning tape players and were sorry to see them go.

Julie Bartlett Nelson joined the meeting at 4:15 PM.

Ms. Moulding reported that this year's Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS) report from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), gives the number of hits on the library's website, but does not break the figure down into more detailed information. Not surprisingly, the greatest number of hits to the library's website was the homepage, followed by the hours page. The third most visited page was the Coolidge home page which indicates the offsite interest and wide appeal of the Presidential collection. Ms. Downing discussed the ARIS report in more detail later in the meeting.

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

**Friends of Forbes Meeting**

Ms. Burnham attended the September 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Friends of Forbes and reported that there are two new board members, Peter Kobel and Mary Fagan. Peter Kobel is a writer and is helping with the Friends' newsletter. Both are helping with the upcoming wine tasting. The summer membership drive raised \$8,000 and the garden tour raised \$6,052. Valley Gives Day is December 12 this year. The Florence Savings Bank Community Choice Grants ballots are out, and the Friends will publicize it in their November mailing. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. McCormick said that the Friends could use two more board members.

**Next Meetings**

The next regular meeting of the Trustees was scheduled for, Thursday October 24, 2013 at 3:45 PM in the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum (CCPLM). Mr. Morin will invite the representatives from Bartholomew Inc. to

**Next Meetings** (continued)

attend. The Trustees scheduled meetings for the rest of the calendar year for Tuesday, November 26 at 4:00 PM, and Thursday, December 19 at 4:00 PM.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held Wednesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 PM. Mr. Twarog will attend on behalf of the Trustees.

The Coolidge Advisory Committee will be meeting in 2013 at 4:00 PM on Monday, December 2.

**Communications**

Mr. Carrier received a letter from Jason Petcen, President of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA), in regards to the lack of a FLEA contract. Mr. Carrier said that the Trustees also want the contract to be settled, and will know better where they stand financially after their meeting with the mayor on October 8.

Mr. Carrier received the renewal notice and annual conference announcement from the Massachusetts Library Trustees Association. Ms. Moulding will look into whether it is less money to register the board as a whole rather than renewing individual memberships.

**Local History Scavenger Hunt**

Ms. Nelson reported that the annual Dollars for Scholars Local History Scavenger Hunt will be held on Saturday, October 5. Since the event has become such good publicity and outreach for the library, the entry fee of \$200 to sponsor a team can now be paid from the library's budget.

Mr. Twarog moved that the library sponsor a team for \$200 in the Dollars for Scholars Local History Scavenger Hunt to be paid from the Bak Fund. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

**City Appropriation**

Ms. Moulding reported that representatives of Forbes Library had a meeting scheduled on August 19 with Mayor Narkewicz and Finance Manager Susan Wright to discuss ESCO charges and extraordinary maintenance expenses. The Mayor cancelled that meeting and it is now rescheduled for Tuesday, October 8. The library representatives want to discuss the responsibility for unexpected capital expenditures made to maintain the library building. The Trustees drafted a memorandum of understanding in March of this year, but have not yet met with the Mayor to discuss it. The library also wants to continue discussions of ESCO payments. The library cannot afford to pay ESCO payments and extraordinary maintenance expenses without an increase in the appropriation to cover those costs. The Mayor recommended that the library use Central Services for repairs instead of hiring outside contractors to save money, however the response time has been slow for requests for electrical work.

Mr. Carrier suggested that Ms. Moulding draft a note to send to the mayor outlining the main issues to discuss including the ESCO payments, the extraordinary maintenance expenses and memorandum of understanding, the use of central services for maintenance and repair work, and the non-FLEA employee raises. In the past non-FLEA employees received the same increases as FLEA members; however that has not happened for the past few years. The memo should also mention that in past practice, Forbes Library employees have received the same salary increases as other city unions, but more recently other unions have received higher increases. As a result, Forbes is having

**City Appropriation** (continued)

difficulty retaining employees. Ms. Moulding will show the draft to Mr. Carrier and Mr. Twarog before sending it to the mayor.

**Elevator Project**

The Handicap Elevator Project has begun. An RFP for an architect to oversee the project went out August 22. Three bids were received: from Thomas Douglas Architects of Northampton, from HAI Architects of Northampton, and from Timothy Murphy Architects of Holyoke. This bid process was coordinated by Joe Cook, the City Procurement Officer. Thomas Douglas Architects was chosen from the three applicants as the most qualified because the firm has the most similar experience to the project and had excellent references.

Ms. Burnham made a motion to award the project to Thomas Douglas Architects for \$27,000 to be paid from the \$14,000 community block grant and the funds being raised in the "Forbes for All" elevator campaign. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to appoint Mr. Rowe as the Trustees' representative on the project and to authorize him to sign documents on behalf of the Trustees. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

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

The following *designated gifts* were received since the last Trustees' meeting: Attached list of donations to the Second Century Fund; \$150 from Lawrence & Ronnie Field, Florence, to be deposited in the Book & Media Fund; \$50 from Robert Barber & Carol Edelstein, Northampton, for the purchase of the book Ladder to the Roof, to be deposited in the Book & Media Fund; \$25 from Marcia Waliser, Florence, in appreciation of the "knowledgeable and kind staff of the Children's Library", to be deposited in the Book & Media Fund and used to buy children's material.

Mr. Rowe 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 *undesigned gifts* were received since the last Trustees' meeting: list included with the Second Century donation list.

The following *receipt from sales/rents* was received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$1,500 from Old School Commons for lease of land to be deposited in the Second Century Fund.

Mr. Rowe made a motion to approve the allocation of the undesigned gifts and receipt from sales/rents as proposed by Ms. Moulding. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

**Wine Tasting**

In response to a request from Ms. Burnham, Mr. Carrier and Ms. Hess said that they would be able to help with gathering tickets at the front door during the Wine Tasting on September 28, arriving at 5:45 PM with doors opening at 6:00 PM.

**Second Century Fundraising Committee**

Ms. Downing reported that the committee has been meeting regularly. So far, \$162,000 has been raised and the campaign is in its final stretch, hoping to wrap up on Valley Gives Day on December 12<sup>th</sup>. There will be an additional

**Second Century Fundraising Committee** (continued)

mailing to people who haven't donated yet, and a raffle of an Eric Carle print. The committee will also approach local businesses and banks. Ms. Hess reported that the Five College Credit Union has generously agreed to pledge a total of \$1,000 over two years.

**ARIS Report**

This year's Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS) report of statistics required by the MBLC was distributed to the Trustees. Ms. Downing reviewed the findings and pointed out some highlights. Holdings are up a little due to an increase in digital content. The number of e-books has increased by 300% this year. DVD holdings are also up due to the addition of the Pleasant Street Video collection and some VHS being transferred to DVD. The "miscellaneous" category includes musical instruments, e-book readers, and museum passes.

Circulation of e-books and downloadable content also increased by 300% this year, in correspondence with the increase in e-book holdings. Circulation overall was level, although the switch to Evergreen software resulted in some circulation data being lost. Books and DVDs are still the top circulating items.

Approximately 67% of Northampton residents have library cards, and about 2,000 non-residents have cards. Meeting room use increased, while door counts, reference questions, and program attendance were down slightly this year, although they had increased significantly in the prior year. Overall Ms. Downing said there has been some leveling off, but the library and staff continue to work at a very high level.

**Capital Improvement Committee Requests**

For FY15, Forbes Library has requested that the city include two library projects in its Capital Improvement plan. As in former years, the library requested that the windows in the building be replaced and that a separate HVAC system be installed in the CCPLM rooms and in the Hampshire Room for Local History. Copies of the CIP requests were distributed.

**All Hamptons Read**

Ms. Downing reported that the program kicked off on September 15 with a soccer tournament at Northampton High School featuring six teams with players who immigrated to the Pioneer Valley from El Salvador, Honduras, Columbia and other Latin American countries where soccer is the national sport. This program was inspired by the themes of this year's book selection, *Outcasts United: An American Town, a Refugee Team, and One Woman's Quest to Make a Difference*. Book discussions, film screenings and other events will continue in the four "Hamptons" through mid-November. A bookmark with the calendar of events was distributed to the Trustees.

**Reports on workshops/meetings/activities**

Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum Advisory Committee Meeting - minutes of the CCPLM Advisory Board meeting of September 2 were distributed to the Trustees.

**Other Business**

Ms. Moulding said that CSpan was here and interviewed Ms. Nelson for a program about Grace Coolidge, which will air on October 9 at 7:00 PM, and will be shown in the CCPLM.

**Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA) Negotiations**

At 5:05 PM, Ms. Hess moved that the Trustees go into executive session to discuss the contract negotiations with FLEA because negotiations in open session would be detrimental to the library's bargaining position. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously, with Ms. Burnham, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Mr. Rowe, and Mr. Twarog all voting in favor. The Trustees invited Ms. Downing, Ms. Moulding, Mr. Morin, and Ms. Sheirer to remain as guests at the executive session. Ms. McCormick and Ms. Moss left the meeting at 5:05 PM. Ms. Burnham, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Mr. Morin, Ms. Moulding, Mr. Rowe, Ms. Sheirer, and Mr. Twarog were present during the executive session. The Trustees discussed the negotiations with FLEA. No votes were taken during the executive session.

At 5:20 PM, Ms. Hess moved that the executive session be ended and the regular meeting reconvened. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously, with Ms. Burnham, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Mr. Rowe, and Mr. Twarog all voting in favor.

At 5:20 PM Ms. Hess moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 PM.