

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Tuesday, November 20, 2018

Present: Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss, Mr. Twarog, Ms. Reall, Ms. Sheirer, Ms. Wight. **Also Present:** Ms. Sarah Johnson, Head of Children's and Young Adult Department; Ewan Hill; Serena Smith, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Jason Petcen, representative of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA). **Absent:** Ms. Buckhout.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM in the Watson Room.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Guest Visitor: Lindsay Sabadosa, Representative Elect

Mr. Carrier welcomed Ms. Sabadosa, who had a tour of the building prior to the meeting.

Ms. Hess congratulated Ms. Sabadosa on her recent election as State Representative. She is a regular Forbes library user along with her daughter and is already familiar with the library and its services. Ms. Hess said Ms. Sabadosa should feel free to ask questions of Ms. Downing or the Trustees. Ms. Hess said there are two main legislative events, the Legislative Breakfast, date and location to be determined, and Library Legislative Day at the State House in Boston on March 5. Ms. Hess also mentioned the library caucus which Ms. Sabadosa said she plans to join. Ms. Sabadosa asked if there were current legislation that the Trustees would like her to support, and who they see as library advocates. She asked the Trustees to let her know how she can be supportive and if there are any volunteer opportunities she can use to help demonstrate the importance of the library and its services to the community. Ms. Downing said that funding for libraries is such a small percentage of the state budget, .01%, but serves such a large constituency. Funding sources include state aid through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) and funding from the Massachusetts Library System (MLS). Some library line items are at pre-recession levels. Ms. Downing is concerned about funding for the delivery system, interlibrary loan, and CW Mars. She said Forbes is hoping for a 3% increase this year in state funding for libraries. Ms. Downing gave Ms. Sabadosa a tote bag with information about Forbes. Mr. Carrier thanked her for coming to the meeting and for her support.

Ms. Sabadosa left the meeting at 4:12 PM.

Secretary's Report

Ms. Hess moved that the Secretary's Report of October 16, 2018 be accepted, and placed on file with a minor correction. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report of October 31, 2018 was distributed to the Trustees. The General Aid Fund had negative net activity for the month of \$5,526, which can be attributed to the \$11,060 in Labor and Repairs for installation of a return air duct and contract maintenance. The ending balance in the fund is \$39,166. The Book & Media Fund has a balance of \$36,827 after receiving the annual distribution of \$10,000 from the Garvey Fund and unspent technology funds of \$16,000. The e-books budget has been almost fully spent due to the CW Mars overdrive fee. The Community Webs fund has a surplus of \$2,867 after

Treasurer's Report (continued)

receiving additional funds of \$3,250 from Internet Archive. The Doland Reference Room Fund has a balance of \$14,013 after receiving an endowment distribution of \$6,391. The Externally Financed Transaction Fund has a deficit of \$1,283. The Halberstadt Technology Fund has a balance of \$6,265. The Lyman Special Collections Fund has a balance of \$7,111. The MacFarlane Fund has a deficit of \$410. The Macomber Fund has a balance of \$626. The interest income from the operating accounts at Florence Bank are deposited into the Morin Fund which has a balance of \$81,919. The Staff Development Fund has a balance of \$1,993. The value of the endowment as of October 31, 2018 was \$4,790,655.

Ms. Reall moved that the Treasurer's Report of October 31, 2018 be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Hess seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Carrier expressed concern that the recent volatility in the stock market could impact the endowment distribution which is based on the last 20 quarters. Ms. Downing said that Ms. Buckhout plans to recommend that next year the determination be made on the last 20 quarters ending December 2018 to give the Trustees more time to plan and maneuver.

A copy of the library's FY2018 990 tax return is close to being ready to file and a copy was distributed to the Trustees. The draft of a letter prepared by Ms. Buckhout to solicit a new auditor was distributed to the Trustees along with a list of potential firms. The letter details the library's requirements. The Trustees agreed by consensus to wait until next month when Ms. Buckhout is present to approve the letter so they can ask her about the requirements and what the financial impact will be on the amount budgeted for the auditor.

Gifts, Donations, and Bequests, etc.

Ms. Downing distributed a list of recent donations to the library's annual fundraising campaign letter totaling \$7,363. Expenses for the letter were about \$1,000. Ms. Downing said that many of the people who gave in response to the letter last gave during the last mail campaign. The Development Committee will discuss the campaign at their next meeting. They are also working on a list of local businesses to solicit. There were no designated gifts or receipts from sales/rents since the last Trustees' meeting.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve the undesignated gifts as proposed by Ms. Downing. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Ewan Hill joined the meeting at 4:20 PM.

Guest Visitor: Ewan Hill

Ewan Hill requested to speak with the board about their concerns regarding the *Angel of Hadley or The Perils of Our Forefathers*, by Frederic A. Chapman painting in the library's collection that will be discussed later in the meeting as an action item for restoration. Ewan is a member of the Children's & Young Adult Department and made Ms. Downing aware of their concerns when the painting was to be the subject of the Friends annual meeting last spring, although a different topic was chosen. When Faith Kauffman suggested that this might be the next piece in the library's art collection to restore due to its popularity, Ms. Downing asked Ewan to share their thoughts in more detail. They shared a written statement which Ms. Downing distributed to the Trustees. Ewan said they have a degree in History from Smith College and that

Guest Visitor: Ewan Hill (continued)

the painting was first brought to their attention by Professor Elizabeth Prior as a racist depiction of a fictional event involving indigenous people. They said that Native Americans became citizens under Calvin Coolidge, however Coolidge also authorized the building of Mount Rushmore on sacred Sioux lands in the Black Hills. Ewan's first thoughts were to remove the painting, take it down, and donate it to someone else who could present it in context. However, after speaking with Kathleen Brown Perez of the Five College Indigenous Studies Program, Ewan now feels that Forbes should keep the painting and use it to stimulate conversation by presenting the context through an indigenous artist residency program or commission.

Mr. Carrier said that he liked the idea of having something near the painting that puts it in context. He, Ms. Downing, and Ms. Moss have been discussing the library's art collection for the past few years and agree that it is dominated by white males. More recent acquisitions have been designed to diversify the collection. Ms. Hess thanked Ewan for the presentation and said that she loved the idea of a residency with a Native American artist and using the painting as a teachable moment. Ms. Wight said it was important to present multiple view points and not to censor ideas or shy away from uncomfortable discussions. Mr. Twarog agreed that the painting should be presented as a teachable moment and to explain why it is problematic. Ms. Reall said the library's collection was built mainly through donations, and that a plan was needed to go after donations or to borrow on a limited term basis. The Trustees agreed by consensus that Ms. Downing should speak to Mike Ryan, who was to give the talk on the painting, about its history and how it was acquired by Forbes.

Ewan Hill left the meeting at 4:33 PM.

Friends of Forbes

Ms. Hess attended the November 7 meeting of the Friends of Forbes and reported that the wine tasting netted \$9,761 with still a few more bills to come in. The balance in the Greenfield Savings Bank is \$31,000 and the balance in the endowment at Bartholomew Inc. is \$280,000. The Finance Committee is developing a budget for 2019. They voted to move the endowment from Vanguard to Bartholomew and to ask about keeping some in reserve for emergencies. They reviewed the wine tasting including the positives and anything that should be done differently next year. There was a discussion about combining the wine tasting next year with the culminating event of the 125th year anniversary celebration, but there were concerns about additional expense without more revenue, increased work load, attendance at both events, and different audiences. They discussed an American Library Association (ALA) grant for Friends groups for a member to attend an ALA conference.

Administrative Report

Ms. Downing reported that Library Legislative Day is Tuesday, March 5, 2019. The newly elected State Representative and State Senator have been encouraged to put this event on their calendars and be prepared to meet constituents. It would be great to have a contingent representing Northampton at the event. Ms. Downing will share information about bus transportation when it becomes available.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners has released the FY2020 Legislative Agenda:

Based on input from the Massachusetts library community, the Board of Library Commissioners discussed and approved the MBLC's FY2020 Legislative

Administrative Report (continued)

Agenda at their October Board meeting. We are requesting 3% increases over FY2019 funding for all our budget lines except for two: 7000-9401-State Aid to Regional Libraries, which supports the work of the Massachusetts Library System and the Library for the Commonwealth, for which we are requesting an increase from \$10,282,140 to \$11,516,000; and 7000-9506-Library Technology and Resource Sharing, for which we are asking for an increase from \$2,815,928 to \$3,259,000.

Ms. Moss, Ms. Kaufmann, and Ms. Downing attended a program sponsored by the Western Mass Library Advocates (WMLA) about library advocacy presented by Libby Post who stressed the importance of talking about and believing in libraries as an essential community service.

Steven Stover has transitioned from a part time position in Circulation to a full-time position that includes duties in Technical Services, Inter Library Loan and Circulation along with time to spend on programming and community outreach.

Forbes' participation in the Internet Archives Community Web grant was featured in a national digital archives blog and has been receiving accolades for how successful it has been at connecting and collaborating with the local community. A copy of the blog post was distributed to the Trustees.

All Hamptons Read has been a great success so far. The title, *Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge* by Erica Armstrong Dunbar, has caught the attention of the community. All Hamptons Read sponsored dozens of events exploring slavery and the underground railroad, nationally and locally, through discussion, walking tours, exhibits, film and lectures. The walking tours had 60-72 participants (plus 2-5 dogs!) each. Ms. Downing is thrilled to have the author speaking at the culminating event, *Escaping Slavery, Envisioning Freedom*, on November 27 at 7 PM with Barbara Krauthamer (UMass) at the First Churches of Northampton as part of UMass's Feinberg Series.

The new conference table and desk for the Director's Office have arrived. JohnCarlo Woodworking did a gorgeous job making them, and they fit the historic feel and grandiosity of the institution like they have always been there. As a result, more meetings can be held in the office and the new table will now seat up to 10 people.

The library is collecting toiletries for the winter shelter. A list of what is being sought was distributed to the Trustees.

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

Next Meetings

The next regular meeting of the Trustees is scheduled for Tuesday, December 18, 2018 at 4:00 PM.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held Wednesday, December 5 at 6:30 PM. Ms. Hess will attend on behalf of the Trustees.

The Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum (CCPLM) Standing Committee is meeting at 4:00 PM on January 7, 2019. Mr. Carrier and Ms. Wight will attend on behalf of the Trustees.

Communications

There were no communications this month.

Revised Behavior Policy

Ms. Moss reported that the Administrative Team has reviewed the current behavior policy with the goal of making it more concise and useful. The library's current and proposed revised policies were distributed to the Trustees. The previous policy was three pages and presented a specific list of what not to do in the library. The new policy is one page, making it easier to post, and attempts to provide a more positive outlook and lower the barrier to access.

The Trustees discussed the new policy. In response to a question from Ms. Hess, Ms. Downing said that the staff have some discretion in determining what constitutes disruptive behavior, and are comfortable making that determination. The policy is designed to allow for exceptions for people with disabilities. If there is a problem, an incident report is filled out by staff and reviewed by the administrative team. Ms. Reall suggested that the policy not specifically state that pets, other than service animals, are permitted in the library due to liability concerns. The Trustees agreed this was a valid concern and decided to table the discussion until the next meeting.

Coolidge Standing Committee Appointments

Ms. Downing reported that the Coolidge Standing Committee recommended that the board President appoint Daria D'Arienzo as an emeritus member of the committee and Jo Ellen MacKenzie as a new member.

Book & Media Income Letter

Ms. Downing reported that the long-term stability of the Book & Media budget is of great concern especially in light of the annual increase to the spending requirement by the state and the decline of overdue fines which has been a significant portion of the income to this fund. A letter has been drafted to the Mayor's office to alert them of this concern and anticipated need for additional support in the coming years. Ms. Downing recently discovered that Forbes can reduce the amount of the overall budget spent on books and media from 13% to 12% due to the combined open hours of Forbes and Lilly. With this adjustment, the library will need to seek the additional funding from the city beginning in 2021 or 2022. In response to a question from Ms. Reall, Ms. Downing said that there is a national movement to do away with overdue fines that mostly affect lower income people. Ms. Wight added that fines are also declining because of the increased use of online resources and e-books which do not generate overdue fines.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve and send the draft letter to the Mayor's office about the coming shortfall in the book & media budget. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Sarah Johnson joined the meeting at 5:02 PM.

Department Report: Children & Young Adult

Sarah Johnson, Head of Children's and Young Adult Services, presented a report of activities for the past year. She reported that they have reorganized the collection, created new programming, made their spaces more user friendly and inviting, and added new technology and furniture. There was a 61.4% increase in programming and a 31% increase in attendance. With the open Saturday hours, there was a 5.9% increase in circulation in June, 12% in

Department Report: Children & Young Adult (continued)

July, and 19.8% in August. They are also working on updating their marketing materials, including creating a new brochure for the department and redesigning their web pages. Looking ahead, they aim to become a Summer Meals site, make the bathroom more child friendly, and redesign the Young Adult Room. Completed projects include a successful Summer Reading Program, relocating the Young Adult collection, creating new signage, brightening the spaces, purchasing new tables and computers for the YA room, and a new preschool story time program. A media alcove was created behind the desk bringing together all the DVDs and media in one place. Projects in progress include a monthly story time at Grace House, creating an art corner in the YA room, and creating "Welcome to Forbes Library" packets for parents and guardians. They are also in the process of redesigning the Children's and YA website by removing outdated information and broken links, creating new content, and redesigning the layout. Future plans include a mural in the basement bathroom, becoming a free lunch site in the summer of 2019, and a more complete redesign of the YA Room, expanding it to make space for a new programming room for teens, installing a drop-down screen for projecting media, and adding a longer computer bar, as well as new lighting, carpeting, ceiling tiles, and furniture. Ms. Johnson answered questions from the Trustees about the Summer Meals program and other possible outreach connections including immigrant families and local schools and religious organizations. Ms. Johnson will provide cost figures to Ms. Downing for the proposed mural and consultant estimate for the renovation of the YA Room including moving walls and expanding the space. Ms. Downing said that she deeply appreciates the work that Ms. Johnson and Kat Janeczek are doing for the Children's and YA department to create a rich and welcoming environment for users. Mr. Carrier said he also appreciated all their efforts and that he wanted the Children's & YA Department at Forbes to be an example to other libraries.

Ms. Johnson left the meeting at 5:21 PM.

Angel of Hadley Restoration

Ms. Downing reported that the Williamstown Art Conservation Center, Inc. has evaluated the Angel of Hadley painting and frame from the library's collection and submitted two estimates for restoration, \$12,450 for full restoration including filling and retouching areas of abrasion and paint loss or \$5,200 for restoration without the filling and retouching. They also submitted two estimates to restore the frame, \$1,345 including filling ornamental losses or \$785 to tone areas of ornamental loss. This piece is one of the most asked after items in the collection and is in fairly poor condition. Ms. Downing asked Faith Kaufmann about her opinion and she verified how popular this piece is among visitors who come to see it and how the condition limits the visual appeal of the painting. She did some research and believes the cost of restoration would exceed the monetary value of the piece but may be warranted due to the historical significance. Staff member Ewan Hill has raised concerns about having the painting in the library's collection and presented a summary earlier in the meeting. The Trustees discussed the proposal and considered it alongside with the concerns about the piece.

Ms. Downing will do some further research to try to determine when and how the library came into possession of it. She will contact Mike Ryan who was going to do a talk on the painting to get more information about it. The Trustees decided to table the discussion until they have more information.

FY 2020 Action Plan

Ms. Downing reported that the action plan for fiscal year 2020 is due to the MBLC by December 1. A proposal developed by the Administrative Team to further achieve the Goals and Objectives of the current strategic plan that will take the library through 2023 was distributed to the Trustees. This is the second year of the five-year strategic plan. Highlights include a partnership with Smith College on an innovation grant to teach information literacy to high school students, coordinating and aligning policies with Lilly Library, creating an historian in residence program, interviewing people for an oral history project, continuing with the digital archive grant, and increasing hours which are a baseline for services, creating mobile hotspots to increase access, participating in a free lunch program for children and teens, redesigning the YA room, and creating a master plan for the library grounds. The Trustees said these were great objectives and very ambitious.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the action plan for FY 2020. Ms. Reall seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

125th Anniversary Merchandise

Ms. Downing reported that in celebration of the library's 125th anniversary, it is proposed to offer limited edition merchandise branded for the anniversary year along with some giveaways. It is anticipated that some of the expenses will be recouped through sales but are mainly approaching this as a marketing expense. A proposed list was distributed totaling \$1,300, including \$325 for water bottles, \$300 for tote bags, \$350 for mugs, \$100 for post cards, and \$225 for golf pencils.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approved spending \$1,300 from the Morin fund for the purchase of branded merchandise for the library's 125th year celebration. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Ms. Wight said that branded apparel will also be offered through a website with no upfront cost to the library.

HVAC Project Update

Ms. Downing reported that Kleeberg Associates was back on site working on resolving the outstanding performance issues. They are also going to provide her with an estimate to replace the two circulating pumps which Mr. Petcen believes might be a large part of the problem. The only work remaining is balancing the system although it is hoped to keep the project open until the next cooling season because we won't know for sure if the system is working until then.

Window Restoration Update

Ms. Downing reported that a public hearing was held for the 8 CPA proposals before the committee on November 7 and Julie Bartlett Nelson, Jason Petcen and Chris Mason from the Central Services Department spoke on behalf of the library's window restoration application. The chair of the CPA reiterated how competitive the grant round is and said that the committee anticipates making decisions in early December. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing said it has been 10 years since the library received CPA funds, and 5 or 6 years since they last applied for funding for the windows.

Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA) Election

Ms. Downing reported that FLEA held its meeting and re-elected the current slate of officers: Jason Petcen, President; Dylan Gaffney, Vice President; Kat Janeczek, Secretary; Susan Schaeffer, Treasurer. Ms. Downing has reached out to congratulate them and offer a meeting of the Labor Relations committee. Ms. Downing said it is a great group and she is looking forward to getting the conversation started. Mr. Carrier said that the planned contract review is intended to clean up language, not to negotiate contract terms, which will be a separate process in the spring. Mr. Carrier asked that the Trustees be given a heads up if there are going to be any contract issues so they can prepare.

Department of Public Works (DPW) Grounds Work

Ms. Downing reported that DPW Director Donna LaScaleia and Rich Parasiliti came on site on October 19 to review outstanding grounds projects and library concerns. Ms. LaScaleia suggested a solution to the cracked pavement situation out front that has been used at the Academy of Music and put in a work order for that project. She also agreed to paint one-way arrow signs on the incoming and outgoing driveway. She said that adding sidewalk ramps to the right rear sidewalk along with one to the west lawn would not be a project that the DPW handles in house and that should be submitted as a capital improvement request. Ms. Downing showed her the crowding to the Bart Gordon memorial tree and talked about tree removal and trimming to increase sunlight to the Gordon tree. They also talked about adding shade trees and turf improvements in collaboration with the DPW and she said that she wasn't clear on the DPW's responsibility in these areas and would talk to Susan Wright about it. Ms. Downing has subsequently learned that this has been clarified and the DPW will be handling the tree removal and trimming work and discussion about turf management will continue.

Ms. Downing said that the drainage off the rear right embankment to the bike path needs major overhaul and a funding request has been submitted to the CIP. She said that a drainage pipe on the back slope has failed causing debris and sediment to wash down the embankment onto the bike path. The proposal includes \$50,000 to develop a plan and \$250,000 for the actual repair.

Community Engagement

Ms. Downing and Ms. Moss attended the launch of the Career Center's new statewide brand, MassHire Franklin Hampshire Career Center, with stakeholders from around the state including Mayor Narkewicz. It was great to see colleagues in their 'home office' and hear how much the partnership with Forbes is valued.

Mr. Carrier and Ms. Downing attended the annual Smith Community Breakfast which included a presentation about the Neilson Library project. Susan Fliss, Dean of Libraries made a point of connecting them with several people on campus and as a result we have requested a follow up meeting with Sam Masinter and Susan Fliss to discuss some potential collaborative projects.

Ms. Moss distributed a list of recent and upcoming community engagement events.

Reports on subcommittee meetings/activities

Development Committee - Ms. Downing reported that the committee is working to expand the number of community members on the committee. Giving Tuesday will take place on November 27 and we will be working with the Friends to have an

Reports on subcommittee meetings/activities (continued)

online presence for the online day of giving. The Annual Fund has received over \$7,363 to date.

Coolidge Standing Committee - Ms. Downing reported that the committee met this month and reviewed previous planning studies conducted. A Presidential book club is being planned to launch around President's Day and a 10-minute introductory video that could greet and orient museum visitors is being planned. The Mayor issued a proclamation in recognition of the Coolidge's 100 anniversary of becoming elected Governor.

125th Anniversary Committee - Ms. Wight reported a page has been created on the library's website that includes a write up about the anniversary, a list of events, and a running list of 125 things to do. They are talking to the Daily Hampshire Gazette about publishing 3 or 4 articles throughout the year. Other ideas include the merchandise previously discussed, and coffee with the Library Director. They are still discussing ideas for the culminating event to be held next September.

Other Business

Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Moss to prepare a summary of the progress of the Circulation Desk upgrades for the next Trustees' meeting.

Ms. Hess requested that information about how to donate to the Hot Chocolate Run be added to the library's website.

At 5:52 PM Mr. Twarog moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 PM.