

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Thursday, September 19, 2019

Present: Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss, Mr. Twarog, Ms. Reall, Ms. Sheirer, Ms. Wight. **Also Present:** Alene Moroni, Head of Reference Services; Elise Bernier-Feeley, Local and Family History Librarian; Maxine Schmidt, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Leslie Skantz-Hodgson, candidate for Trustee; Dan Krauss. **Absent:** Ms. Buckhout.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM in the Library Director's office.

Public Comments

Dan Krauss introduced himself as a resident of Northampton and said that it disturbs him that Forbes, a public library in a progressive town, houses a museum honoring Calvin Coolidge, who had racist and xenophobic views toward immigrants. He suggested moving the museum to a private location, such as the Coolidge Homestead in Vermont. He said the space on the second floor could be better used for far more noble people such as Harriet Tubman or others who have done so much work for immigrants.

The Trustees thanked him for his comments and Mr. Krauss left the meeting at 4:02 PM.

Secretary's Report

Ms. Wight moved that the Secretary's Report of July 25, 2019 be accepted and placed on file with a few minor corrections. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Downing presented the Treasurer's Report for the periods ending July 31 and August 31, 2019 prepared by Ms. Buckhout. The beginning balances in the General Aid Fund, Book & Media Fund and Cutter Fund were adjusted due to items addressed in the audit. Once the audit is complete, a final report will be provided to the Trustees to review. The General Aid Fund had positive net activity of \$9,833 and ended with a balance of \$7,562. The Book & Media Fund closed with negative net activity of \$13,978 and a cumulative deficit of \$12,899. The Civic Hub Grant fund had negative net activity of \$1,394 for expenses related to the grant and ended the period with a balance of \$1,813. The Community Webs fund had negative net activity of \$1,311 for conference and travel expenses and ended with a zero balance. The Doland Fund had negative net activity of \$2,024 and ended with a balance of \$6,760. The Externally Financed Transaction Fund had negative net activity of \$514 and has a deficit of \$59. The Garvey Book & Media Fund had positive net activity of \$1,711 and ended with a balance of \$2,682. The Halberstadt Technology Fund had negative net activity of \$1,586 and ended with a deficit of \$2,319. The Morin Fund had negative net activity of \$5,776 and has a balance of \$101,232. The Programming Fund-Children had positive net activity of \$503 and ended with a balance of \$8,612. The Watson Copier Fund had positive net activity of \$1,009 and ended with a balance of \$1,096. In September a distribution from the endowment will occur for \$28,000, of which \$3,000 will go to the General Aid Fund, \$19,000 to the Book & Media Fund, \$1,500 to Staff Development, and \$4,500 will remain in Doland Fund in the operating account.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Reports of July 31 and August 31, 2019 and place them on file. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report (continued)

Ms. Hess made a motion to transfer \$10,733.06 from the Halberstadt Fund in the endowment to the Halberstadt Fund in the operating account. This includes the annual \$10,000 distribution plus \$733.06 to cover the deficit from FY19. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously

Ms. Wight made a motion to transfer \$5,000 from the Lyman Special Collections Fund in the endowment to the Lyman Special Collections Fund in the operating account. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to transfer 2.5%, \$28,000, from the Doland Fund in the endowment of which \$3,000 will go to the General Aid Fund, \$19,000 to the Book & Media Fund, \$1,500 to Staff Development, and \$4,500 will remain in Doland Fund in the operating account. Mr. Reall seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Ms. Downing said that the audit is going well and is on schedule. She will ask Ms. Buckhout to invite the representatives from Bartholomew Inc. to the October Trustees' meeting, and the auditor to the November Trustees' meeting. Mr. Carrier asked that the Bartholomew Inc. representatives prepare to talk about the impact of negative interest rates on the Forbes investment strategy.

Ms. Downing said that Ms. Buckhout recommended reducing the number of visits from the Bartholomew Inc. representatives, but the Trustees said they would like to continue meeting with them quarterly.

Gifts, Donations, and Bequests, etc.

The following undesignated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$300 from Anonymous to the Book & Media Fund; \$153.94 from miscellaneous donations to the Morin Fund; \$125 from Virginia Hayssen, Northampton, MA to the Book & Media Fund; \$50 from Nicole Sibley, Amherst, MA to the Book & Media Fund; \$25 from Alexander George, Amherst, MA to the Special Collections Fund; \$20 from James Greiner, Herkimer, NY in appreciation of assistance in using the Hampshire Room for Local History to the Special Collections Fund.

The following designated gift was received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$500 grant from Harold Grinspoon Foundation, Agawam, MA to the Adult Programming Fund towards Klezmir lawn concert; \$250 grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts to the Staff Development fund; \$200 from Colleen Kendall & Georgia Griffiths, Encinitas, CA to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Mem. Fund in memory of Norma Kellogg; \$100 from Holly Olander Remington, Colorado Springs, MA to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Mem. Fund in memory of Norma Kellogg; \$100 from Barbara Ostberg, Ipswich, MA to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Mem. Fund in memory of Norma Kellogg; \$100 from Michael & Margaret Lieber, Newtonville, MA to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Mem. Fund in memory of Norma Kellogg; \$100 from Debra & Arthur Cote Jr., Marshfield, MA to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Mem. Fund in memory of Norma Kellogg; \$100 from Sarah & Gregory Bates, Marblehead, MA to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Mem. Fund in memory of Norma Kellogg; \$50 from John & Kathleen Doherty, Florence, MA to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Mem. Fund in memory of Norma Kellogg; \$50 from David & Margaret Meehan, Reading, MA to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Mem. Fund in memory of Norma Kellogg; \$25 from Alice Guimond & Ilene Seymour, Easthampton, MA to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Mem. Fund in memory of Norma Kellogg; \$25 from Charles & Pamela Carey, Delray Beach, FL to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Mem. Fund in memory of Norma Kellogg; \$25 from Sandra & Richard Lorigan, Rockport, MA to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Mem. Fund in memory of Norma

Gifts, Donations, and Bequests, etc. (continued)

Kellogg; \$25 from Marlene Musante, Amherst, MA to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Mem. Fund in memory of Norma Kellogg; \$25 from Joel & Cecile Carr, Goshen, MA to the H. Clifton Kellogg II Memorial Fund in memory of Norma Kellogg.

The following receipt from sales/rents was received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$1,500 from Old School Commons for annual leased land payment to the Lyman Special Collections Fund.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the designated and undesignated gifts and receipts of sales/rents as proposed by Ms. Downing. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Reference Department Report

Alene Moroni presented the annual Reference Department report to the Trustees. The main theme is improved access, to be achieved by removing barriers to access wherever possible. Accomplishments include: new Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant, Accelerating Promising Practices: Moving Memories Lab; interlibrary loan operations now integrated with Information and Borrower Services; expanded Large Print section, interfiling Large Print Closed Stacks materials to improve access; continued improvement to public computer access (15 minute self-extensions, no daily time limit, combined with freely available guest passes); new public printer in reference improves speed of access in busy times; and new copy machines allow scan to fax, email, or USB, long-requested services. Ongoing and in progress projects include: Civic Hub grant programming wrapping up; demand for Outreach support, exam proctoring, notary public services, and increased computer help appointments; prioritized efforts to increase inclusivity, access, and circulation through ongoing monthly displays, Readers' Advisory services, and collection management; staff development including Google suite classes and new "book chat" format for ongoing genre study; Franklin/Hampshire Career Center Outstation: integrating cooperative services with community agency to meet patron needs; continued maintenance and refreshment of Adult Fiction collection to improve access and displays; revising and reclassifying Reference collection to improve access to high interest materials and accommodate special collections and displays (starting with circulating puzzles and games); continued maintenance and refreshment of Adult Nonfiction to create display space and accommodate shifting; Adult Summer Reading: 27 unique participants reported 141 books read and claimed 95 prize books; Ben Kalish working on Disability Committee; Heather Diaz working on the grant writing.

In response to a question from Mr. Carrier about what the Trustees can do to help, Ms. Moroni said that increasing the financial commitment to professional development would be much appreciated.

The Trustees thanked Ms. Moroni for her report and she left the meeting at 4:17 PM.

Friends of Forbes

Mr. Twarog attended the September 4 meeting of the Friends of Forbes and reported that they discussed the upcoming wine tasting on September 27, the garden tour last June, and reviewed their endowment investments at Bartholomew Inc. He said they are planning for National Friends of Libraries week October 20-26, 2019. They will have a table in the library lobby and will re-order Paco t-shirts for the holidays.

Administrative Report

Ms. Downing reported that new rugs and artwork were added to the quiet study areas at the back of the library this summer. This has helped to improve the look and feel of the space to make it more appealing. Lighting will also be improved.

The library saw huge increases in circulation since automatic renewals were implemented by the CW MARS network. Now all eligible items are renewed without patrons needing to take action. This has been generally well received.

The FY19 audit is going well and Ms. Buckhout is getting ready to move to the tax return portion. The audit should be ready for the October meeting.

The air conditioning was out for more than a week this summer when a motor in one of the air conditioners broke and had to be replaced. Central Services responded as quickly as possible to coordinate the repair and did the labor in house. The part cost \$2,500, but they didn't charge for labor.

The library's pollinator friendly garden was planted on Tuesday, September 17 with help from children from the library's weekly Preschool Storytime Explorers group.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners held their monthly meeting in the Coolidge Museum and presented the library proclamation in honor of Forbes' 125th anniversary.

Special Collections purchased a small group of mid-20th century photographs off EBay. Dylan Gaffney has made searching EBay for local photographs, documents and memorabilia a regular weekly task and when a local seller posted aerial photographs of downtown Northampton in the 1950s, he reached out to the seller. These fill a gap in the collection as there are some aerial photographs of Northampton from the 30's, 40's, early 70's and 90's but nothing from this period. Forbes purchased a small group of three 8" x 10" prints for about \$30 and when it was explained that they were for the library he agreed to throw in an additional eight photographs of the 1954 Tercentennial Parade. Two social media posts from scans of the recent acquisition were extremely popular online and reached over 11,000 people with more than 3,000 'engagements' (likes, clicks or comments).

Forbes has received a \$250 grant from the Massachusetts Library Aid Association Committee on Aid to Small Public Libraries (under 35,000) to hold a staff training on mentoring. As library and staff roles evolve, mentoring is a critical skill for staff. The training will be held in early 2020.

Forbes received front page coverage about the \$45,000 IMLS Moving Memories Lab grant that quotes Mr. Gaffney as describing a goal of the project to be the "democratization of local history." The project began September 1 and Forbes is partnering with the Wisconsin Library Services as a mentor organization. They have had a similar project ongoing since 2005, <https://recollectionwisconsin.org/>.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) released good news that statewide library funding exceeded the legislative ask for FY20. Ms. Downing thanked the Trustees for being part of the lobbying efforts. She has heard over and over that this is the key to success.

Administrative Report (continued)

There was a staff cookout this month behind the library. Staff were invited to come and have burgers, hot dogs and corn from Jason Petcen's farm. The career center staff were invited to join in. Jennie Lamour, Mr. Petcen and Frank Heston worked very hard to put the event together. There will be a separate volunteer recognition event for this fall.

Forbes is hosting 10 amazing local authors for a program called Writing in Common on Wednesday, September 18, co-hosted by Straw Dog Writers Guild and the Forbes Writer in Residence. This is one of the culminating events in the library's 125th year anniversary celebration; an evening of readings by local writers whose work, within the library and in the broader community, has made space for literature's role in contributing to and shaping the social worlds we share.

The wine tasting is coming up on September 27, 2019. Ms. Downing reminded the Trustees to share the invitation with their friends on social media and join in for a wonderful evening.

Ms. Reall 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 Thursday, October 24 at 3:45 PM. Ms. Buckhout will invite the representatives from Bartholomew Inc. to attend. The following meetings for the rest of the year were previously scheduled: Tuesday, November 19; and Thursday, December 19.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held Wednesday, October 2 at 6:30 PM. None of the Trustees are available to attend.

Communications

Ms. Downing received an email on July 26, 2019 from the Massachusetts Library Trustees Association (MLTA) announcing the date of the annual meeting on November 16, 2019 at the Shrewsbury Public Library.

Forbes Library received a thank you note from the Jackson Street PTO thanking Forbes for its participation in their fundraiser. Forbes donated a classroom visit from librarians.

Mr. Carrier received an email on September 18 from Ms. Vallejo asking the Trustees to reconsider their decision to allow food in the library due to food allergies suffered by herself and her son who are both disabled. She also questioned the library's policy of allowing people to sleep and bathe in the library. Ms. Moss and Ms. Downing met with her yesterday to discuss her concerns. The Library's current Behavior Policy, which was recently revised does allow for covered beverages and neat food, but not in the Hampshire Room and Coolidge Museum. Ms. Downing sampled other libraries' behavior policies and found that some libraries restrict where food can and cannot be consumed. Some libraries have a separate policy for food and drink. Ms. Downing also confirmed with the public health office that there are 170 known foods that cause allergies, with 8 major allergens including wheat, peanuts, tree nuts, soya, fish, crustaceans, milk, and eggs, many of which are common in foods brought into the library. She also spoke to the Children's Department staff who said that they've only received one inquiry about food allergens. If asked, they suggest people eat at the crafts table, but it is not a requirement.

Communications (continued)

The Trustees agreed that Ms. Vallejo's concerns about food allergens should be addressed and discussed possible ways to address them. Ms. Reall said that it seemed reasonable to limit the locations where food could be consumed in the library to reduce harm to the collection and facilities, and that a café would be a possible solution. Mr. Twarog agreed that it would be respectful to encourage people to eat in one area of the library, but it would be difficult for staff to monitor and police. Ms. Reall said that education and self-regulation have gradually worked with limiting public smoking areas. Ms. Hess said that part of the reason the library allows food is because it doesn't have a café, and there isn't space or money to build one. She also said that people are more than likely eating while reading their library materials at home. Ms. Wight agreed that setting limits on spaces where food is allowed is a good idea. Mr. Carrier said that the culture has changed and people want to eat and drink in the library and the library is welcoming to all. Mr. Twarog suggested doing research on how other libraries are handling the problem. Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Downing to work on a policy to bring to the next Trustees' meeting. The Trustees agreed by consensus that the issue of hygiene and cleanliness, or perceived threatening attitudes, is not something they need to address. Ms. Downing said the complaint did not mention a specific incident or confrontation that could be addressed with the behavior policy. Ms. Moss said that if someone is sleeping and snoring loudly, the staff will wake them up.

Ms. Downing received an email on September 18 from Sheila Delson asking permission to gather signatures from Massachusetts registered voters at the entrance of Forbes Library in favor of Voter Choice and a ranked choice voting system. Ms. Downing said that the Behavior Policy says "Canvassing, selling, soliciting or distributing materials is prohibited except when written permission to do so has been obtained in advance from the library director." The Meeting Room policy prohibits political use. Mr. Twarog and Ms. Reall suggested that Ms. Downing ask the Attorney General's office for a ruling as to whether this should be permitted. If the library has a ruling from the AG's office, it is something they can point to if other groups request the same thing.

Department of Unemployment Assistance Credit

Ms. Downing reported that Ms. Buckhout discovered that the library has a credit with the Department of Unemployment Assistance that totaled \$7,942.26 as of June 30. This credit is from funds deducted by the payroll company that exceeded the amount Forbes was required to pay. Ms. Downing recommends transferring these funds back to the Cutter endowment fund. This fund covered a shortage of nearly \$50,000 in FY18 to cover the correction for payroll accounting and is a critical piece of the Book & Media Budget.

Ms. Wight made a motion to transfer the \$7,942.26 credit from the Department of Unemployment Assistance to the Cutter fund in the endowment. Ms. Reall seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

CPA Grounds Master Plan

Ms. Downing reported that the Landscaping & Grounds Committee recommended applying to the Community Preservation Committee for CPA funds to hire a landscape architect to develop a master plan for the grounds. The application seeks \$20,000 in CPA funds with an additional \$5,000 from the Friends of Forbes Library. The application was due last Monday, and Ms. Downing asked for retroactive approval.

CPA Grounds Master Plan (continued)

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve the application to the Community Preservation Committee for CPA funds to hire a landscape architect to develop a master plan for the grounds, with an additional \$5,000 from the Friends of Forbes. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Major Joseph Hawley Plaque

Ms. Downing reported that the library's collection includes a desk owned by Major Joseph Hawley (1723-1788) that sits at the top of the stairs on the second floor near the entrance to the gallery. Ms. Downing distributed copies of the catalog record for the item along with an essay by Samantha Dinnie about his significance to Northampton and a second essay by local historian Dr. George Snook. Ms. Dinnie is an undergraduate student at Western New England University majoring in history with a concentration in early American history who has been working with Elise Bernier Feeley on researching Major Hawley. Ms. Feeley along with Ms. Dinnie are proposing that the library add a 6x9" bronze plaque to the desk reading, "Major Joseph Hawley (1723-1788) was an ardent patriot, selfless champion of the people, and fierce advocate of liberty. One of the foremost leaders of the American independence movement, he greatly inspired his fellow Revolutionaries and helped found the nation. His last wish was to give Northampton youth the gift of education, so he bequeathed part of his estate to the town for a school that would bear his name."

Ms. Feeley gave a brief history of Major Hawley. He was the third generation of the Hawley family to reside in Northampton, the son of the second Joseph Hawley and the maternal grandson of Rev. Solomon Stoddard and first cousin of Jonathan Edwards. Hawley studied law at Yale and at Harvard, becoming both a preacher and a lawyer. He is best remembered for his work in the Massachusetts General Court in the 1760's and 1770's, where he and Samuel Adams led the fight against the Stamp Act. Encouraging John Adams to carry on the Revolutionary cause, he wrote "Fight we must finally, unless Britain retreats." Hawley and his wife had no children. He left a thousand acres of land (including his own family homestead on Hawley Street) to the town of Northampton, with the income derived to be used forever to support its schools. His desk went to his adopted son, Joseph Clarke, who passed it on to his granddaughters. They in turn allowed Ms. Mary K. Brewster to have lifetime use of it. At the time of her death in 1958, the desk came to Forbes Library. The desk is significant because it was used by Major Hawley for every letter he wrote during the Revolutionary War.

Ms. Downing obtained quotes for a bronze plaque for \$425. The plaque would hang on the wall next to the desk. The Trustees agreed that a plaque should be made but were concerned about the proposed wording, suggesting it begin with "This desk was owned by Major Joseph Hawley..." Mr. Carrier suggested that Ms. Downing and Ms. Feeley work on the wording and bring it back to the Trustees at their next meeting. The Trustees thanked Ms. Feeley for her presentation and she left the meeting at 5:03 PM.

Annual Appeal Mailing

Ms. Downing reported that the Development Committee recommends a budget of up to \$1,500 to be paid back from the proceeds of the annual fund appeal to cover the costs of mailing. The appeal will be mailed in early October to approximately 1,100 previous donors.

Ms. Wight made a motion to approve a budget of up to \$1,500 for expenses from the EFT Fund for the annual appeals mailing to be paid back from the proceeds of the appeal. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Window Restoration Update

Ms. Downing reported that the project is in the final month with about 50% of the work still remaining. There is concern that the project will not be complete before the weather turns cold. The latest project schedule was distributed to the Trustees. The good news is that the quality of the work is excellent.

Special Collections HVAC Update

Ms. Downing reported that programming for the system has been done and training for Mr. Petcen and a couple of others is awaited before the project can be closed out and completed. There will be one year after closeout to report and resolve any problems with the new system, which it is hoped will be non-existent. Ms. Downing said that final payment will not be made until the project is complete. She said that Mr. Petcen is concerned there will not be significant cost savings since there are now 2 separate systems.

Whistleblower Policy

Ms. Downing reported that the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA) has given verbal approval of the whistleblower policy that the board preliminarily approved at the July meeting. This policy has now been enacted.

FY 19 Annual Report Summary & Infographic

Ms. Moss reported that the annual report summary was built on information from the 2018 Annual Report and FY18 ARIS data. Ms. Moss distributed an infographic created by Ben Kalish based on the FY19 ARIS data (not finalized until mid-August). Ms. Moss will present a summary of that report at the October meeting. Ms. Moss is seeking feedback on how these different reporting periods can be reconciled to best represent the library to stakeholders.

Community Engagement

Ms. Moss distributed a list of recent and upcoming community engagement events. Forbes Library received thanks for help with the Read with Pride list that was distributed by the MBLC state-wide. Ms. Moroni is co-chair of the brand new Reader's Advisory Section of the Massachusetts Library Association. This means she is also on the board of the Massachusetts Library Association. Steven Stover is now on the board of the Downtown Northampton Association. She and Ms. Downing are so proud of staff for taking these leadership roles in both local and state-wide communities.

Reports on subcommittee meetings/activities

Coolidge Standing Committee - Ms. Downing reported that a new brochure for the museum was designed by Ms. Wight and is being distributed to raise awareness of the museum. The programming committee has a full calendar of events including the annual meeting on Saturday, November 2 at 2 PM with the author of *1920: The Year of Six Presidents*.

Other Business

The Trustees discussed a response to the public comment made at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Carrier said that if the Trustees are to encourage public comments, there should be a response, given that they discuss other communications received by letter and email. He said the response doesn't need to happen in the moment, but can be done after the meeting. The Trustees agreed by consensus that Ms. Downing should write a letter to Mr. Krauss thanking him for his comments and making it clear the Trustees understand his point of view, and that they will be addressed by the recently formed Coolidge Standing Committee. Ms. Wight said the committee has been expecting this question and are working on a response. The Trustees agreed that the museum should have a more expansive approach, showing all sides of Coolidge,

Other Business (continued)

placing him and his views in context. This takes time, money, and effort and the new committee is working on it. Ms. Downing will write Mr. Krauss a letter, and the question will be placed on the Coolidge committee's agenda.

Ms. Downing reported that there was water damage in the Hampshire room resulting in moisture inside the frame of a lithograph hanging on the wall. The print is being cleaned and dried and will hopefully require minimal conservation. It is hoped the problem was caused by a missing roof shingle which is scheduled to be repaired next week.

At 5:29 PM Ms. Hess moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:29 PM.