

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Thursday, May 20, 2021

Present: Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, Ms. Sheirer, Ms. Wight. **Also Present:** Ms. Faith Kaufmann, Head of Arts & Music Department; Martha McCormick, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Jason Petcen, representative of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA); Debin Bruce; Stan Sherer. **Absent:** Cheri Buckhout.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's Emergency Order Modifying the State's Open Meeting Law issued March 12, 2020, this meeting was held using remote participation via Zoom teleconferencing.

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 PM.

Public Comments

Ms. Downing introduced Ms. Debin Bruce and Mr. Stan Sherer who are both considering running for trustee.

Bills & Warrants

Ms. Prabhaker made a motion to verbally approve the warrant dated May 20, 2021. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor. Ms. Downing will wait until there are a few more months of warrants and then schedule a time for the trustees to come in and physically sign them.

Secretary's Report

Ms. Hess moved that the Secretary's Report of April 15, 2021 be accepted and placed on file with a few minor corrections. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report of April 30, 2021 was distributed to the trustees. The General Aid Fund had positive net activity for the month of \$25,757 and has a balance of \$64,256. The Book & Media Fund had positive net activity of \$2,623 and has a balance of \$10,727. The Externally Financed Transactions Fund had negative net activity of \$1,577. The Halberstadt Technology Fund had negative net activity of \$1,171 and has a balance of \$3,363. The Morin Fund had positive net activity of \$10,479 and has a balance of \$84,301. The Moving Memories IMLS Grant fund had negative net activity of \$2,101 and has a deficit of \$5,715. The RCCR Centennial fund had positive net activity of \$900 and has a balance of \$825. The Watson Copier Fund had negative net activity of \$929 and has a deficit of \$3,343. The balance in the endowment as of April 30, 2021 was \$6,225,286.

Ms. Downing said that she's heard back from Susan Wright, City Finance Director, that Forbes will be reimbursed by the city for expenses related to the COVID pandemic. She said there will be some variances in the General Aid budget, but that it will likely end with a surplus.

Ms. Prabhaker made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report of April 30, 2021 and place it on file. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Gifts, Donations, and Bequests, etc.

The following undesignated gifts were received since the last Trustees' informational packet. The Trustees are asked to approve that they be deposited as requested: \$756 from the Lucey Family Endowment to the Lyman Special Collections Fund; and a total of \$749 to the Morin Fund including: \$250 from Allan Baustein and Barbara Thompson, Florence MA; \$200 from Andrew Crystal, Northampton MA; \$103 from Debra Orgera and George Kohout, Northampton MA; \$100 from David and Doris Cohen, Northampton MA; \$54 from Ruth and George Barham, Northampton MA; \$30 from Nicole Sibley, Amherst MA; \$10 from Morgan Brown, Northampton MA; and \$2 from the Stop & Shop Giving Tag Program, Portsmouth NH.

The following designated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting. The Trustees are asked to approve that it be deposited as requested: \$1,000 from Gregory White and Patricia Reidy, Leeds MA to the Marie Hershkowitz Memorial Children's Book Fund.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve the designated and undesignated gifts as proposed by Ms. Downing. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

There were no receipts from sales/rents or donations this month.

Finance Report

There was no finance report this month.

Friends of Forbes

Ms. Hess attended the Friends of Forbes virtual meeting on May 5 and reported that the Friends have just under \$558,000 in their endowment. Some money was withdrawn for funding needs, but they are getting a good return. They sent reminders to previous sponsors of the wine tasting and received a \$200 donation from Maple and Main. The garden tour is scheduled for July 17. The Friends will provide water bottles and recycling bins. They will start selling tickets in front of the library on June 19 for 4 weeks and also on the day of the tour. There will also be online tickets sales. They expect up to almost \$5,000 in sponsorships. Ms. Downing reported on the library's reopening plan. Plans are underway for a Juneteenth event. The new book drops are being repaired. This is the final year for writer-in-residence Art Middleton. The library will take a year off and then they are hoping for an historian-in-residence and a program around indigenous people. Their newsletter will come out in June and they discussed upcoming articles including ones about the film by Stan Sherer, trustees' award, Paco webcam, Hampton Reads program, and garden tour. Florence Bank announced its customer choice community grant recipients on May 18 and Forbes received \$5,000.

Administrative Report

Ms. Downing reported that Mr. Petcen discovered that there has been significant surface runoff on the regraded back embankment. Ms. Downing reached out to the DPW and the director told her that it should not affect the integrity of the project because the new drainage pipes are cemented in place. She said that they were trying to regrow grass on the surface and that she would send her crew out to investigate and get back to her with an update.

The latest community read of Station Eleven is wrapping up and this month included a panel discussion about "What makes a museum?" This topic is relevant to the book because in it a "Museum of Civilization" is created with

Administrative Report (continued)

artifacts saved before modern technology came to a halt as a result of a devastating pandemic. Ms. Nelson was one of the panelists along with Betsy Sharpe from Historic Northampton and a few others. A recording of the program will be up on the website soon.

Ms. Moss, Ms. Kaufmann, and Dylan Gaffney have been working diligently on two grant applications as possible funding for implementation of a new content management system for special collections. The project has large upfront costs of both software expenses as well as staff time to make the transition from the current system.

Ms. Downing and Ms. Moss would like to call the Facilities Committee together to discuss the FY22 facilities plan which they hope to present to the board in June.

Sarah Johnson and the youth services staff are getting ready to announce this year's summer reading program on the theme Tales & Tails. Each week will have an animal theme that includes take and make craft kits. People can register online using Beanstack and there will also be a paper sign up option for families. Ms. Johnson is working with the schools to help get the word out.

The Trustees Award ceremony is on Saturday, May 22 at 3 PM. It is hoped to be held outside if the weather is good and if not it will be in the Reading Room. While it is expected that the event will be smaller and briefer than normal, the trustees are pleased to be able to honor Martha McCormick, Elaine Reall and Dr. Melvin Hershkowitz for their extraordinary service to the library.

Ms. Buckhout prepared the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) forgiveness application and Ms. Downing has submitted it. A copy of the application was distributed to the trustees. Ms. Buckhout has heard that it could take quite a while to hear back but she and Ms. Downing are very hopeful that it will be forgiven before the end of the fiscal year. The auditors have the draft FY20 990 report prepared for the trustees' review. A copy was distributed to the trustees. It is anticipated to be filed very soon. Ms. Buckhout will invite the auditors to the July trustees' meeting.

Phased Reopening Plan Update

Ms. Downing reported that the Reading Room was reopened for expanded browsing of new fiction, non-fiction and large print on Friday, May 7. This also allowed for expansion of the number of materials available for browsing from the Children's & Young Adult and Arts & Music collections in the Reference Room. So far the response has been very positive. The reopening committee is planning to continue to make incremental reopening steps as long as the health metrics support it. The next step being worked on is adding public computer access.

Now that the vast majority of staff are vaccinated and the health metrics have improved, Ms. Downing would like to bring benefitted staff back to 100% of their hours as of July 5th and have requested this as an action item on the agenda. Further, she would like all staff to return to working all of their hours in the building by early September with the understanding that telecommuting requests will be considered as well as other accommodation requests.

Phased Reopening Plan Update (continued)

The reopening committee feels strongly that masks should continue to be worn in the library regardless of federal or state guidance. An action item is being put forward to support this recommendation. The reopening committee is now meeting weekly as the situation is changing rapidly. The good news is that 100% of benefitted staff will be fully vaccinated by early June and it will be almost the same for part-time staff.

Ms. Wight said that she's heard that the state is lifting the emergency order declaration affecting open meeting laws on June 15 meaning that the next trustee's meeting on June 24 would need to be in-person unless something changes between now and then. The meeting would likely be held in the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum (CCPLM) which is large enough to allow for social distancing. Ms. Downing will monitor the situation and keep the trustees informed.

Ms. Hess moved that the Administrative Report including the Phased Reopening Plan Update be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Wight seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Ms. Faith Kaufmann joined the meeting at 4:15 PM.

Arts & Music Department Report

Ms. Kaufmann presented the Arts & Music Department report to the trustees. Staff have been responding to the pandemic challenges and have combined efforts with Reference and Borrower Services to integrate all patron services in as accessible a way as possible. A number of programs have been adapted to an online format to appreciative audiences. "The Right to Vote: Past, Present, Future" was completed in October and "Coming to America" wrapped up in December. Department staff have participated in a number of online trainings and webinars including opportunities that became accessible because they happened virtually. Staff helped edit and coordinate the streaming premier of Back to the Bay State on Twitch, YouTube, and Facebook live, in partnership with Northampton Open Media. The Virtual Hosmer Gallery was launched in April 2020 and now features 467 images by 160 Western Massachusetts artists, and is still growing. Projects in progress include virtual exhibits in the Hosmer Gallery, the Far Out Film Club, Zine Club, and Storytime for Grownups. The Hosmer Gallery is currently inviting applications for a virtual exhibit highlighting the interconnectedness of planetary and human health, which will be featured on the website this summer. Ongoing grants include the Digital Capacity grant of \$4,999 from Mass Humanities for equipment and training to stream and record hybrid programs live from the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum (CCPLM) and the Outside Voices grant from LSTA/IMLS to expand and diversify the oral history project. Ms. Kaufmann is working with the BIPOC Art Committee to diversify the library's permanent art collection to better reflect and welcome the community. Future plans and projects include the musicians in residence, The Quark Quartet, giving an outdoor concert in July. An outdoor performance with the Northampton Jazz Project and a virtual workshop on Art Marketing Online with Robert Floyd are being planned. Several cloud-based content management systems are being explored with Historic Northampton. In terms of needs, the Hosmer Gallery track lighting needs a number of bulbs replaced, and it would be best to do this before the second floor is opened to the public. Mr. Petcen said that this shouldn't be a problem. For outdoor programming, ultimately the west lawn should have wheelchair accessibility, electrical

Arts & Music Department Report (continued)

outlets (secure and weather protected), and a sheltered stage that would accommodate groups of similar size to past performances.

In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing said that the goals for this year are to install the curb cut for accessibility, improve electrical access, and aerate the lawn. The outdoor landscaping committee will consider the larger project of a covered stage area that could also double as outdoor seating when not in use for performances. Mr. Carrier said it would be an exciting project to involve the Friends with. Ms. Kaufmann said that the library could also seek grants for the project and suggested that Children's Librarian Sarah Johnson be on the planning committee along with Ms. Moss who chairs the Programming Committee. Mr. Carrier asked that it be made a priority and to report back on it next month.

The trustees thanked Ms. Kaufmann for her report.

Next Meetings

The next regular meeting of the trustees is scheduled for Thursday, June 24 at 4:00 PM. The following meetings have been scheduled for 2020: Thursday, July 22; Wednesday, September 15; Thursday, October 21; Thursday, November 18; Thursday, December 16. The meetings will be at 4:00 PM unless the representatives of Bartholomew are invited, in which case the meeting will begin at 3:45 PM.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held Wednesday, June 2, at 6:30 PM. Mr. Carrier will attend on behalf of the trustees.

Communications

Ms. Downing and Mr. Carrier received an email on May 14 from Jason Petcen, president of the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA) requesting a meeting to open negotiations for the FY22 contract. It will be discussed in executive session later in the meeting.

Mask Policy

Ms. Downing reported that federal and state mandates around safety protocols are changing rapidly. It was just learned that indoor masking will no longer be required by the state by the end of the month. The Reopening Committee feels strongly that Forbes should continue to require that masks be worn inside the library by both staff and the public. The vaccination rate in Northampton was 18%/49% partial/full as of May 11 and it does not include anyone under the age of 12. As it is planned to increase services and numbers of the public allowed in the building over the coming months, it is believed that Forbes should remain cautious about serving potentially unvaccinated people. The same circumstances that have been taken into consideration remain: the library's service model is very open and the air filtering and exchange systems remain very limited. In light of this, Ms. Downing requested that the trustees approve the following policy. She will plan to bring this back to rescind it when it seems appropriate to do so.

Forbes Library Mask Policy - It is important that the library is a safe space for everyone. Young children and their families are daily visitors at our library. Because most children are not yet eligible to be vaccinated, we require that ALL patrons and staff continue to wear masks when inside the library regardless of vaccination status.

Mask Policy (continued)

Anyone who is unable or unwilling to follow this policy can borrow library materials through our curbside, drive up or home delivery services and be helped with reference questions via phone or email but may not enter the library.

Mr. Carrier asked if Ms. Downing had a sense of when this might change. Ms. Downing said that she would like to see higher vaccination rates in the community and vaccine eligibility for children. She said there may be incremental steps including different policies for the adult and children's spaces. Mr. Carrier said to keep in mind that enforcing mask requirements will become more difficult once they are lifted in more public areas.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the Forbes Library Mask Policy as proposed by Ms. Downing. Ms. Prabhaker seconded the motion which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Staff Work Time

Ms. Downing reported staff have been allowed to reduce their work week for the past year by up to 20% in recognition of the challenges of working around pandemic procedures. The vast majority of staff are fully vaccinated and Ms. Downing believes that more staff can safely be allowed to work in the building at the same time which will support staff in their ability to work a full schedule. Additionally, many of the benefited staff have been banking other forms of paid time off which is accumulating at levels that have the potential to be burdensome to staffing needs in the future. She requested the trustees' approval to require all benefited staff to account for 100% of their hours as of July 5, 2021.

Ms. Prabhaker made a motion to approve requiring all benefited staff to account for 100% of their hours as of July 5, 2021. Ms. Wight seconded the motion which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Off Site Reference Fees

Ms. Downing reported that the fee structure has been reviewed for research and reproduction requests made of special collections staff and a revision is proposed, a copy of which was distributed to the trustees. This new structure is in keeping with current practice and eliminates fees for personal projects, encourages donations, and still charges for commercial projects with the understanding that larger personal projects will be referred to a list of researchers for hire.

Ms. Wight made a motion to approve the new fee structure for research and reproduction requests for special collections. Ms. Prabhaker seconded the motion which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Concrete Project

Ms. Downing reported that repair work is needed to the ramp leading from the front patio down to the driveway near the handicap parking spots as well as concrete work around the new book drops which will be installed adjacent to that ramp. Additionally, improvements are needed for handicap accessibility to the west lawn where more library programs are being held in the recent past and encouraging patrons to spend time during the pandemic. A curb cut to the granite curbing is required to achieve this. A quote was obtained from

Concrete Project (continued)

Duffy Willard Paving & Excavating LLC for \$8,760 for both projects and she asked for approval to be paid from the Morin Fund.

Mr. Twarog made a motion to approve \$8,760 from the Morin Fund to repair the concrete ramp at the front entrance and around the book drops, and improve handicap access to the west lawn. Ms. Hess seconded the motion which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Mr. Petcen said that book drops are in a fabrication shop awaiting steel to be used for reinforcement and will hopefully return in a couple of weeks.

Anti-Racism Sign

Ms. Downing reported that the Racial & Social Justice Committee recommends adding an anti-racism sign to the front of the building that states, "Racism has no place here." The committee feels it is important to make this statement in support of the library's racial justice stance. The trustees were asked to approve \$250.00 for a 3'x12' vinyl banner from the Aid budget.

Mr. Carrier said he feels that the message is too narrow and does not include other discriminated against people including gay, lesbian, and transgender individuals as well as Jews and Muslims. He suggested the wording include "hatred", "intolerance", or "prejudice" in addition to racism. Mr. Twarog said that he understood Mr. Carrier's point, and that the word "racism" must be included. He suggested including "bigotry". Ms. Hess said the sign is part of the library's focus this year on black lives matter but is willing to broaden it to "no place for hate". Ms. Prabhaker suggested getting input from the Racial and Social Justice Advisory Committee which is meeting on Monday. Ms. Downing said the recommendation came from the Racial and Social Justice Committee but that the Advisory Committee had not yet had a chance to weigh in on it. Mr. Twarog reiterated that the statement should be broad enough to include hatred against Asians. He expressed concern that it is taking so long for the library to come out with a statement. Mr. Carrier said that the trustees' role is to listen to the advice of the director, assistant director, administration, and all the committees and to look at the bigger picture, have discussions, and then make decisions. Ms. Wight said that she agreed that the Racial and Social Justice Advisory Committee should have input on the wording of the sign and that she trusted both the Racial and Social Justice Committee and the Racial and Social Justice Advisory group to come up with the more inclusive wording by adding a word or two to the proposed statement. Ms. Downing said she also agreed that the advisory committee should weigh in when they meet on Monday. Mr. Carrier said to relay this conversation to them for guidance. Both Ms. Prabhaker and Ms. Hess will also be at that meeting.

Ms. Wight made a motion to approve \$250 from the Aid fund for a 3' x 12' vinyl banner with final wording to be decided after the Racial and Social Justice Advisory Committee meeting. Ms. Prabhaker seconded the motion which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

FY22 Book & Media Budget

Ms. Moss reported that the state mandated Materials Expenditure Requirement (MER) for FY22 is a number equivalent to 12% (with MBLC waiver) of the library's operating budget or \$171,958. If we weren't able to take the

FY22 Book & Media Budget (continued)

waiver, it would be \$186,288. Distributed to the trustees were the proposed FY22 Book & Media Income and FY22 Book & Media Expenditures. The book funds are 3.25% of the rolling twenty quarters. New this year are the Hershkowitz fund, and the removal of fines and card replacement fees from the budget. The last few years eligible tech expenses were allowed to be counted toward the materials expenditure requirement, but they are funded outside of the book and media budget. Ms. Moss included this at the bottom of the budget to show that the budget will be making the MER, but the book and media budget income and expenditures will be \$157,915. She hopes that removing these items from the budgets will make the process easier. She also anticipates that the library might end FY21 with a surplus in the Book and Media budget. If so, she would like to propose reducing the amount taken from the book funds for the FY22 budget. The changes to the expenditures from FY22 include sharing the expense of Kanopy, the streaming media, with Lilly Library. The overall budget will increase, but Forbes' portion will decrease slightly. A line has also been added for games, and it is proposed to take a year off from a targeted Collection Enhancement project.

In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moss said that 3.25% was being taken from the Doland Fund but that some of that goes to other line items. Mr. Carrier said that Bartholomew Inc. recommended that withdrawals not exceed 4% and so far Forbes has been able to stay below that. Mr. Carrier said that Ms. Moss has been doing a very professional job with the budget.

Ms. Prabhaker made a motion to approve the FY22 Book & Media budget as proposed by Ms. Moss. Ms. Hess seconded the motion which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Additional Self Check Machines

Ms. Moss said she would like to purchase two additional self-checks to be located in the children's and Arts & Music departments for \$17,184. The current self-checks have allowed Forbes to safely open for self-service holds, and allow for social distancing. The addition of two more will allow this service model to be extended to the other departments, and allow staff time to be used more efficiently, including being able to spend more time with the patrons that require it. She suggested that they be funded with the forgiven PPP loan funds.

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve the purchase of two additional self-checks for \$17,184 to be paid from the forgiven PPP loan funds. Ms. Wight seconded the motion which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

Discussion Topic: Board Diversification

Ms. Downing distributed four articles for background to the trustees: Board Diversity: Moving From Awareness to Action (<https://pndblog.typepad.com/pndblog/2019/02/board-diversity-moving-from-awareness-to-action.html>); Recruiting for Board Diversity - Without disrespecting People of Color (<https://blog.boardsource.org/blog/recruiting-for-board-diversity-with-respect>); 5 Steps to Achieving Diversity on Your Board (<https://trustees.aha.org/key-steps-achieving-diversity-health-care-governing-board>); and "The Thing About Diversity Is..." Debunking five misconceptions that derail diversity efforts (<https://trustees.aha.org/thing-about-diversity>). She said the library is governed by a board that is elected by the voters. This structure was intentional to avoid political appointments and even political

Discussion Topic: Board Diversification (continued)

pressure in running the library. We do not control who gets elected in the way that appointed boards do; however we do have influence over where openings are announced and as individuals, who is encouraged to run. We also have control over some of our practices and procedures like meeting times and board culture that can make or break the success of someone's tenure. We should also remember that the library has other important boards and committees working on our behalf with appointed members including the Friends of Forbes, CCPLM Standing Committee, and the Racial & Social Justice Advisory Group. Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss, and Ms. Downing recently attended a webinar about diversifying boards that highlighted the process that the Greater Northampton Chamber took to successfully diversify its board including race, age, background and gender. Ms. Downing reported on a few major takeaways from that training. Diversifying the library's boards and committees has several significant potential benefits including assisting the library to achieve progress on its racial and social justice goals. It requires a concerted effort to achieve diversity. This includes community outreach with messaging about our desired intentions. Lastly, diversifying the board is not the final step. Diversity, equity, and inclusion needs to be continually discussed and trained on as well as built into our mission, strategic plans and policies. Mr. Carrier said to keep in mind that since the trustees are elected, not appointed, it's ultimately the voters who determine who sits on the board.

Ms. Hess said she was impressed with the Chamber's presentation and opened up the discussion by asking "Is it enough to have a board of well-meaning people who believe in diversity, equity and inclusion even if that board is not itself diverse?" Ms. Prabhaker said that she's heard from a woman of color speaking to the Racial and Social Justice Advisory Group that the group wouldn't be needed if there were more diversity on the staff and the board, and that having visible people of color in the library space would go a long way towards making other people of color feel welcome in the library. Mr. Carrier said that we all agree that it's not enough, but that where we've fallen in the past is in not encouraging more diverse people to run for trustee and that we can do more in the areas of hiring at all levels. Diversity can also be improved through programming and presenters, the library's policies, exhibits and the permanent art collection, social media and publicity, and reaching out to neighborhoods and areas of the city where there is more diversity. By encouraging diversity in these areas, more diverse people will begin to emerge to fill roles in the library. He cautioned against filling roles solely based on race and said the library needs trustees with backgrounds in development and law. He also suggested increasing the number of trustees from five to seven which would not only help with diversity, but would also help with the amount of work involved. Mr. Twarog said these were all very good points and said that we want to avoid tokenism, checking a box for diversity and then assuming that now the problem is fixed. He said we need to change our image to be more inviting and approachable, and he is in favor of expanding the board. Ms. Prabhaker agreed that we need to make our board something that people are interested in and that we should look at changing our structures, reimagine our needs, and be more flexible and open. Ms. Wight said that coming from the publishing world which is 90% white, there are a lot of conversations about how to improve things so that there is a more diverse pool of applicants. She also agreed that increasing the number of trustees would be helpful. She noted that the trustees are the only unpaid elected positions in the city which means that only people with privilege can afford to serve in this capacity. She said the library has a lot of committees in addition to the trustees where diversity can be improved. Mr. Carrier said that last time the trustees went before a

Discussion Topic: Board Diversification (continued)

judge to increase the number of trustees, one thing the judge would not budge on was compensation. But perhaps now, with more valid reasons, a new judge might have a different point of view. Ms. Hess said she agreed with the idea of expanding the board and perhaps implementing the idea of a stipend for people who need it especially to cover childcare, transportation, and technology costs, which would allow lower income people to participate. Ms. Downing said that we should offer opportunities for people to engage and participate through appointments to committees, for example an historian-in-residence focused on indigenous people. She said that once leadership is not contending with COVID every day, it will free up some time and space for her and Ms. Moss to work further on this. Mr. Carrier said he felt some progress was made through this discussion.

Public Gatherings on Library Property

Ms. Downing said that Forbes is seeing more interest and use of the library's grounds by individuals coming to work and utilizing the improved wireless as well as a couple of instances that we are aware of groups gathering. While this is not a new phenomenon, because we do not currently have our indoor meeting spaces open, this is the only place we can offer people space to gather at this time. In reviewing the existing Meeting Room policy, there are parameters around the use of the property by political groups but not other guidance specific to the grounds. The leadership team will be reviewing the policy to see if there are additional parameters that should be spelled out for gatherings that are open to the public. They also plan to ask the Racial & Social Justice Committee for their input to make sure that the policy supports the library's anti-racist stance. The trustees should let Ms. Downing know if they have any opinions to share. If the policy is revised, it will be brought to the trustees as an action item for approval.

Community Engagement

Ms. Moss reported that the library was invited to contribute to care packages going to older residents through an initiative by the Council on Aging. An informational flyer was assembled with resources and the library coordinated with and provided partial funding for birding guides that are being included in the packages. This supports a campaign by the council this spring to encourage outdoor recreational activities. Ms. Moss distributed a list of recent and upcoming community engagement events.

Reports on Subcommittee and Other Meetings

CCPLM Standing Committee - Ms. Downing reported that the committee did not meet this month. Ms. Nelson has been coordinating with the National Portrait Gallery to have the portrait of Grace on loan be shipped directly to the Williamstown Art Conservation Center to have the frame repaired and painting assessed.

Development Committee - Ms. Moss reported that the committee did not meet this month although we have continued to receive donations. We received a few more Library Giving Day donations, for a total of 129 gifts totaling \$11,197.

Racial & Social Justice Committee - Ms. Hess reported that the committee has put forth a recommendation for an anti-racism sign and is putting together a virtual Racial Equity Symposium on Monday, June 21 from 10-12. Board members are encouraged to attend.

BIPOC Art Committee - Mr. Carrier reported that the committee has begun reviewing possible artists and this work will continue into the next month. A

Reports on Subcommittee and Other Meetings (continued)

press release about the initiative was issued and has generated some interest. Members of the committee 2 at a time are presenting works by artists considering purchasing. Then will make recommendations to the board about which to purchase

FLEA Contract Negotiations: Executive Session

At 5:40 PM, Ms. Prabhaker moved that the trustees go into executive session to discuss contract negotiations with FLEA because negotiation in open session would be detrimental to the library's bargaining position. Ms. Hess seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously, with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor. The trustees invited Ms. Downing, Ms. Moss and Ms. Sheirer to remain as guests at the executive session. Ms. Kaufmann, Mr. Petcen, Ms. Bruce, and Mr. Sherer left the meeting at 5:40 PM. Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Hess, Ms. Moss, Ms. Prabhaker, Ms. Sheirer, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight were present during the executive session. No votes were taken during the executive session.

At 5:51 PM, Ms. Hess moved that the executive session be ended and the regular meeting reconvened. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously, with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor.

The trustees agreed by consensus to schedule a meeting with FLEA to present their proposal as soon as possible.

At 5:51 PM Ms. Wight moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Twarog seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hess, Ms. Prabhaker, Mr. Twarog, and Ms. Wight all voting in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 5:51 PM.