

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Thursday, January 22, 2026

Present: Rebekah Anderson, Lisa Downing, Ruth Francis, Fred Kass, Molly Moss, Shelly Ruocco, Elizabeth Sheirer, Katy Wight. **Also Present:** Sarah Johnson, Children's and Young Adult Librarian. **Present via Zoom:** Lolán Sevilla; Anne Teschner; Jo Landers, Bookkeeper; Doug Wheat, Treasurer; Lori Mathews, Heidi W. **Absent:** None.

Pursuant to the extended authorization for certain remote meeting provisions signed into law by the Governor, and now available through June 30, 2027, this meeting was available for remote participation.

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 PM.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Secretary's Report

Ruth Francis moved that the Secretary's report of December 18, 2025 be accepted and placed on file. Shelly Ruocco seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Contact Information for 2026

The trustees will review their contact information and submit any changes to Elizabeth Sheirer who will update the contact list for 2026.

Release of Executive Session minutes for 2025

The only executive session in 2025 was on December 2 when the trustees discussed the results of the Classification & Compensation study. Those minutes will be released after negotiation with the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA) is complete.

Financial Reports

Jo Landers distributed and presented the Trustees Financial Reports for the period ending December 31, 2025 which included a Profit and Loss Comparison, Balance Sheet Comparison, Budget to Actual Report, Coolidge Museum Redesign income and expense report, and HVAC Project income and expense report. The balance in the endowment as of December 31, 2025 was \$7,593,536. Jo Landers walked the trustees through each report. The Profit & Loss shows a comparison with the prior fiscal year. The Budget to Actual report has explanatory notes. In general, one-time expenses covering a single fiscal year are expensed all at once when they occur. One-time expenses that cross over fiscal years are divided by twelve and expensed each month. The Balance Sheet tracks assets and liabilities including bank accounts, payroll taxes, and equipment. In accordance with IRS thresholds, expenses under \$2,500 are taken all at once, while expenses over \$2,500 are treated as assets and depreciated. Fred Kass asked about the possibility of adding a column to the Budget to Actual Report showing the percentage of budgeted amount used in the prior year for comparison. Jo Landers said that information is included in the Profit & Loss report and might be difficult or confusing to include in the Budget to Actual report. The Finance Committee will consider this. Jo Landers said that now that the FY23 and FY24 audits are complete, the auditor will start delving into the FY25 audit. In response to a question from Anne Teschner, Lisa Downing said that while the library is happy with the current

Financial Reports (continued)

auditor, it might be prudent for the Finance Committee to look at other options. Jo Landers said it was important to track restricted funds to be able to show that the money was spent as intended by the donor. The Coolidge Museum Redesign income and expense report, and HVAC Project income and expense report track the funds coming in and the expenses being incurred for those specific projects. She said that the Finance Committee receives and reviews these reports about a week before the trustees' meetings.

Shelly Ruocco made a motion to approve the December Financial Reports and place them on file. Rebekah Anderson seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

2nd Quarter FY25 Report

Lisa Downing said that Forbes has committed to providing the city with quarterly budget reports. Molly Moss put the report together based on the same numbers as reported by Jo Landers, but only showing items funded by the city. The city wants to know well in advance if there are any major budgetary issues. If an unexpected major repair arises, Forbes can go back to the city and ask for additional funds. Molly Moss said the budget is currently on track. Personnel appears over budget because there have been two 3-payroll months so already this fiscal year. After a final review, it will be sent to the city.

Gifts, Donations, and Bequests, etc.

Lisa Downing reported that \$26,758.82 in undesignated gifts were received in November, including a \$5,000 gift. The following designated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$24,426.33 for the Children's Renovation project including \$10,000 from Christine Hannon and \$6,000 from the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, \$15,000 for Local History from the Brian Turner Estate, \$725.10 to the Coolidge Fund, and \$100 to the Coolidge Renovation Fund. There were no receipts from sales/rents or donations this month.

An update on fundraising was provided: Coolidge funding budgeted \$50,000, received \$17,565; Children's Renovation Project budgeted \$50,000, received \$25,785; Annual Appeal budgeted \$50,000, received \$87,340; Library Giving Day budgeted \$30,000, none received; Other budgeted \$67,100, received \$26,455.

Ruth Francis made a motion to accept the designated and undesignated gifts as reported. Fred Kass seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Next Meetings

The next regular meeting of the trustees is scheduled for Thursday, February 26 at 4:00 PM. The trustees scheduled the following meetings for the next year: Thursday, March 26; Thursday, April 16; Tuesday, May 19; Thursday, June 18; Thursday, July 16; Thursday, September 24; Thursday, October 22; Thursday, November 19; Thursday, December 17; and Thursday January 21, 2027. Meetings will convene at 4:00 PM unless otherwise noted.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be held on Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 6:30 PM. Ruth Francis will attend on behalf of the trustees.

Department Report: Children's and Young Adult

Sarah Johnson presented the report on activities of the Children's and Young Adult Department. She said that during a year when libraries were facing near-constant challenges, they were in the fortunate position to be embarking on exciting new projects filled with possibility, the new performance stage and new Youth Programming Room. Programs this year included the Summer Reading Program with more than 600 children and teens signed up—representing a 65% increase over the previous year. Thanks to funding from the Friends of Forbes, they were able to host a wide range of wonderful events and performers all summer long, including a Mobile Petting Zoo, a STEM program by the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, escape rooms for kids and teens, the Toe Jam Puppet Band, and a return visit from the Poop Museum. They also hosted a creative and collaborative Rubber Ducky Costume Contest for teens at the end of August. In October, they used the library's new performance stage for an energetic performance by the Expandable Brass Band. People of all ages danced on the lawn and also decorated mini pumpkins ahead of Halloween. They continued to find ways to increase engagement with the community. They offered multiple story times at the People's Institute (a childcare center) and the Northampton Winter Farmer's Market; visited the kindergarten classes at Ryan Road, Leeds Elementary, and Bridge Street School; signed up people for library cards at the Bombyx Center for Arts & Equity, the Northampton Parents Center's Preschool Resource Fair, and at Northampton Public School's Kindergarten Registration; and gave library tours and book talks during class visits with second graders from Jackson Street School. They once again led an Open House for Smith students in partnership with the Adult Services Department, which resulted in 100 new library card signups. They also hosted a successful Youth Winter Clothing Drive to benefit the local Head Start center. Smith students from the MIND in Development Lab offered a children's program about how the brain works and they offered three special story times (complete with kid-made salads!) in collaboration with Grow Food Northampton to highlight local food and farms.

Sarah Johnson then talked about the artist chosen to paint the mural for the Youth Programming Room, Esme Shapiro. She read the following artist's description of the vision for the mural:

The mural will aim to build a bridge between the real, physical environment of Northampton and the imaginary worlds that Forbes Library empowers. The lower third of the mural will depict a small-scale painting of Northampton in spring, rendered in a style that evokes regional folk painting (in the tradition of Grandma Moses).

Above the town, the mural will transition into a more fantastical realm. Clouds will swirl into whimsical landscapes filled with magical creatures. To honor the enduring importance of the library for local Dungeons & Dragons players, a dragon will feature prominently, creating a bold, dynamic shape that draws the eye upward. The iconic Paco will also make an appearance, perhaps swimming amongst the clouds.

Native woodland animals formed from clouds may drift through the sky, suggesting that the collective imagination of the town creates an entire world above it. The mural will be vibrant, playful, and filled with "Easter eggs" that reward close looking. It will invite viewers of all ages to interact with the image—much like identifying shapes in clouds on a spring day. It will become an iconic backdrop for community

Department Report: Children's and Young Adult (continued)

activity, drawing residents and visitors alike into work, play, or dream beneath the painted sky.

The trustees said they were very excited about the project and were impressed by all the events and activities going on in the Children's & Young Adult Department. In response to a question from the trustees about resources, Sarah Johnson said that the Programming budget does not stretch as far as it used to. The trustees thanked her for her report, and she left the meeting at 5:00 PM.

Youth Programming Room Mural Recommendation

Lisa Downing reported that the Ad Hoc Art Selection Committee worked briskly to define a scope of work, recommend criteria in addition to the library's Special Collection policy, put out a call for proposals, and is making a recommendation in the month since the committee was formed. She would like to especially thank Julia Cornick and the rest of the Children's and Young Adult Department for taking the lead on facilitating the selection process. There were 49 artist applicants. It was a very competitive group of applicants and a difficult decision for the committee. The committee voted and is recommending Esme Shapiro. She is a well-known illustrator, and her timeless design and vision will appeal to a broad range of ages. In response to a question from Fred Kass about the weight given to local artists, Lisa Downing said that the committee applied the guidelines in the Special Collections policy. The artist has a regional connection and has visited Northampton often. Additionally, Northampton will be centered prominently in the design. She said she expects the mural to take 5 days to paint with an additional day for sealing and will be completed in April.

Rebekah Anderson made a motion to approve the recommendation of the Art Selection Committee to select Esme Shapiro as the artist to paint the mural for the Youth Programming Room. Shelly Ruocco seconded the motion, which was approved with Anne Teschner, Katy Wight, Rebekah Anderson, Ruth Francis, Fred Kass, Shelly Ruocco, and Lolana Sevilla all voting in favor.

Lisa Downing said that the library will make an announcement once everyone has been notified.

Election of Officers

Katy Wight said that the trustees' by-laws don't say anything about the election process for officers, so she consulted Robert's Rules of Order. She described the process. First, she will ask for nominations for both Chair and Vice-Chair. Nominations do not need to be seconded. After all nominations have been received, the trustees will vote to close the nominations. Next a motion will be needed to decide how the vote will be conducted, for example by roll call or paper ballot, etc.

Katy Wight asked for nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair. Anne Teschner and Ruth Francis nominated Katy Wight for Chair. Katy Wight nominated Shelly Ruocco for Vice-Chair. No other nominations were made.

Anne Teschner moved to close nominations. Fred Kass seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with Rebekah Anderson, Ruth Francis, Fred Kass,

Election of Officers (continued)

Shelly Ruocco, Lolán Sevilla, Anne Teschner, and Katy Wight all voted in favor.

Anne Teschner made a motion to conduct the vote by roll call. Fred Kass seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with Rebekah Anderson, Ruth Francis, Fred Kass, Shelly Ruocco, Lolán Sevilla, Anne Teschner, and Katy Wight all voting in favor.

A roll call vote was taken with Rebekah Anderson voting for Katy Wight for Chair and Shelly Ruocco for Vice-Chair, Ruth Francis voting for Katy Wight for Chair and Shelly Ruocco for Vice-Chair, Fred Kass voting for Katy Wight for Chair and Shelly Ruocco for Vice-Chair, Shelly Ruocco voting for Katy Wight for Chair and Shelly Ruocco for Vice-Chair, Lolán Sevilla voting for Katy Wight for Chair and Shelly Ruocco for Vice-Chair, Anne Teschner voting for Katy Wight for Chair and Shelly Ruocco for Vice-Chair, and Katy Wight voting for Katy Wight for Chair and Shelly Ruocco for Vice-Chair.

Katy Wight suggested that the Personnel Committee explore adding instructions for electing officers to the trustees' by-laws. Fred Kass suggested that the by-laws say that if more than one person is nominated for an office that the vote be conducted by written ballot.

Appointment of Secretary and Treasurer

Ruth Francis made a motion to appoint Elizabeth Sheirer as Secretary and Doug Wheat as Treasurer. Anne Teschner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with Fred Kass, Shelly Ruocco, Lolán Sevilla, Anne Teschner, Katy Wight, Rebekah Anderson, and Ruth Francis all voting in favor.

Trustees' Award

Lisa Downing asked the trustees to discuss potential recipients for the Gertrude P. Smith Trustees Award. The award honors a community member or members who have given exceptional volunteer service or have made another significant contribution to Forbes Library and is named after the first recipient who is responsible for starting the Friends of Forbes Library in 1982. Some years there hasn't been an award, and some years two people have received it. Lisa Downing added that the recipient cannot be a paid employee. She said she had talked to Russell Carrier who said he would decline the award this year. He recommended that the award go to former trustee Debin Bruce and J.R. Greene who has stepped down as chair of the Coolidge Standing Committee. Debin Bruce is recognized for her exceptional work in realizing the new performance stage and working tirelessly to advance Forbes Library. J.R. Greene chaired the Coolidge Committee for decades. He knows a great deal about Coolidge and is a collector of presidential materials. He will remain on the Coolidge Standing Committee but is stepping down as Chair. Lisa Downing suggested that the awards ceremony be held in conjunction with the Friends of Forbes annual meeting in April, with J.R. Greene as the speaker. This will be separate from the Volunteer/Donor event tentatively scheduled for March 1.

The trustees discussed how best to honor Russell Carrier for his years of service. Lisa Downing said she is planning an article in the Daily Hampshire Gazette around Library Giving Day in April, that in addition to honoring him will also solicit donations to the Children's Department renovation. The

Trustees' Award (continued)

trustees will also look for naming opportunities or a plaque in his name somewhere in the library.

Shelly Ruocco made a motion to give the Trustees' Award this year to Debin Bruce and J.R. Greene. Rebekah Anderson seconded the motion, which was approved with Lolana Sevilla, Anne Teschner, Katy Wight, Rebekah Anderson, Ruth Francis, Fred Kass, and Shelly Ruocco all voting in favor.

Lisa Downing will reach out to Debin Bruce and J.R. Greene to discuss scheduling and coordination with the Friends of Forbes.

Committee Appointments

Lisa Downing reported that Russell Carrier is seeking an appointment to the Development Committee and retroactively to January 14th to the Ad Hoc Art Selection Committee currently working on selecting a muralist for the new youth programming room. She asked the Chair to make these appointments with her endorsement.

Lisa Downing also reported that Jocelyn Merrick seeks an appointment to the Development Committee. She comes highly recommended by her colleague in Development at Northfield Mount Herman and Friends of Forbes board member, Nicole Sibley. At NMH, she oversees the annual giving team as the director and has decades of experience. Importantly, she is a great solicitor. She has experience reaching out to individuals for their gifts and managing those one-to-one prospect relationships. Plus, she would be a great collaborator on Forbes' annual fund appeals. Lisa Downing asked the Chair to make this appointment with her endorsement.

Katy Wight made the appointments.

Administrative Report

Lisa Downing reported that a new board photo has been postponed until the spring when the weather is better and the cold and flu season has receded. Trustees should put their new parking stickers on to avoid getting a ticket.

The third annual Volunteer and Donor Event has been scheduled for Sunday, March 1 at 2 PM. She would like to have as many trustees as possible present to help greet guests.

Julia Cornick has been promoted to Youth Librarian and Social Media Coordinator. She has put her recently acquired MLIS degree to use adding additional professional responsibilities as well as taking on the role of coordinating the library's social media presence.

A trustee asked about the impact of Baker and Taylor's bankruptcy on the library's book ordering as the havoc it has caused to many libraries was recently covered by the media. Fortunately, Forbes was not a customer of B&T but its primary competitor, Ingram. There have been some delays over the past few months as B&T customers have flocked to Ingram. Ingram is working hard to grow capacity, and it is already starting to improve.

Another trustee pointed out an article in the Gazette warning of federal cuts to Northampton and Amherst because of their sanctuary status. It doesn't

Administrative Report (continued)

appear that any details are yet known and the situation will continue to be monitored.

The annual call for artist submissions to show in the Hosmer Gallery is open now through the end of February for shows beginning in August. Trustees should feel free to help spread the word among their networks.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC)'s Legislative Agenda for FY27 has come out and the tagline is "It all starts at the library." They are asking for a 3% increase to 6 of the 7 library-related lines in the state budget and a 5% increase for State Aid to Public Libraries. Trustees should reach out to Senator Comerford and Representative Sabadosa to let them know that they would like them to prioritize library funding in the upcoming budget year and fund according to the legislative agenda.

Molly Moss was up at the front of the room representing CWMARS in her role as Treasurer this month and again for the opening of the Shutesbury Public Library, a project that is near and dear to her heart, and one that she worked very hard on through the building committee. Congratulations, Shutesbury!

Lisa Downing said that she and the Director of Lilly Library have been asked to present to the City Council on the role and activities of the library at a future meeting.

Ruth Francis moved that the Administrative Report be accepted and placed on file. Shelly Ruocco seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Communications

Forbes Library received a letter dated December 17, 2025 from the Northampton Survival Center thanking Forbes for the recent donation of \$328 from the annual holiday sing-along.

Forbes received an email on January 12 from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) announcing the state aid awards. Northampton will receive a total of \$51,618.86 to be split between Forbes (80%) and Lilly Library (20%) in two payments.

Discussion Topic: Trustee Committees

Lisa Downing said that after each trustee election, committee assignments are reviewed. Katy Wight asked the chairs to give a brief overview of their committee, recent accomplishments, and what they anticipate will be important projects or goals of the committee this year. She said the library had sought advice from their lawyers who said that in accordance with the will of Judge Forbes, the "core" committees of Finance, Personnel, and Buildings & Grounds should consist of only trustees and library staff members, although they are free to bring in advisors or have community members on sub-committees. Since these are the "core" functions of the trustees, they should be performed by elected trustees. The Ad Hoc Art Selection Committee, Development Committee and Coolidge Standing Committee can include community members since they are not "core" functions. She said that any committee can have no more than 3 trustees to comply with open meeting laws. The Racial and Social Justice Advisory Group has only 2.

Discussion Topic: Trustee Committees (continued)

Each chair then described the work of the committee they chair. Katy Wight said that Debin Bruce had been chairing Buildings & Grounds. She said they meet about once a month, sometimes more often if a project requires it. Meetings include old business and review of active projects. There is a spreadsheet in Google Drive with completed, current, and future projects listed. Some projects are funded by the library, while others are financed by the city. The committee works with Central Services, CAPA, and the DPW.

Rebekah Anderson said the Development Committee is primarily involved in fundraising. They partner with the Friends of Forbes and the Coolidge Standing Committee. They are responsible for the library's two main yearly fundraising events, the annual appeal and Library Giving Day. They also help plan the Volunteer/Donor event in March. They meet approximately every other month.

Ruth Francis said that the Finance Committee is a new committee that meets once a month for about an hour to an hour and a half. They are a very busy committee, and recent accomplishments include the transition to QuickBooks online. They brought on Doug Wheat as Treasurer. They have broad oversight of the library's budget which is prepared by Lisa Downing and Molly Moss. They also work on policies and procedures such as the gifting policy and procedure for collecting the coins from the parking meters. When money comes in they make recommendations about how it should be allocated and where it should go. A primary goal is preserving the library's financial independence. Upcoming projects include a review of the library's insurance policies and premiums. They will also be developing training for the trustees on the library's finances.

Shelly Ruocco said that the Personnel Committee meets about once a month. Projects include the Director's bi-annual evaluation, reviewing library policies and updating language, and reviewing job descriptions for open positions. Recent and upcoming projects include the Classification & Compensation Study, negotiations with FLEA on a new 3-year contract, and working on creating an annual schedule or timeline of events that happen over the course of the year.

Anne Teschner said that the Racial and Social Justice Advisory Group has gone through a shift over the last year going back to its roots. They have a community member and staff member as co-chairs and meet 3 or 4 times a year. Adrienne Andrews is the current co-chair. Their primary work involves identifying or soliciting input from the community, especially from youth, addressing issues that come up from the trustees, and giving input on the use of the new performance stage.

Katy Wight said that the Coolidge Standing Committee can have up to 17 members and includes people from the community. It is a mix of people interested in Coolidge and includes community members, trustees, Friends of Forbes, and Archivist Julie Nelson. They've been meeting about once a month, 11 times this year. They have sub-committees including Exhibits, Development, Strategic Planning, Programming, Marketing, and Nominating. Their big project right now is the Coolidge renovation and exhibit redesign, and finding the money to do it. There is a lot of opportunity to have a voice in what it will look like.

Discussion Topic: Trustee Committees (continued)

In response to a question from Fred Kass, Katy Wight said that the Coolidge Committee typically meets on the first Monday of the month at 5:00 PM. The Racial and Social Justice Advisory Group is meeting on a Monday afternoon in April and September and those dates have been set. Ruth Francis said the Finance Committee has been meeting on Wednesdays at 11:00 AM, but has some flexibility. Katy Wight said the Personnel and Buildings & Grounds committees are flexible as to meeting dates and times.

Molly Moss will send out a form to the trustees after this meeting asking them to rank their committee assignment choices. Shelly Ruocco asked that trustees complete the form within a week. The Personnel Committee is meeting on February 3 and will review the votes along with the current needs of the committees. They will do their best to match trustees with committee assignments for the next 2 years. Trustees can begin attending meetings as soon as they receive their assignments.

Review Prior Year's Trustee Goals

Lisa Downing distributed a list of the prior year trustees' goals and their status. She said that significant progress has been made on both the trustees' goals and the strategic action plan. Goals are set for the calendar year for all committees except the Finance Committee which are set on the fiscal year.

The 2025 trustees' goals include ongoing goals: publicly supporting legislation that protects intellectual freedom and library employees, seeking opportunities to serve as an ambassador for the library and advocating for the library's needs, and increasing outreach to the downtown business community about library resources. Finance Committee goals include: complete the transition to the new budget structure, complete the FY23 and FY24 audits, clarify the library's relationship and expectations with Bartholomew Inc., and ongoing monitoring of investments. Development Committee goals include: produce a reliable stream of fundraising dollars per year to support the library's operating budget, readiness for increased solicitation for major gifts and planned gifts, donor appreciation and retention, and review and revise goals annually. Personnel Committee goals include: complete independent Classification and Compensation Strategy and devise an implementation plan once complete, begin negotiating a new contract with the Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA), create rolling calendar of activities for Personnel Committee. Racial and Social Justice Advisory Group goals include: review the advisory group charge, provide input to library boards, committees and projects, and support the work of the Northampton Reparations Committee. Coolidge Standing Committee goals include: support the renovation, collections, and programming work of the Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum, and assist the Marketing & Outreach subcommittee with advocacy with elected officials and tourism agencies. The Building and Grounds Committee goals include: add an accessible performance stage to the west lawn, advocate for improved links to existing and planned bike infrastructure in the city to the library, renovate the young adult room, add a youth programming room, and update the HVAC system that supports the ground level.

Lisa Downing invited the trustees to review their goals and develop an updated list for 2026 in consultation with the committees they are serving on that can be approved at an upcoming meeting.

Trustee Resources

Lisa Downing gave an annual reminder that there is a resource page for trustees at <https://sites.google.com/forbeslibrary.org/trusteeresources>. The page has been reworked into a google site and is maintained with the help of Adult Services Librarian, Robin Williams. In addition, there is a "Trustee Resources" google drive with folders for current and past meetings, trustee committees, and other documents that has been shared with the trustees. This has been a working drive for Lisa Downing and Molly Moss for years that has been reorganized before sharing. Trustees should let Lisa or Molly know if they would like a tour or have any questions. The City Solicitor, Alan Seewald, gave a presentation to the City Council about the Open Meeting Law. It might be helpful to watch the 30-minute section of the recording (minute 50:00 to 1:22:00) as a refresher. Lastly, forbeslibrary.org email addresses are being offered to the trustees. They recommend that trustees start using them right away so that it is separate from their personal or work emails. Molly Moss will be sending each of the trustees an email with a temporary password. This is the email that the google drive will be shared with. Please let her know if you have any questions. If you are unfamiliar with Google drive, etc. you can schedule an appointment for tech help with one of the librarians or come in during Drop-in Tech Help with volunteers.

Building Projects Updates

Lisa Downing reported that there has been exciting progress on the youth programming room this month with the installation of the cabinets, sinks, and countertops. It is anticipated that the lighting will be installed soon. There are discussions about the timing of the rest of the HVAC equipment in hopes that the project can be kept on schedule and reduce impacts to heating and cooling as we move through the seasons. She said that energy costs are likely to be higher this winter due to the use of a temporary heating coil.

Lisa Downing said the library is purchasing new chairs and tables for the youth programming room and community room funded through donors. The olds one will be utilized in the new performance stage. The invoice will be about \$16,000 and require two signatures.

Resolution Recognizing Russell Carrier

Lisa Downing reported that Russell Carrier has received state recognition for his outstanding record of service as a Trustee of Forbes Library in the form of a joint proclamation from Senator Jo Comerford and Representative Lindsey Sabadosa. The board is so proud and pleased that he has received this formal recognition!

Reports from Subcommittees and Other Meetings

Friends of Forbes - Ruth Francis attended the January 7 meeting of the Friends of Forbes and reported that after a summary of the December trustee meeting, the Friends of Forbes treasurer provided a comprehensive overview of their finances. Ending balance of the endowment was \$669,852. Income from the artisan fair was \$10,004 and the garden tour brought in \$21,540. Net income from the events was \$23,793. Scott Monroe provided an update from the Friend's finance committee. The Finance Committee needs a broader policy for the endowment in relation to managing funds and emergency funds. They wish to reduce the disbursements from the endowment by \$10k for the next two years. Additionally, they suggested that there be no further approval of requests until the policy is in place. Suzy Campos will join the Finance Committee. The Friends are trying to come up with another fundraiser that doesn't

Reports from Subcommittees and Other Meetings (continued)

require a lot of work and will move forward with bingo. In prior meetings, an ask went out for help with the garden tour. Again, the garden tour committee is looking for more people to join. Claudia Leftko has been asked if she would present her film at the upcoming Friends of Forbes annual meeting. There was general discussion on Google Drive access and committee assignments. Lori Mathews will attend the January trustee meeting.

Art Selection Committee - Katy Wight reported that the committee is making a recommendation after a robust response by muralists and thorough discussion.

Building and Grounds Committee - The next meeting of the Building and Grounds Committee is to be determined.

Coolidge Standing Committee - Katy Wight reported that the standing committee is supporting the development of a strategic plan for the museum with consultant Sarah Tanner. They hope to have it completed by late spring. PeoplesBank is the first to respond to a sponsorship request for the museum redesign. Several other banks have been approached. An online day of giving is being planned for March 4.

Development Committee - Rebekah Anderson reported that their next meeting is scheduled for February 12 at 4:30 PM.

Finance Committee - Ruth Francis reported that the Finance Committee met on January 15. In reviewing the cost to implement the new compensation and classification plan, the budget would increase by \$72,000. The timing of city budget negotiations is uncertain with the new city council. FLEA union negotiations are beginning soon for a new three-year contract cycle. The FY23 audit is complete, and the Finance Committee has received a draft of the FY24 audit to review. They intend to meet with the auditor to discuss their findings. At this time, the Finance Committee will ask the auditor to discuss the pros/cons of capitalizing the circulating materials as it is currently expensed. They have begun reviewing the insurance coverage for Forbes and requested that the agent seek quotes from other carriers for comparison. They approved \$80K to be sent to the money market account at Bartholomew & Co. from Florence Bank. The Finance Committee will meet to review and discuss the requested fee increase for Jo Lander's services. The next committee meeting will be in person as Bartholomew & Co. is presenting on February 11 at 11:00 AM. The March meeting has been scheduled for the 11th at 11:00 AM.

Personnel Committee - Shelly Ruocco reported that they discussed the Lucentini legal opinion regarding non-trustees sitting on committees, details which were discussed previously at this meeting. After reviewing committee descriptions and responsibilities, including how to prepare monthly summaries, they made minor revisions to the trustee committee assignment form. The form must be returned by 1 week after the January trustee meeting after which the Personnel Committee will make assignments, at which point trustees can begin attending their assigned committees. They then discussed strategies for meeting with the city to request funding for staff salary increases based on the compensation study. After Shelly Ruocco, Lisa Downing and Molly Moss have preliminary FLEA contract discussions, plans will be solidified at the next Personnel Committee meeting.

Reports from Subcommittees and Other Meetings (continued)

Racial and Social Justice Advisory Group - Anne Teschner reported that they met on January 12. The group elected longtime member Adrienne Andrews to Co-Chair. Lisa Downing and Adrienne Andrews appointed Gaurav Jashnani as a member. Gaurav Jashnani (he/they) is a committed educator and lifelong activist. As a professor at Hampshire College, his scholarship examines institutional violence, social change, and experiences of harm and healing, particularly in education and policing. His work draws on his experiences of student and community organizing, somatic training and practice, and a wide range of educational work. In addition to research and teaching, Gaurav is a writer, therapist, public and special education advocate, and co-founder of the Challenging Male Supremacy Project (challengingmalesupremacy.org). The group reviewed a draft revision of the Meeting and Grounds Use policy that will be brought forward to the trustees soon. They also brainstormed topics for the April and September meetings. Ann Teschner said that Lolán Sevilla (they/them) has been a member of the group for some time and was encouraged to run for trustee, which they did and won! Congratulations to Lolán!

Other Business

There was no other business.

At 6:07 PM Shelly Rupcco moved to adjourn the meeting. Ruth Francis seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 PM.