

PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of Meeting

February 2, 2024

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The meeting was called to order by President Kate O'Brien at 6:46pm, with quorum having been reached by 6:46pm. The meeting was held on Zoom and broadcast live on PATV's television station.

The roll call was taken:

**Present**

Ruth Titelbaum  
Jennifer Smith  
Stephanie Najjar  
Peter Bakula  
Stacie Dolin  
Richard Shruhan  
Frances Gallugi  
Stephanie Dallaire  
Kate O'Brien

**Absent**

Katrina Vassallo  
Anne Quinn

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**Public Comments**

None.

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**Approval and Discussion of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

The minutes are not yet available for the past few month's meetings. Once available there will be a motion to approve for past months not yet approved. Dorothy Louisos is present to record the meeting minutes on a trial basis.

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**Receipt of Communications**

All the library trustees voted in this year received a letter from the state. A letter was received regarding the paintings being hung in the West Branch from the family who donated the paintings.

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## **Acting Director's Report**

### **Staffing**

The job posting for Library Director ended on January 12th. Human Resources Director, Beth O'Donnell collected applications and coordinated 4 interviews. My thanks to the Board and the hiring committee for graciously including me and accepting my feedback and opinions.

We have filled 3 of the 4 open Aide positions, all of whom are beginning their training this week. I would like to welcome to the staff, Emily Cooper, Chidi Ojiaku, and Joshua Trelegan and look forward to their contributions to our great staff. Interviews are underway for the last open Aide position and I hope to fill that position soon.

Human Resources has been working with the Custodian's union to post the vacant Library Custodian position. We hope to give our current, excellent custodian Sean Meagher some help in the near future. In the meantime, Sean has been doing excellent work on behalf of the Library.

### **Budget**

Acting Director Hayden included the current budget for your review.

### **Programs & Initiatives**

At the Main Library:

Senior Technical Librarian Yunan Guo is in charge of the English Language Circles program and will be adding 2 more sessions to our current 3. The program now also has a dedicated laptop and TV in the room used for the in-person Conversation Circles.

Senior Children's Librarian Jenny Usovicz has been doing outreach at the elementary schools. At the McCarthy school she gave a presentation about the library and upcoming Children's programs to three grade levels. At the Carroll school she did a story time and craft with a second grade class. At both outreach sessions she signed up all grades at the school for library cards. She received a Peabody Cultural Council Grant to run an Accessible Art Club and has lined up three painting programs with Cape Ann Art Haven. The first one will be a Northern Lights Glow Painting class that is available to kids and teens. Upcoming Children's programs include: Little Groove: Baby Wiggle and CFCE Music and Movement, Family Lego Fun, Thursday Drop in Crafts, a Bug Petting Zoo coming with Professor Bugman, Saturday Creative Movement class with our Aide Veronica, and Make a Hot Cocoa Jar activity with our new Children's/Teen Assistant Librarian Neph. Also upcoming is a pilot program: drop-in Homeschool Hangout for Homeschooling families to meet each other and do a craft activity together.

Senior Teen Librarian Amory Thomas has been managing a busy teen room. A donated Wii video game system was added to gauge interest in adding video games to the collection and has been used every day since its installation. Upcoming programs include: Terrarium making, Paint pouring activities, and a month long Read-a-Thon, Slime Making, Cookie Tasting, and a Teen Checkout Contest with the Peabody Institute Library of Danvers. Amory has been doing regular school visits to the local middle school and high schools, and plans on setting up a lending

system with the Peabody Veterans Memorial High School, similar to what she had established for the Brooksby Village Senior Living Facility with the West Branch Library. Amory is also quick to commend the new Teen/Children's Assistant Librarian, Neph as an excellent asset and resource for the Teen Room.

At the South Branch:

The Urban Planning for Kids program presented by UMASS graduate student Calvin Anton was very well-attended and featured on the front page of the Peabody Weekly. The South Branch will also begin hosting two monthly programs for senior citizens. The Game Group for Seniors will be a meetup for patrons interested in playing board and card games together, and LEGO for Seniors will allow patrons to get in touch with their inner child and build LEGO creations.

At the West Branch:

The Teen area will be getting 3 new gaming computers by the end of this month.

### **Building & Grounds**

Facilities Director Jim Hafey has approved moving forward with installing a U Channel Filter Rack on the HVAC units at the South Branch. He has requested a timeline and the project should begin as soon as that timeline has been provided by Limbach.

### **Long Range Planning**

Acting Director Hayden included an outline for your review.

### **George Peabody's Birthday**

Acting Director Hayden included an outline for your review.

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There was a MOTION to approve the Acting Director's report by Trustee Shruhan. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gallugi.

All in Favor: Yes      Any Opposed: No

No discussion. The motion was carried unanimously.

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### **Reports of the Committees and Sub-committees**

**Audubon:** Nothing to report.

**Building and Grounds:** Nothing to report.

**Personnel:** The director search will be discussed later in the meeting.

**Policy and Procedures:** Trustee Vassallo is not present.

### **Liaison to the Peabody Institute Library Foundation:**

Trustee Najjar stated that during a meeting last week an update was given about the "Birds and Bubbly" event. Trustee Quinn has secured Drumlin Farms to have live owls/birds of prey. There are no details yet on how many birds they will be bringing. The theme for this year is "Birds of Prey". Trustee Najjar is very excited to have the live birds as part of the event. They are hoping

to get sponsors for the event. If there are any friends, businesses, or family members who would like to sponsor the library, Trustee Najjar has stated that you will be getting a sponsor letter very soon that can be shared. The date of the event is Friday April 26, 2024. Tickets will be sold via a QR code on the website and any forms we send out so that people can use Venmo for their tickets and make it seamless as far as ticket purchases go.

The geranium sale will take place on Saturday May 11, 2024, which is the day before Mother's Day.

**Liaison to the Peabody Historical Society:** Trustee Quinn is not present.

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There was a MOTION to accept the reports of the committees and subcommittees by Trustee Gallugi. The motion was seconded by Trustee Dallaire.

All in Favor: Yes            Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

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### **New Business**

President O'Brien brought up George Peabody's birthday which will be discussed under Unfinished Business. She stated that if anyone has any questions, concerns, or wants to be more involved with long-range planning that Acting Director Hayden would be the point of contact. President O'Brien confirmed with Acting Director Hayden that there was nothing that she discussed earlier that needed to be put to a vote.

### **Unfinished Business:**

#### **Director Interviews**

President O'Brien stated that they ended up with 8 applicants for the director position and interviewed 4 candidates last Monday in the first round of interviews. The interviews were attended by President O'Brien, Trustee Shruhan, Trustee Titelbaum, Trustee Gallugi, Trustee Quinn, and Beth from HR. There are two candidates being presented to the whole board. President O'Brien proposed two dates for consideration for second interviews, Monday February 12, and Thursday February 15. These would be in person, hopefully in the Sutton room. Trustee Shruhan, Trustee Dolin, and Trustee Najjar voiced a preference for Thursday. President O'Brien will coordinate with Beth to see if the candidates are available. The interviews are open meeting, followed by an executive meeting to discuss, and the vote will be during open meeting. Once the interviews have been scheduled President O'Brien will send out the resumes and information about the two candidates so that there is opportunity to review them prior. Send her any questions that you want to make sure are asked so that we can do so in an organized fashion. Trustee Shruhan reiterated that the interviews will be attended by an HR representative to keep everything above board and commended President O'Brien and Beth on keeping the interviews to 45 minutes per candidate with a 15-minute discussion following. He stated that folks should plan for the interviews to take two hours. President O'Brien agreed that yes, it will be about two hours because there will be the interviews followed by wanting plenty of time to discuss, and then go back to open meeting for a vote. It will be a role call vote. President O'Brien will touch base with Dorothy because they will need a recording secretary. Trustee Najjar expressed being

impressed with how quickly this process is moving along because everyone wants this to happen as quickly as possible. President O'Brien expressed wanting this complete in time for the budget and for Acting Director Hayden's benefit. Trustee Titelbaum asked if the interviews could occur later than 5pm. President O'Brien asked if 6pm is more reasonable for people. Six worked for all concerned. President O'Brien elaborated that Acting Director Hayden and Beth will be there, and that this is an open meeting, followed by an executive session, then return to open meeting. Trustee Gallugi asked to confirm that the executive session would be just the trustees, which was confirmed by President O'Brien, who will touch base with Beth about scheduling the two candidates and then notify all by email. There were no further questions or comments.

### **George Peabody's Birthday:**

President O'Brien has discussed Acting Director Hayden's plan with her previously and thinks it is great. In the past there had been a Saturday cake and coffee, which was often attended by mostly trustees, so they had started trying to combine it with other events.

In the past trustees have purchased a wreath which has been placed in various places. She would like to propose that this be done this year as well, mentioning that there is still money in the line item. She would also like to see the wreath displayed at the library, with the "Happy Birthday" ribbon, and that the wreath is from the trustees. Trustee Najjar agrees with President O'Brien and would like to see that happen. The wreath used to be placed on an easel just inside the main entrance of the main branch so that people could see it. This year George Peabody will be 229, and Trustee Najjar voiced that it would be nice to say that on the ribbon. President O'Brien believes that Evan's is the florist that has been used in the past and stated that "we can take care of that". Where it is displayed is at the discretion of the trustees. Trustee Najjar stated that wherever it is placed is fine with them. Acting Director Hayden said that it could be placed behind the information table so that people can see it right as they walk into the library or the alternative would be to put it in front of the queen. Acting Director Hayden is happy to take trustees opinions on this.

Trustee Najjar brought up that if George Peabody is turning 230 next year that it would be nice to do something of a gathering. In the past elected officials have been supportive of that type of thing and they like coming. It would be nice to think about this over the next few months and brainstorm ideas. President O'Brien noted that this has been best when it is in conjunction with other events taking place at the library and could be playful about this. Trustee Dallaire echoed Trustee Najjar's sentiment about doing something special for the 230<sup>th</sup> birthday. Even if it isn't with other departments or attached to another event, she thinks a fundraiser for the library similar to "Starry Starry Night" should be considered, like a gala. It could be tied into February and Valentine's Day. A fundraiser for the library, but also an acknowledgement of 230 years. President O'Brien liked the idea and added that they could partner with the foundation. Trustee Dolin brought up that this is also the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the library building opening as well which could be factored in to planning.

Trustee Titelbaum has noticed that the list of trustees on the website has not been updated. President O'Brien responded that she has emailed IT and they do have the information. Acting Director Hayden asked which website Trustee Titelbaum is referring to, the city's website or the library's website. Trustee Titelbaum responded that is the library website requiring an update. Acting Director Hayden is able to update this information. It had fallen off her radar, but she will be able to update this.

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The next meeting will be held on March 5, 2023, at 6:30pm. A decision will be made as the date get closer as to whether this meeting will be held in person or a Zoom meeting.

There was a MOTION to adjourn the meeting by Trustee Gallugi. The motion was seconded by Trustee Najjar.

All in Favor: Yes      Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

Submitted by,  
Dorothy Louisos  
Trial Recording Secretary