

PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of Meeting

March 4, 2025

The meeting was called to order by President Kate O'Brien at 6:30 pm, with quorum having been reached by 6:30 pm.

The roll call was taken:

Present

Ruth Titelbaum
Jennifer Smith
Stephanie Najjar
Katrina Vassallo
Peter Bakula
Anne Quinn
Frances Gallugi
Stacie Dolin
Kate O'Brien

Absent

Stephanie Dallaire
Richard Shruhan

Public Comments

None.

Approval and Discussion of Minutes from Previous Meetings

There was a MOTION to approve the minutes of the previous meeting by Trustee Gallugi. The motion was seconded by Trustee Najjar.
All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

Receipt of Communications

No new communications.

Director's Report

Staffing

Olivia Grabowski accepted our last vacant Library Aide position and begins training on Monday, March 10th.

After 21 years at the Peabody Institute Libraries, Pam Shachook is retiring at the end of the month. Pam began working part-time at the Main Library in 2004 and was promoted to the full-time Assistant Branch Librarian position at both the South and West Branches in 2006. Once both branches required a full-time Assistant Librarian in 2014, Pam dedicated six more years to the West Branch Library before accepting the position as the Technical Services Librarian at the Main Library in 2020. Pam will be greatly missed among staff and patrons, and we wish her the best on her next chapter.

Budget

I have included the budget for your review. I ask that the Trustees approve the amount of \$5,000 be paid to Advantage Archives from the Brattle Books Trust to cover the cost of the first 25 digitized microfilm reels.

Building & Maintenance

LAND Computer began working on the new security system upgrade yesterday, March 3rd. They are already more than halfway done with installing the new cameras.

Programs and Initiatives

PeaPod, the Peabody Library's seed exchange program, launched on Saturday, March 1st at all three library locations. While this program usually begins on the first day of spring, patrons requested seeds be available earlier to give slow-growing vegetables time to mature. We were happy to meet that request!

Please mark your calendars for this year's George Peabody Medal Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, May 27th from 7-8pm in the Sutton Room. As in years past, Peabody High School's Full House A Cappella ensemble will kick off the event.

The library's long range plan is well underway with surveys in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Albanian live on the library's website. I am in the process of scheduling focus groups for community member input at all three libraries for April.

Children's Department

Senior Children's Librarian Meeghan Bresnahan has been busy with elementary school visits. She reports that Children's Yoga, Thursday Night Drop-In Crafts, and the movie night were well-attended, and she looks forward to March's programs of Coconut Brazilian Fudge Making, Carnival Celebration, Spring Bingo, and another movie presentation. Meeghan recently updated the Children's Department webpage on the library's website, adding resources for caregivers on how to discuss hard topics with children, including Ableism, Anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia.

Public Services Department

The Public Services Department has been busy with tax season and an increased number of patrons using the printer, copier, and scanner. Public Services Librarian Eileen Finnegan and

Senior Technical Services Librarian Yunan Guo created a Citizenship Study Group that had its first session on Monday, February 24th. The group will continue to meet weekly on Mondays until May 19th. Eileen has also started a Classic Sci-Fi Film Series with viewings on one Sunday per month.

Senior Adult Services and Programming Librarian Gabi Toth reports that the monthly Craft & Chat program has become very popular among patrons. March's craft is mini bookcase making with Altoid tins. The Spring Concert Series kicked off with Stephanie James and continues with Susan Hagen and friends of Trio Nordica on March 10th. Theo Theoharis begins his next lecture series on March 19th with Holocaust literature.

Creativity Lab

Creativity Lab Librarian Justin Allain begins his Lure Making Series again this year with lures to catch early season squid. He is creating a curriculum for Adobe Suite classes and is working on the adult take home craft for next month. Justin is finishing a Creativity Lab 2.0 strategic plan to begin ordering new equipment. This includes a list of local business foundations with quick response times and a comprehensive list of all pieces of equipment, vendors, and materials needed. The plan will also include a potential program for local businesses to sponsor one of six workbenches needed.

Local History

Senior Local History Librarian Catherine Badal began hosting weekly drop-in hours in the Sutton Room on Thursdays from 1-4pm. Attendance is steady at 1-2 patrons each week. The range of interest includes the history of the room, the art collection, the new genealogy periodicals, and requesting to see specific books in the collections.

South Branch

Senior South Branch Librarian Amy Titus and Senior Children's Librarian Meeghan Bresnahan will attend the South Memorial Elementary School's annual Literacy Night on Thursday, March 20th. Students will be able to sign up for library cards, learn about programs, and check out books. A community puzzle share will take place at the South Branch on Saturday, March 29th. Patrons can bring in unwanted puzzles in good condition to exchange with each other.

West Branch

The West Branch continues with AARP Tax Filing Assistance on Wednesdays until April 9th. On Tuesday, March 18th, the West Branch will be hosting a Stovetop Potpourri Jar program for attendees to customize their scent with a variety of herbs, spices, and fruits. For children, toddler sensory bins, storytimes, and crafts continue throughout the month.

There was a MOTION to accept the Director's report by Trustee Gallugi. The motion was seconded by Trustee Titelbaum

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

Reports of the Committees and Sub-committees

Audubon: Nothing to report.

Building and Grounds: Trustee Shruhan was not present.

Personnel: Nothing to report.

Policy and Procedures: Nothing to report.

Liaison to the Peabody Institute Library Foundation: Trustee Najjar reported that they are moving along with “Birds and Bubbly”. The meeting is scheduled for next week, and PR needs to go out within next two weeks. The flyer will be shared. Please post on your social media if you have it. The date of the event is Friday, May 9, and the theme is “backyard birds”. Drumlin Farm will bring bird species to compliment the theme and to coordinate with the prints. Director Yeo added that they have obtained an outside banner now for use every year. The dates can be changed and added, since they are a vinyl cutting added on to the existing banner.

Liaison to the Peabody Historical Society: Nothing to report.

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

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

New Business

There was a MOTION to close all three libraries on Monday, March 10 between 9am and 1pm by Trustee Quinn. The motion was seconded by Trustee Dolin.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

There was a MOTION to pay \$5000 to Advantage Archives from the Brattle Books Trust to cover the cost of the first 25 digitized microfilm reels by Trustee Gallugi. The motion was seconded by Trustee Titelbaum.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

A new recording secretary will be starting next month.

Trustee Quinn expressed the desire for the Peabody Graduation Program to have a designation showing the recipients of the George Peabody medals. Director Yeo Said that she can issue a press release afterwards naming the recipients. Trustee Bakula stated that outside awards don't have their own designations in the program.

Director Yeo also mentioned that the booklet is getting too large. It dates to the 1800s. Trustee Najjar suggested keeping a bound version. President O'Brien suggested that the booklet could list the last 25 years, and an archive list be housed on the library website.

Unfinished Business

Trustee Dolin recently spoke to the mayor, who said that there is an item in the budget to fix the roof. Director Yeo reported that ice and leaves have been cleared out, and they are looking at assessing damage.

Trustee Bakula asked if we know how old the libraries are and if we celebrate their birthdays. It was determined that this is not currently known or celebrated.

Director Yeo said that the budget request is due at the end of this month, and that the phone services are the biggest request.

Conversation took place around appraisals. This is something that Director Yeo will begin looking into this year and next. She began to look through some of the older emails about this and spoke about it at the last foundation meeting.

The next meeting will be held on April 1, 2025, at 6:30pm in the Trustees Room.

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

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

Submitted by,
Dorothy Louisos
Recording Secretary