

PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of Meeting

November 12, 2024

The meeting was called to order by President Kate O'Brien at 6:32pm, with quorum having been reached by 6:30pm.

The roll call was taken:

Present

Ruth Titelbaum
Katrina Vassallo
Peter Bakula
Anne Quinn
Stacie Dolin
Richard Shruhan
Frances Gallugi
Stephanie Dallaire
Kate O'Brien

Absent

Jennifer Smith
Stephanie Najjar

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 Dallaire.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

Receipt of Communications

No new communications.

Interim Director's Report

Staffing

I have held interviews for library aides. I hired James DiVasta and Thomas Rutigliano as library aides, they both started on October 15th. I also sent an offer letter to a library aide applicant for the remaining library aide position. Meeghan Bresnahan, one of our library aides, has accepted the position of Senior Children's Librarian; her first day is November 12th. Senior West Branch Librarian Alex Pappas and I have conducted interviews for the position of West Branch Assistant Librarian and I sent an offer today for that position to an internal candidate.

Budget

I have included the budget for your review.

Building & Maintenance

Limbach came again in September to service the HVAC and restored the HVAC system.

Programs and Initiatives

Assistant Director

I submitted our financial report due to the state department on October 4th which will determine our state aid amount awarded in December. I met with Robert Skinnion from UMASS Lowell about a digital equity partnership. I applied on behalf of the main library and they have agreed to supply the library with up to \$15,000 in improvements to the library technology space. I also encouraged the branch libraries to apply as they can apply as separate facilities. I approached Senior Local History Librarian Catherine Badal about updating the local history displays and she will be working on those over the winter with some of our archival materials.

Tech Services Department

Senior Technology Librarian Yunan Guo interviewed volunteers and students during the summer break for the English Conversation Circles which resumed in the fall. Yunan purchased 4 PCs to replace staff computers at the public services desk. She also met with Robert Skinnion from UMASS Lowell about the Digital Equity Partnership and has begun a wishlist of materials she would like them to purchase to improve the library technology space.

Adult Services Department

Program updates include: Dance Caliente came for an interactive ballroom dance performance, 13 patrons participated. Senior Adult Services Librarian Gabi Toth has started weeding the non-fiction section and has updated the library of things with new board games. She is looking to offer a series of knitting lessons and set up the spring concert series in the future.

Public Service Department

Eileen Finnegan has settled into the new role of full time Public Service Librarian. Senior Public Service Desk Librarian Max has begun offering evening Tech Help hours on Thursday nights.

Max has attended a meeting with the Peabody Commission on Disability and hopes to develop a relationship with them to improve the accessibility of library services. We also recently conducted a system-wide reference transaction and delivery service assessment to collect statistics for the library's next Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS).

Teen Department

Senior Teen Librarian Amory is back from her parental leave, and has hit the ground running with programming and events. She received a grant for \$5,000 from the Massachusetts Literary Initiative for Teens and Tweens (or the LITT grant). She used some of this grant to order two new half shelf bookcases for the Graphic Novels collection. Upcoming programs include movie nights, volunteer hours, and art classes hosted by Bruce Orr with Inkwell, which have been well attended. Bruce plans on working with us to create a mural in the stairwell outside the Teen Room, similar to the one outside the Children's Room below in the near future.

Children's Department

Pop Up Art School visited the library for four art programs in September and October. This is part of the accessible art club funded by the Peabody Cultural Council. I participated in our Book or Treat event during the Nightmare on Main Street event and gave out over 200 books to children in the community. The senior Children's librarian Meeghan Bresnahan had her first day today. Children's librarian Katia Pascoal has taken a training course on Baby Yoga and will be getting a certificate to teach Baby Yoga at the library.

Creativity Lab

Creativity Lab Librarian Justin Allain is continuing Open Labs for the coming months. His P&G grant was not accepted, but he is working on a federal grant for informal STEM learning that includes maker spaces. PAT has been filming the InkWell afterschool art classes and will interview Bruce and Justin about the collaboration. Bruce intends to continue to do it next year. Justin is hosting the School for the Deaf, making wooden snowflakes and is in talks with Northeast Arc to do something similar. He has also been working on adult take home crafts which will include 3D printed embroidery hoops to embroider our logo, 3D puzzles, and collage art.

South Branch

The South Branch Library is hosting two adult programs in November; Introduction to Medicare presented by the SHINE organization, and a needle felting program presented by Pop Up Art School. All four third grade classes at the South Memorial Elementary School received library cards and a tour of the library at the beginning of the school year, and have been visiting regularly with their teachers to check out books.

Senior South Branch Librarian Amy Titus has begun planning for the Winter Holiday Art Fair, scheduled to take place on Saturday, November 30th from 11AM to 4PM. The vendor sign up form is full with 20 vendors signed up to participate and there will be free take-home craft kits available for children.

West Branch

Upcoming programs at the west include a Winter Balance Bootcamp, pie garlands, registration is full for both. The October fiction book group had 16 attendees and November fiction had 17. TACO on Thursdays has had a high turn out. Adult Yoga with Jacqui Orphanos has had 10-15 people each class.

The West Branch Children's Librarian, Aimee Servideo has planned a dino-excavation program and dino-vember tea party.

Trustee Titelbaum asked about the Digital Equity Partnership. Interim Director Usovicz explained that this is a grant that reached out to the library based on demographic. They have worked with other libraries as well. The grant is for physical technology to improve the space by providing items like printers, laptops, and Chromebooks.

Trustee Shruhan asked about the wages line of the 2024-2025 expenditures in the budget. Interim Director Usovicz will investigate this item and report back.

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

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: The outside lights at the west branch have been fixed.

Personnel: Nothing to report.

Policy and Procedures: Nothing to report.

Liaison to the Peabody Institute Library Foundation: Trustee Najjar is not present.

Liaison to the Peabody Historical Society: The Historical Society is holding a Crafts Fair and Apple Bake Sale on Saturday, November 23rd featuring homemade apple based baked items using apples from Brooksby Farm. There is a \$5 admission fee. On Sunday, December 8th the garden club will be decorating the Felton house and the Firehouse Museum, for an open house from 1-4pm.

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

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No
The motion was carried unanimously.

Unfinished Business

Trustee Holiday

In the previous meeting a motion for a Trustees Holiday on December 24th and 26th did not pass. President O'Brien spoke to Director Yeo and the mayor. City Hall will be open 9am to 1pm on the 24th. It was noted that the staffing will be tight on, and that the vacation time was approved prior to Director Yeo and Interim Director Usovicz taking over.

Trustee Dolin asked if the following week is covered for New Year's Eve, which it is. During the week of New Year's Eve the library will follow City Hall's hours.

Discussion occurred regarding how busy the library would be on the 26th, as well as whether these days would be taken as time off or if this would be a holiday. Interim Director Usovicz stated that if there is a Trustee Holiday that the staff would get holiday pay. It was noted that on December 26th a single employee calling out would necessitate a branch closure.

There was a MOTION to be open from 9am to 1 pm on December 24th and to close completely on December 26th by Trustee Dallaire. The motion was seconded by Trustee Shruhan.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

A vote was taken, and the motion was carried unanimously.

December Trustee Meeting

Director Yeo will return on November 25th and will be present at the December Trustees meeting. It was noted that typically the December meeting is held outside of the library and would be for dinner. President O'Brien will make a reservation and alert folks who were not present at the November Trustees meeting.

There was a MOTION to hold the December Trustees meeting on December 3rd at 6pm at the Bell Inn Tavern by Trustee Gallugi. The motion was seconded by Trustee Shruhan.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

A vote was taken, and the motion was carried unanimously.

New Business

Trustee Gallugi inquired about whether there is a daily checklist for opening and closing the branches. She noted that during a visit to the West Branch Library the computer to look up books was off. This occurred on her next visit as well. Interim Director Usovicz will investigate the daily procedures.

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

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

Submitted by,
Dorothy Louisos
Recording Secretary