

PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of Meeting

June 3, 2025

The meeting was called to order by President Kate O'Brien at 6:30 pm, with quorum having been reached by 6:25 pm.

The roll call was taken:

Present - THIS IS THE ACTUAL LIST

Absent

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

Stephanie Dallaire

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 Dolin.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

Going forward, meeting emails will contain the previous month's minutes and agenda but not the Director's Report.

Trustee Quinn asked that the May minutes be amended to reflect that the outgoing president of the Historical Society is Michael Bonfanti.

May minutes amendment: Elections for new officers will be held at the Historical Society's upcoming meeting on the 21st of May, and the previous president, Michael Bonfanti, will be stepping down.

Director Yeo asked that the May Director's report be amended to reflect that the elevator oil valve will be replaced in July.

May minutes amendment: The oil [in the elevator] was just changed before Birds and Bubbly and the oil valve will be replaced in July.

Receipt of Communications

No new communications.

Director's Report

Staffing

Former seasonal intern Kristina Derrivan accepted the position of Library Aide and started her new role this week.

I'm pleased to announce that Justin Liberti accepted the position of Senior Public Services Librarian. Justin is a Peabody native with 17 years of library experience in various roles including Circulation, Reference, Adult Services, Technical Services, and staff supervision. I'm confident he will be a wonderful addition to our team.

Budget

I have included the budget for your review.

Building & Maintenance

The Facilities Department has confirmed that the rubber section of the West Branch roof has been successfully patched. Looking ahead, roofers are scheduled to address rotted woodwork within the next month. In July, City Elevator is scheduled to flush and replace the elevator's hydraulic fluid and valve.

Programs and Initiatives

Public Services

Public Services Librarian Eileen Finnegan is coordinating a variety of upcoming programs for the summer. Throughout the month of June, she is offering one-on-one Ancestry.com help sessions by appointment on Tuesday afternoons, with plans to continue the service if there is interest. Beginning in July and running through September, she will lead a Documentary Film Series featuring films that highlight extreme sports and extraordinary physical achievements such as bodybuilding, high wire walking, and rock climbing. The Citizenship Study Group will continue meeting weekly over the summer, with the long-term goal of hosting a Naturalization Ceremony in the Sutton Room. This event would provide an opportunity for participants to take the oath of citizenship, administered by officials from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS).

Adult Services

Senior Adult Services and Programming Librarian Gabi Toth and Director Yeo are planning to add a new page to the library's website that will feature a list of community resources. Gabi will also be collaborating with North Shore Community Health to expand outreach efforts and develop new programming.

Inspired by a session attended at the Massachusetts Library Association conference, Gabi will be launching a "Recovery Corner" at the Main Library. This dedicated space will include flyers on recovery support services, books from the library's collection, Narcan kits, fentanyl testing strips, and other resources. The initiative will begin on a small scale and grow based on the evolving needs of the community. The recent sensory-friendly LEGO program was a success, and the library is awaiting a response from Northeast Arc about partnering for additional inclusive programs. In addition, plans are underway for an author event featuring two writers who are grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, both of whom have written a memoir. Gabi is currently seeking a moderator to lead the discussion.

Children's Department

The Children's Department experienced a successful month in May. Program attendance remained steady, with a highlight being the *Dog Man* Movie Night, which welcomed 35 participants. In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, Senior Children's Librarian Meeghan Bresnahan created a dedicated book display focused on the mental health of children and their caregivers. This display included materials provided by the Parent Professional Advocacy League, offering additional resources for families. Meeghan also introduced a Self-Care Bingo activity for children, promoting age-appropriate strategies for self-care and emotional well-being. Looking ahead, June programming includes a National Cheese Day Party hosted by Meeghan and a *Sleeping Fruity* Storytime and Smoothie event led by Children's Librarian Katia Pascoal.

Teen Department

Senior Teen Librarian Amory Thomas will be offering a variety of engaging programs for teens, including the return of Roblox Club, the monthly Movie Night, and Pride Month activities featuring a Rainbow Bagels and Bracelet Making event. To prepare for the Summer Reading program, the Teen Department will host a Summer Reading Journal event on June 30th, followed by the annual Summer Reading Ice Cream Party on July 3rd. Amory has initiated the hiring of two teen summer interns through MassHire, with a planned start date in July. These interns will play a significant role in supporting our annual Summer Foods program, which will run Monday through Thursday throughout the summer.

Creativity Lab

Creativity Lab Librarian Justin Allain reports that his 3D CAD modeling class was well attended this month. The series will continue next month with a focus on 3D Sculpting. Plans are underway for the return of Bruce Orr's Inkwell art classes. This summer, Bruce will lead two one-week art camps—one for middle school students and one for high school students. Each camp will conclude with the creation of a small mural in the Creativity Lab staircase, helping to visually guide patrons to the Lab. Additionally, Bruce will be teaching a two-day printmaking workshop later in the summer. While there are no new updates yet regarding the larger grant applications Justin submitted, he is actively developing partnerships. He is working with the New England Weavers Guild to acquire a loom and is in discussions with local woodworking organizations to secure tools for the Lab.

Local History

An inventory is currently underway on the Audubon prints to ensure they are properly organized and fully accounted for.

South Branch

The final third grade class from the Brown Elementary School visited the South Branch on May 28th to get a tour of the library and check out books. All students from the South Memorial Elementary School in grades K-4 will be visiting the library in early June to learn about the upcoming Summer Reading Program. On June 5th, Pop Up Art School will be leading a clay bowl making program. On June 14th, Assistant Librarian Betsy Reid will be running a Teddy Bear Picnic for children ages 3 to 7.

West Branch

In addition to the ongoing weekly yoga sessions, three special adult programs are scheduled for the summer. Senior West Branch Librarian Alex Pappas will lead two craft-based programs: Seashell Painting and Popsicle Garland Making. Assistant Librarian Lauren Tryder will facilitate another Plant Re-Pot and Swap on June 17th. The teen volunteer group, TACO (Teen Advisory and Community Organization) remains active through the summer. Volunteers are currently focused on assembling boxes of books to send to the Main Library for the book sale on Saturday, June 14th. Children's Librarian Aimee Servideo has planned a wide variety of engaging programs for June and throughout the summer including a STEAM series, storytimes, toddler art, and toddler sensory bins. On June 28th, the West Branch will host a Summer Reading Kickoff Party to launch the season's activities. The addition of a dedicated Children's Librarian at the West Branch has had a significant positive impact. Staff report a noticeable increase in family visits and participation, with patrons frequently expressing appreciation for the renewed energy and welcoming atmosphere at the branch.

Discussion of Director's Report:

Trustee Titelbaum asked for clarification about the fact that there are now two employees named Justin. Director Yeo explained that one is incoming (Justin Liberti, Senior Public Services Librarian) and one currently works here (Justin Allain, Creativity Lab Librarian).

The Trustees approved of the opportunity for the Citizenship Study Group and potential Naturalization ceremony.

Director Yeo noted that Justin Allain, Creativity Lab Librarian, is applying for grants and that there is no update on a connection with Harmonic Drive.

Director Yeo's goal is to have the long-range plan completed in July.

Director Yeo was unsure if she would be able to meet with the Mayor about the budget before the City Council budget meetings on the 24th. The phone system is being updated with funds from State aid, with potential additional support from the City Council.

Trustee Titlebaum requested clarification on the summer interns, asking if volunteers are ever asked for from the local schools. Director Yeo noted that teens who would be selected from local schools are already in TACO (Teen Advisory and Community Organization). Interns do not receive any certificate of completion or appreciation because they are considered employees.

Trustee Titlebaum requested an update on the preservation and appraisal of the Audubon prints. Director Yeo noted that the project is not currently in the budget, but that the library is currently ordering it. Completion of half of the project has taken about 10 hours, and State aid covers the cost of the prints preserved.

In further discussion of the budget, Director Yeo noted that the price of utilities has significantly increased—water (testing in particular), gas, and electricity. Paying for utilities does not have to be supplemented with State aid. The cost of office supplies (i.e. to get books ready for shelving) increased significantly, and more money will need to be put into the telephone line item as well as landscaping.

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

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:

Personnel: Nothing to report.

Policy and Procedures: Nothing to report.

Liaison to the Peabody Institute Library Foundation: (Trustee Najjar) Birds and Bubbly netted \$9,209 after all expenses paid, plus a \$250 donation.

Liaison to the Peabody Historical Society: (Trustee Quinn) A new president was elected. June 18th will be the Felton Tea. Tickets are limited and cost \$20, and that will be the event of the summer, as it generally sells out quickly.

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

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

New Business

There was a MOTION to suspend meetings for the months of July and August by Trustee Najjar. The motion was seconded by Trustee Smith.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

Unfinished Business

Trustee O'Brien reported that all of the Peabody Medal awardees and elected officials attended the awards ceremony, which was very successful overall.

Trustee Dallaire will be attending Peabody High School graduation (and will be sitting on stage).

The next meeting will be held on September 2nd, 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 Najjar.

All in Favor: Yes Any Opposed: No

The motion was carried unanimously.

Submitted by,
Julia Rowny
Recording Secretary