

Minutes of the Board of Library Trustees, Public Library of Brookline

A hybrid meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library was convened on Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 6:16 PM.

Present: Burstein; Chanyasukit (remote); Fredkin; Goleman; Hung; Livingston; Lohe; Margolis; Martin-Page; Vogt; Zelkha (remote)

Absent: Vanderkay

Also present: Library Director, A. Hirst; Executive Assistant to the Library Director, C. Hesslein

Trustees voted to convene the meeting.

All votes were conducted by roll call vote.

I. Comments from the Chair

- A. Burstein explains upcoming procedure timeline; informs Board that Margolis will take on Chair responsibilities as needed / if they arise while Burstein recovers
- B. Burstein highlights that Board is meeting at the Coolidge Corner location as part of Board's goal to visit all Library locations; reminds Board that this was recommended by the Trustee Development Committee

II. Comments from the Public (5 minute limit)

- A. No comments from the public

III. Secretary's Report

A. Minutes

- 1. Martin-Page asks for a motion to approve last meeting's minutes; Lohe makes a motion; Livingston seconds
- 2. Roll call vote results in 10 'yes' votes and 1 'present' vote; minutes are approved

B. Correspondence

- 1. No correspondence discussed

C. Other items

IV. Treasurer's Report

A. Other

1. Lohe plans to present half-year budget figures at next month's meeting; has yet to receive December 2023's endowment report from State Street
2. Lohe explains that Anne Reed – the former Assistant Director for Administration who was a PLB employee for 46 years prior to retiring and who has since established a fund for adult or children's programming – sent the Trustees a holiday note that included a \$400 contribution to the Anne and Richard Reed Fund, which is currently valued around \$11,400
3. Upon receiving this contribution, the Finance Committee, Hirst, and Burstein met to discuss the Board matching Anne's contribution using funding from the unanticipated expenses line
4. Martin-Page seeks clarification on the amount that will be matched; Lohe and Burstein clarify that it would be \$400 to match Anne's recent contribution
5. Livingston makes a motion for the Board to approve matching Reed's recent \$400 contribution to the Anne and Richard Reed Fund by using funds from the unanticipated expenses line; Fredkin seconds
6. The Board unanimously votes to approve the matching; Lohe will send Anne a letter to express Board's appreciation for recent contribution and for everything else she continues to contribute to PLB

V. Library Director's Report

A. Statistical

1. Hirst shares that the PLB was featured in the American Library Association's magazine in an article about induction cooktops
2. Hirst states that there have been no resignations since the Board last met and that PLB has hired 3 part-time Library Assistants and the Coolidge Corner Assistant Branch Supervisor
3. Hirst explains that PLB's attendance data for calendar year 2023 (defined as people coming into the buildings) was up 12%; this increase accounts for the lack of attendance data for April 2023. Margolis mentions attendance data is still below where PLB was in 2019; asks if that is a library-wide trend; Hirst affirms it is

B. Financial

VI. Trustee Committee Reports

A. Buildings & Grounds

1. Vanderkay (Chair of Buildings & Grounds Committee) is not present to deliver report; Margolis offers to speak on behalf of Committee
2. Margolis explains that the initial proposal placed the EV charger in the Library's driveway on the side closest to Washington Street; the Committee preferred it to be on the right-hand side, closer to the Library
3. Multiple Board members discuss location of charging ports on electric cars, length of charging cords, and overnight parking options; Zelkha informs Board that proposed placement isn't finalized as additional analysis needs to be completed
4. Several members express concern with voting on this when some items aren't finalized; multiple members express concern about potential tripping hazards on sidewalk if the charging cord isn't retractable

5. Hirst mentions that a Board vote is needed to get this work in Eversource's project queue / to be able to use the grant money
6. Margolis moves that Board accept the Committee's recommendation to situate the EV charging station on the right-hand side of the Library's driveway; Fredkin seconds; Board unanimously votes to situate the charging station on the right-hand side

B. Trustee Development

1. Martin-Page makes a motion for the Board to authorize the Trustee Development Committee to work with the Library Director to develop an updated written plan for new trustee orientation; Goleman seconds
2. Board unanimously votes to authorize the Trustee Development Committee to do this

A 5-minute recess is called by Burstein

C. Other

1. Staff Appreciation Party Committee
 - a) Fredkin provides latest details about staff appreciation party and reestablishes expectations for Trustee's involvement and attendance
2. DEI committee
 - a) Burstein asks Board to read the minutes / report from the DEI's first meeting back in November
 - b) Chanyasulkit informs Board of the League of Women Voters upcoming webinar on January 17 entitled 'Turning Words Into Effective Action'; Chanyasulkit will share registration and recording with Board

c) Vogt asks Burstein about portion of his DEI report pertaining to staff sentiment expressed in Dr. Carter's survey; multiple Board members express concerns about how patrons treat staff and offer potential solutions to ensure patrons treat staff with respect and courtesy; Hirst clarifies that there are certain laws surrounding the public's ability to freely speak with public employees and references two instances where patrons were banned for periods of time due to violations of patron acceptable behavior policy; Board offers Hirst support to help her navigate this

VII. Old Business

A. None discussed

VIII. New Business

A. Staff Retention

1. Margolis discusses desire to conceive of an effort to find out how to retain current staff and attract new staff; multiple Board members discuss potential solutions, such as classification studies, additional staff surveys, and determining a quantifiable, acceptable rate of retention
2. Board discusses what advocacy work they can do to support staff, particularly related to salaries; Martin-Page asks about what the Board is authorized to do in these matters; Board agrees to continue this conversation

B. Other

1. Martin-Page asks about the proposed Eagle Scout project to add original art installations on the ground floor of Brookline Village; Buildings and

Grounds Committee did not vote favorably on the proposal; Hirst is considering better projects for the Scout

IX. Remarks for the Good of the Order

X. Adjourn

A. Margolis makes a motion to adjourn the meeting; Hung seconds

B. The Board unanimously votes to adjourn the meeting

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM.

Minutes drafted by Courtney Hesslein

A true record.

ATTEST



Koinonia I. Martin-Page

Secretary

2023-2024