

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, March 11, 2025, at 6:15 PM.

Present: Burstein; Chanyasulkit; Fredkin; Goleman; Hung; Livingston; Lohe; Margolis; Martin Page; Vogt; Zelkha

Absent: Vanderkay

Also present: Interim Library Director, D. Savin; Assistant Director for Administration, R. Brennan, Executive Assistant to the Library Director, C. Artavia; Head of Youth Services, Elissa Martel; Brookline HS Senior and BOLT candidate, Joey Elasmarr

Motion to convene by Hung; Lohe seconds. All present vote yea, 6:16

p.m. All votes were conducted by roll call vote.

I. Comments from the Chair

A. Hung mentions that the election for the Board is coming up and encourages everyone to think about how to attract candidates in the future.

II. Comments from the Public (3-minute limit)

A. No public comment

B. Savin introduces E. Martel, Head of Youth Services to the Board.

III. Secretary's Report

A. Minutes

1. Martin-Page requests, on behalf of a patron, for the library to carry Bay State Banner (a weekly newspaper primarily geared towards readership interests of the African American Community in Boston).
 - a. Brennan explains that the library has had trouble subscribing to

the physical paper but notes that it is available online.
b. Martin-Page asks that we find out more information on this in order to get the request moving along. Brennan offers to look into this.

2. Discussion regarding roll call votes.

a. Roll call votes should only be called when a vote is not unanimous. There is some question as to whether a roll call vote should ever be recorded in the minutes.

3. Hung asks Board to move to approve the February 2025 meeting minutes. Livingston moves; Lohe seconds.

a. Board votes unanimously to approve the minutes.

B. Correspondence

1. No correspondence received

IV. Treasurer's Report

A. Lohe requests Trustees and Admin give thought to discretionary funds and committee needs for next year's budget. Lohe hopes to work with Admin to arrive at a clear list of what the various discretionary funds should pay for.

V. Library Director's Report

A. Savin informs Board that some of the staff at BV requested that ergonomic furniture be purchased. Purchases were made. Training in proper use was rolled out to staff. Branch requests being considered next.

B. Savin informs Board that the library participated in the Town's 'I Voted' design contest for youth and received 35 applications.

C. Savin thanked the Friends for their generous lunch to the staff on February 13.

D. Savin mentions the upcoming Staff Development Day on March 25th. Trustees are encouraged to attend the afternoon bowling party, hosted by the Staff Appreciation Committee, at American Flatbread in Brighton.

E. Savin reports that the budget was presented to the Advisory Committee and the Human Services Subcommittee.

1. Trustees thank Savin, Brennan, and everyone who contributed to the presentations, saying that Savin demonstrated "grace under pressure" while handling questions.

2. Lohe states that despite the staff turnover, the public has expressed appreciation for the service provided by the library.

3. Vogt expresses appreciation to Savin and staff and asks about staff morale. Savin mentions the positive comment a patron left on the PBL Facebook page stating that "the happiness of the staff recently has been palpable." Savin adds that leadership continues to address the ergonomic issues that have come up with the sorter and its effect on work flow. The year has been difficult, but the staff is prevailing.

F. Savin reports to the Board that there have been no resignations and two hires in the last month.

1. In the past year the library has filled 29% of full-time positions and 40% of part-time positions.

G. Margolis expresses concern that the Pierce School construction has blocked the use of the library's loading dock for patrons dropping off donations. Savin states that the loading dock is not currently being used for deliveries due to safety issues; Savin suggests this be referred to the Library Functions Committee. H. Statistical Report

1. Brennan explains that there was an issue with self-checkouts due to the installation of new check-out machines; check-out data from the other branches was being credited to Brookline Village. The issue has been resolved and will reflect the correct data in the next stats report.

I. Financial Report: The budget is on track at 60%.

VI. Trustee Committee Reports

A. Advocacy Committee

1. Margolis suggests that the Board advocate more actively for the budget in the future; mentions the possible privatization of custodial and food services workers in the school system. Savin states that the library custodian salaries are part of the library budget. Margolis asks, "Do we want to take a position on the privatization of services?" Chair Hung answers that the Finance and Advocacy Committees can work together on this.

B. Library Functions Committee

1. Hung discusses the concerns expressed about the sidewalk in front of

Brookline Village library and the need to make the walkway safer. Discussion ensues about the future of the dedicated bricks in front of the library and

working with the Foundation on how, possibly, to repurpose the special

bricks and preserve the library's history. Library Functions committee to

meet and consider possible solutions and to connect with the Foundation.

Livingston mentions that the fundraising efforts with the bricks were more of

a nightmare than a money-maker.

C. Staff Appreciation Committee

1. Staff bowling party on March 25th:

D. Trustee Development Committee

1. Chair Martin-Page discusses the importance of bringing energy and

hopefulness to the annual meeting in May and to welcome new and

seasoned members with food and liveliness.

2. Martin-Page recommends that at the April meeting in odd-numbered years the Board should review its development strategies and policies. 3.

Lohe and Goleman give update on Handbook for New and Continuing

Trustees. Hung thanks the committee for the work and love that went into the new handbook.

E. Ad Hoc Committee to Hire Workplace Consultant

1. Hung recaps: The Board is in process of hiring a consultant as a response to the complaints brought to the Board from the staff. The Board voted to allow a fee of up to \$45,000. Hung wants to make sure this project is well thought-out and that there is a solid plan going forward. Goleman, the Trustee representative on the committee, will assist.
2. Goleman re-states the 3-step plan: 1. The consultant will start with an assessment of staff morale and library culture; 2. The consultant will present recommendations to the Staff, Admin and Trustees, followed by implementation of selected recommendations; 3. Once this process is determined to be well underway in meeting its goals, the Trustees will work with HR to begin the search for permanent director.

VII. Old Business

- A. No discussion

VII. New Business

- A. Adult Services Programming Presentation

1. Head of Reference, Jess Steytler, joined the meeting to present 'Elements of Programming'.
 - a. Trustee question arises about updating the library's website.

Steytler answers there have been some updates with calendars, events, and museum passes. Savin states the previous director requested funds from the Foundation for updating the website.

This was sent to the newly re-instated Staff IT Committee; it is on pause for now.

B. FY25 Action Item Update: Savin

1. Art Walk Festival

- a. Library will hold an event on Saturday, May 3rd in conjunction with the Coolidge Corner Arts Festival.

2. After Hours Programs

- a. After hours programming will take place in April and May; three events will take place — one for youth, one for teens, and one for adults. At the conclusion of these events, the staff will gather feedback before moving forward with this concept.
- b. The definition of ‘after hours’ is clarified as referring to events that occur after the library is closed, not an “adults only” program.
- c. Savin states they are working with the Leadership Team to think about next year’s action items. Lohe reminds that the Board can help with additional funding.

3. E-Resources

- a. Resources have been rolled out to the public through social media posts, drop-in help sessions, BHA, Wisdom Cafe at Putterham, and

saved into the historic archive of digital resources.

IX. Remarks for the Good of the Order

A. none

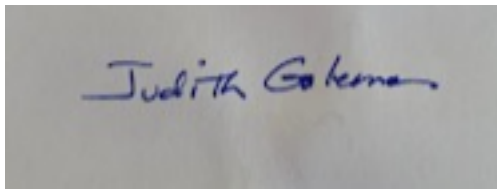
IX. Adjourn

B. Hung makes a motion to adjourn the meeting; Margolis seconds; Board votes
unanimously to adjourn meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Minutes drafted by Cary Artavia

Attested

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in blue ink. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Judith Goleman".

Judith Goleman, Secretary
2024-2025