

Thomas Crane Public Library

Board of Trustees Minutes

November 14, 2011

Trustees Present

Sandra McCauley, Chair; Harold Crowley; Mary L. Reed.

Staff and Guests Present: Harry R. Williams III, Director; Deb Rich, IT/Systems Librarian; Sondra Vandermark, Library Consultant.

Call to Order

Sandra McCauley, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:20 am in the Quincy Room at the Main Library.

Approval of Minutes for the Meeting of October 17, 2011

Mrs. McCauley asked for comments additions, or corrections to the minutes of the October 17th Board meeting. Hearing none, Mr. Crowley moved and Ms. Reed seconded approval of the minutes. The Board unanimously approved the minutes.

Treasurer's Report

In the absence of Treasurer Lawrence J. Falvey, Jr., Mr. Williams presented the expenditures for the Literacy Account in the amount of \$1,852.77. Mr. Williams then presented expenditures for the Trust Accounts, a total of \$1,873.75, all from the Gift Account: \$151.35 for books purchased with funds donated in memory of Isadore Zack, and \$1,722.40 for presenters and expenses for the Civil War 150 series of programs. Mr. Crowley moved and Ms. Reed seconded to approve these expenditures. In response to Ms. Reed's question at last month's meeting, Williams reported that no limit seems to have been established on the amount that can be paid as an honorarium from Trust Funds. Except for the Gift Account, where grant funds such as from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Library Association are deposited to pay for programs like the Civil War 150 series, Trust funds are rarely used for program expenses because those are usually paid by the Friends of the Thomas Crane Public Library.

Director's Report

Mr. Williams introduced Library Consultant Sondra "Sunny" Vandermark who is working with the administration to develop our Strategic Planning Process. She explained that the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners ("MBLC") requires that public libraries file long range plans covering 3 to 5 years in order to qualify to apply for state and federal grants. Both MBLC and the Public Library Association highly recommend having a Community Planning Committee to formulate recommendations in the context of the unique needs of the community. The Trustees then react to these recommendations by working with the library administration and staff to develop "Service Responses" to guide the allocation of resources by developing a Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives, and then specific action steps to achieve them. The ideal Community Planning Committee would have about 20 members, representing various constituencies from across the City and reflecting its diversity. It should have one Liaison from the Trustees and one from the Library staff. Since some who are invited will be unable to meet on the scheduled dates, we should consider alternates for each "nominee" that could represent the same slice of the community. The Trustees were asked to suggest members, and staff will be invited to make suggestions too. This group would participate in two 3-hour meetings. At the first they would identify community needs and select preliminary service responses, and at the second they would finalize selected service responses. In the period

between the meetings the Trustees would review the preliminary responses with the administration and staff, with their determinations to guide the deliberations at the second meeting. Mr. Williams described “data gathering” by the staff to identify and quantify patron activity. In a four week period the numbers, ages and activities (broken into a large number of very specific categories) of patrons in every area of the library were observed and recorded on an hourly basis. Recently a survey was distributed both online and throughout the library, with plans to place them in other locations – City Hall, senior centers, etc. – and in just the first day or two 300 online responses and 150 paper surveys were submitted. All this hard data will replace guesses and hunches as we enter the planning process. An all-staff meeting this Wednesday will review the planning process, and Ms. Vandermark will meet with two non-supervisory staff focus groups on December 5th and will facilitate the Community Planning Committee meetings, tentatively January 17th with a snow date of January 24th and then February 21st, snow date February 28th, to take place afternoons or evenings. Ms. Reed asked the duration of the Strategic Plan, and Ms. Vandermark said most are for five years. Mr. Crowley suggested attendance might be improved by having one of the meetings in the afternoon and the other in the evening. Ms. Reed asked about periodic review of the Plan and Ms. Vandermark said an Annual Action Plan is an integral part of the process. Mr. Crowley suggested that the second Community Planning Committee meeting be rescheduled to February 28th with a snow date of March 6th, since the 21st is School Vacation Week, and also to allow time to schedule four “Citizen Input Meetings,” one at each location, between the first and second CPC meetings, as discussed last month. The Trustees instructed Williams to arrange a schedule for the four meetings. After reviewing forms, including one for selecting a diverse and representative CPC, and there being no more questions about the process, the Trustees thanked Ms. Vandermark and she left the meeting.

Mr. Williams then reported on activities in the Departments. Children’s Services was very busy with 40 events at the Main Library and 23 at the branches. Circulation from the Children’s Room was 22,727 items, the fourth month in a row with circulation over 20,000. The Halloween Magic Show drew almost 100 children, and the Pumpkin Character contest drew the largest-ever number of entries. Julie Rines, Will Adamczyk and Megan Allen are planning events plan for the John Adams Unbound exhibit with the National Parks Service and the Quincy Historical Society. Circulation set a third straight monthly record - circulation has increased 25% in the last five years. After successfully shelving Non Fiction DVDs without security cases, we expanded the project to some of our music CD collection. Since instituting floating collections, approximately 225 items from the Chinese Language Collection have moved from the Main Library to North Quincy. The annual MLS Delivery Survey shows that we average 66 outgoing bins and 2642 outgoing items per week. Reference Supervisor Linda Beeler was invited to speak at the Massachusetts Library System's Annual Meeting about the Boston Public Library digitization grant project’s value to libraries with historical collections. The Reference staff was busy with class visits, preparing for the Civil War 150 series, training staff on eBooks and Overdrive, and creating databases. Acquisitions Librarian Rita Seegraber and Catalog Librarian Claudia Shutter spent a lot of time on the patron observation project, weeding and shifting at the Main Library and Wollaston, and learning about eBooks. 2,342 new items were catalogued in October; 1,780 for the Main Library and 562 for the Branches. All three Branches have been busy with programs as well as circulating items. The Literacy Program’s “Basic, Basic Computer Class” is off to a great start, and 12 new volunteers completed tutor training and will be matched with students. Mary Diggle took learning disability training to be able to conduct workshops for tutors and provide LD strategies for tutors and students. We have 6 “Talk Time” groups, and are training 6 new volunteers to offer Talk Time at new locations, including the North Quincy Branch and the South Shore YMCA, and at additional times. Assistant Director Megan Allen worked tirelessly to plan and promote programs, tweak and add content to the new web site, and helping the Friends prepare for the Book Store opening on November 5 – a huge success. We submitted the supporting materials for our Request For Waiver of the Municipal Appropriation Requirement to the Board of Library Commissioners. We hosted a New Quincy Center Redevelopment Project Information Session. State Urban Development Coordinator John Fitzgerald wrote that “everyone coming into the space for the first time was stunned by the beauty and historical significance of the venue.” Security measures were completed in the Richardson/Aiken basement for the

bookstore. Now we want to install similar wireless receivers and panic buttons for the Richardson staff desk and the computer lab. The Public Buildings department believes they have resolved the leaks in the 2001 roof!

Old Business

Mr. Williams recommended purchase from the Brodart Company of a high security book return for the Adams Shore Branch Library, for \$1,181.67 using funds from Esther R. Gizzarelli. Mr. Crowley preferred to hold that account in the hope of using it to restore Branch services. Williams then suggested the Berry D'Angelo fund, and Mr. Crowley moved and Ms. Reed seconded to use this account to purchase the book drop. So voted.

Mr. Crowley asked if the photocopier at the Adams Shore Branch Library had been repaired or replaced, and Mr. Williams replied that he had not followed up with the vendor, but would do so before the next meeting.

Mr. Williams recommended accepting the Bob's Painting proposal to repair and paint the entrances at the Adams Shore Branch Library for \$1,250.00, also from Gizzarelli. Mr. Crowley thought it was too late in the season and too cold for exterior painting and that the City of Quincy, possibly through the School Department, should provide painters for this work.

Mr. Williams submitted a proposal for evening hours once per week at each of the Branch libraries. He pointed out that with current staffing levels such a plan would result in frequent and extended closures of the Computer Lab and/or Richardson Building if even one staff member were sick or on vacation. He suggested that hiring two part-time paraprofessionals and one full-timer, at an annual cost of \$70,072, could make such a plan work with less impact on hours and service at the Main Library. Mr. Crowley moved, and Ms. Reed seconded, that the Board instruct Mr. Williams to include in our Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Proposal such funding for increased staffing to open each Branch Library one evening per week. So voted.

New Business

Mr. Crowley noted that the Main Library flagpole was not yet repaired, and that it is outrageous that we have been without an American flag for Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, and now Veterans Day. Mr. Williams reported asking for help from the City and being told the bucket truck is broken. Mr. Crowley moved and Ms. Reed seconded that Mr. Williams should write to Mayor Koch on behalf of the Trustees, requesting that he intercede on our behalf to get our flag flying. Voted unanimously.

Mr. Williams submitted two scenarios for scheduling Trustee meetings in the coming year. The first was based on alternating monthly between the Main Library and each Branch in rotation, as discussed at a previous meeting. The second would allow for each Department Head to meet with the Board about once per year. Mr. Crowley suggested that one meeting per year at each of the Branches would be sufficient and everyone agreed with "Scenario Two."

Mrs. McCauley has written to Mayor Koch requesting that she not be reappointed at the end of her term. She intends to continue to advocate for the Library and writes, "It has been an important part of my life since I got my first library card at the age of 6."

Adjournment

The next meeting will be held on December 12th at 9:15 A.M. at the Wollaston Branch Library. Mr. Crowley moved and Ms. Reed seconded to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:55 A. M.