

THE FERGUSON LIBRARY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
April 25, 2023

Present:

Board Members: S. O'Shea (Chair); E. Bromley; S. Frederick; M. Hyman; A. Livingston;
T. Lucero; R. Mercede; L. Meyer; P. O'Brien Morrow; S. Vidan

Citizen Advisors: A. Better-Wirz; S. Duarte; S. Fitzgerald; J. Freeman; D. Golden;
R. Granata; A. LiVolsi; M. Millan; J. Orlikoff; S. Perry

Staff: A. Knapp; C. Harper; C. Hubbard; S. LaPerla; L. Avellar; A. Marrocolla

Guests: Henry Myerberg, Principal & Founder of HMA2 Architects
David Vinjamuri, President of ThirdWay Brand Trainers

Ms. O'Shea called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm. The meeting was held in-person and via Zoom.

Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the February 28, 2023 meeting along with the minutes of the special March 23, 2023 board meeting. The motion was passed.

Feasibility Study - HMA2 Architecture Firm

Henry Myerberg from HMA2 and David Vinjamuri of ThirdWay Brand Trainers presented an overview of ideas for the Main Library, Bennett Branch and Weed Memorial Hollander Branch based on "the 12 space design universalisms". They touched on improving flow using a retail store format, how to merchandise the collections while making pathways, and distinguishing active and passive zones. At the DiMattia Building, for example, we could take advantage of the flat roof to create a welcoming roof deck, add an event space and a teaching kitchen. The feasibility study / 10-year plan was funded by the City of Stamford and the Ferguson Library Foundation.

Treasurer's Report

Susana Vidan, along with Cheryl Harper, walked through the library's financial activity through March 31, 2023. Although annual appeal revenue is lower than anticipated, passport income is over budget. Due to staff openings in Youth Services, wages and benefits expenses are below budget. The Board of Representatives did not cut the mayor's recommended budget for the library.

CEO's Report

Before the CEO reports, Connie Hubbard played a video of the EDI work done by the EDI Council, Leadership Team and staff.

In her February report, Alice Knapp spoke about her efforts to advocate for library services. State Representative Matt Blumenthal is supporting HB 6829, a legislative bill that will compel publishers to provide reasonable terms for leasing e-books and e-audio to libraries. Ms. Knapp also discussed SB 2, a bill proposed by State Senator Ceci Maher, which would provide funding to sanctuary libraries, like the Ferguson.

The March CEO report highlighted the library's literacy support for Stamford educators and the many Youth Services programs that support early child literacy, early grade reading, as well as parents and educators.

Ms. Knapp noted that although circulation numbers are going up at the Weed Branch, across the system, circulation of physical material is still not as high as it was in 2019. The Ferguson's output statistics are on par with comparable libraries but still not back to pre-Covid numbers. Program attendance is slowly rising.

Executive Committee

Stephanie O'Shea provided an update on the Executive Committee meeting that was held earlier that day.

Building Committee

The Building Committee met in person on April 12, 2023 at the Harry Bennett Branch where Henry Myerberg presented 12 universalisms which will be used in all library facilities. Mr. Vinjamuri discussed the space audits for the Main Library and Bennett Branch.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee held a meeting on March 22, 2023 to discuss potential new board members and a slate of officers for the new year. Their results will be presented at the annual board meeting in June.

Pension Committee

On March 16, 2023, the Pension Committee met to review responses to our request for proposals for the pension plan advisory services. Two proposers, Wells Fargo and Hooker & Holcombe have been invited back to make more detailed presentations to the Pension Committee.

Friends of Ferguson

Deborah Golden said the Friends' annual Gale fund distribution to the library will be \$49,177 this year.

Book Shop revenue is down and the Harry Bennett Shop is accepting donations once a month. The 38th Literary Competition will be held April 30. CrimeCONN will be held May 6. James M. Scott author of *Black Snow*, will deliver the Joe Sexton Lecture (May 11); actor Andrew McCarthy will be here on May 25 to talk about his book, *Walking with Sam*; Fiona Davis will speak about her new novel *The Spectacular* on June 27. And Alka Joshi will be streamed live on June 15 to discuss her latest in the Jaipur Trilogy, *The Perfumist of Paris*, on June 15. A special in-person author event in July is planned with best-selling author Daniel Silva, who will talk about his new novel *The Collector*. And Jacques Pepin will be back for a program in October.

Old Business

2023-2024 Operating Budget Update

The Ferguson Library received a 0% increase in the budget.

New Business

Main Library Roof Replacement

A resolution was presented to allow the Library's CEO to execute a contract with Silktown Roofing, for the Main Library's roof replacement.

Resolved:

That the library CEO be authorized to execute a contract with Silktown Roofing, Inc. of 27 Pleasant Street, Manchester, Connecticut, the low bidder for the Main Library DiMattia Building Roof Replacement Project, for a cost not to exceed \$327,400.

And that up to \$100,000 may be used from the operating reserved account to pay for this project.

A motion was made and seconded to accept this resolution.

Novel Affair Results

Polly O'Brien Morrow and Pitney Bowes were honored for their many years of library support at A Novel Affair. About 250 guests attended and major donors were invited to a pre-event reception at Winfield's. A Novel Affair raised \$236,000 this year.

Board Retreat

A Board Retreat is planned for a weekend in June. Carmen Hughes, the City's Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion will conduct the retreat for the library board and citizen advisors.

There being no further business, a motion to end the meeting was proposed. All accepted, the meeting was adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

Ellen E. Bromley
Secretary