

THE FERGUSON LIBRARY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
September 14, 2021

Present:

Board Members: A. Livingston (Chair); R. Granata; S. Frederick; S. Kim;
P. O'Brien Morrow; S. O'Shea

Citizen Advisers: S. Arnold-Rossetti; R. Baron; A. Better-Wirz; J. Block; S. Duarte;
D. Golden; E. Larson; T. Lucero; R. Mercede

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

The meeting was called to order and was held in person as well as via Zoom.

Minutes

A motion to accept the minutes of the June 15, 2021 meeting was approved.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Harper presented the financial report for year ending June 30, 2021, and the year-to-date through August 30, 2021 noting variances in several categories and that the Library is in good financial standing.

Ms. Knapp reported that the Sprinter van, that the maintenance staff used, was no longer safe to drive. A new van was purchased using the State Contract Number provided by Mr. Lawson. One of the library vehicles was sold to offset the cost of the van.

President's Report

Ms. Knapp reported that the weekday hours at the Main Library have been extended to 8 pm. The Harry Bennett branch hours have been extended during the week to 6 pm, and to 7 pm on Wednesday. We are beginning to see a rebound in circulation.

The Leadership Team and the EDI Council have joined forces to continue the work on EDI. The combined group is reading *"The Conversation: How Seeking and Speaking the Truth About Racism Can Radically Transform, Individuals and Organization"* by Robert Livingston. The reading will help to develop trust and create an action plan that is measurable.

Susan LaPerla reported on the youth summer learning program with Cradle to Careers' "Raise a Reading" program, which has reading coaches at the various campsites, YWCA and Intempo. Other summer reading initiatives include working with Building One Community, SPEF agency coordinating after school programs, and expanding for the summer the Linked Libraries and Grab & Go meals at the South End Branch. Staff have been assisting parents with remote learning.

Elizabeth Joseph reported on the NEA Big Read. In looking for a book that would bring the community together, the book "*Beloved*" by Toni Morrison was selected. The NEA Big Read broadens our understanding of our world, our communities, and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book. NEA Big Read is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest. Generously supported by the Friends of the Ferguson Library and co-sponsored by Stamford Stands Against Racism and UCONN-Stamford. There will be book discussions throughout all the branches, and at Mill River. There will be a community quilting project, which will hang up at the Main Library when completed. On October 7, we will have as a keynote speaker, Valerie Smith, president of Swarthmore College. President Smith is a Toni Morrison scholar and author of *Toni Morrison: Writing the Moral Imagination*.

The Big Read Youth program will feature Tonya Bolden's book *Crossing Ebenezer Creek* and Jewell Parker Rhodes' book *Sugar*.

The library has been awarded two grants. One is a \$100,000 grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to provide professional development on tools and software available to eliminate barriers to reading. The other grant awarded is \$96,000 from the CT State Library for a Digital Navigation Pilot ARPA Grant, to provide hot spots and tablets to the underserved community. Ms. O'Shea asked how do people find out about these projects. Ms. Knapp responded that the Library will be partnering with United Way, Building One Community, SPEF, Charter Oaks, SilverSource and the City.

Executive Committee

Mr. Livingston said that the Executive Committee met the morning of September 14, 2021 and reviewed the matters on the Board of Trustees agenda. The mandatory vaccination policy was vetted by Mr. Fredrick, which was created by Ms. Hubbard and Ms. Harper. A motion was made and seconded to approve this policy.

Bylaws Committee

The Bylaws Committee met on August 26, 2021 to review each section of the bylaws for clarification. There was a general consensus to move the Annual Board of Trustees meeting from September to the month of June.

Pension Committee

Mr. Granata said that at its September 2, 2021 meeting, the Committee met with the Wells Fargo investment advisors and learned about the performance of the portfolio. Hooker & Holcombe presented a report on the investment in the 401a and 403b plans at ICMA-RC.

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee met on August 3, 2021. Ms. Hubbard reported on the new hire of 5 full-time and 7 part-time staff.

Ms. Knapp's goals for FY-2022 were discussed and it was agreed to change Ms. Knapp's title from President to CEO.

Friends of Ferguson

Incoming Friends Board President Ms. Deborah Golden reported that their fiscal year ended with the Friends giving \$98,000 to the library. An upcoming event on October 20 will be an in person author talk with Zakiya Dalila Harris author of "The Other Black Girl". The Friends are going to launch an online book store and the annual Pub Crawl has been postponed.

Eversource Lighting Project

Mr. Livingston asked for a motion to ratify the Eversource lighting project at the Main Library. A motion was made and accepted.

Dudley N. Williams, Jr. Memorial Recognition

A motion was made and seconded to name the Auditorium in memory of Dudley Williams.

Gail Malloy Memorial Recognition

A motion was made and seconded to name the Rotary Room in memory of Gail Malloy.

2021-2026 Trustee Nominations

As recommended by the Nominating Committee, Ms. O'Shea moved and Mr. Granata seconded, the election of Dr. Tamu Lucero to succeed Anderson R. Livingston to a term on the Board of Trustees for 2021 to 2026. The motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Livingston reported that Mr. RJ Mercede was appointed by the Mayor to the Board of Trustees for the 2021-2026 term to succeed Dudley N. Williams.

2021-2026 Officer Nominations

The Nominating Committee made the following recommendation for officers for 2021-2022:

Officers for 2021-2022

Chair	Stephanie O'Shea
Vice-Chair	Michael Hyman
Treasurer	Sopong Kim
Secretary	Robert J. Granata

Bank Resolution**Resolved:**

That the Officers* of the Board of Trustees, as well as the CEO of the Library, be authorized for, and on behalf of, this corporation to transact any and all business with the following bank:

First County Bank

and that

- the Director of Administrative Services be eligible to authorize disbursements (checks, ACHs, wire, etc.) from the Library's operating and grant accounts;
- operations and grant checks and ach/wire disbursements in excess of \$5,000 will require signatures of both the CEO of the Library and the Director of Administrative Services;
- the Assistant Accounting Manager be authorized to initiate interaccount transfers and ach disbursement for payroll and related deductions and taxes, subject to the approval of either the CEO or Director of Administrative Services.

*Board Secretary Robert J. Granata abstained.

Trustee Resolution

The following resolution made by Mr. Granata and seconded by Ms. O'Shea, was unanimously approved:

WHEREAS, Anderson R. Livingston has served as a member of the Board of Trustees for five years, 2016 – 2021; and

WHEREAS, Anderson R. Livingston has served as Board Chair for one year, Vice Chair for one year, Treasurer for one year, and Secretary for one year;

WHEREAS, Anderson R. Livingston has served as Chair of the Executive and Nominating Committees, Co-Chair of the Long Range Planning Committee, and as a member of the Development, Pension, and Personnel Committees, as well as Board Liaison to the Ferguson Library Foundation and the Friends of Ferguson Library Board of Directors;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of The Ferguson Library hereby extends its sincerest appreciation to Anderson R. Livingston for his distinguished service.

The following resolution made by Mr. Granata and seconded by Ms. O'Shea, was unanimously approved:

WHEREAS, Dudley N. Williams, Jr. has served as a member of the Board of Trustees for five years, 2016 – 2021; and

WHEREAS, Dudley N. Williams, Jr. has served as Board Chair for one year, Vice Chair for one year, Treasurer for one year, and Secretary for one year;

WHEREAS, Dudley N. Williams, Jr. has served as Chair of the Executive and Building Committees, and as a member of the Development, Nominating, and Personnel Committees, as well as Board Liaison to the Ferguson Library Foundation and the Friends of Ferguson Library Board of Directors;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of The Ferguson Library hereby extends its sincerest appreciation to Dudley N. Williams, Jr. for his many years of distinguished service, and hereby dedicates The Ferguson Library DiMattia Building Auditorium in Memory of Dudley N. Williams, Jr.

A motion was made to go into Executive Session.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Robert J. Granata
Secretary