

THE FERGUSON LIBRARY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
December 8, 2020

Present:

Board Members: A. Livingston (Chair); E. Bromley; R. Granata;
M. Hyman; S. Kim; P. Morrow; S. O'Shea; S. Vidan

Citizen Advisers: S. Arnold; R. Baron; T. Bartley; J. Block; T. Cassone; T. Cheng;
S. Duarte; C. Ernst; D. Kooris; T. Lucero; R. Mercede

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

The meeting was called to order and was held via zoom.

Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting of October 20, 2020 was made by Ms. Bromley, seconded by Mr. Hyman, and approved.

Treasurer's Report

The results of financial operations through November 30, 2020 was presented by Mr. Bochicchio. He also said that First County Bank has reported that the library's application for forgiveness of the PPP loan has received preliminary approval by the bank. It will also need to receive SBA approval.

President's Report

Ms. Knapp reported that the preliminary proceeds of the Ann Sexton gift will be used to purchase new furniture for the board room. She also announced that Marissa Bucci, a librarian in the Youth Services Department, has been appointed to the ALA Award Committee for Children's Literature, and that another Youth Librarian, Stephen Zampino, has been appointed to the ALA 2022 Geisel Award Committee. She also reported that circulation of printed books is lower this year, but e-book circulation is up compared to last year. She added that virtual programming is higher this year compared to in-person programming last year when additional viewings of recorded content is added.

Executive Committee

Mr. Livingston said that the Executive Committee met via zoom on December 8, 2020 and reviewed the matters on the Board of Trustees agenda. Draft minutes of this meeting were distributed through email prior to the board meeting.

Development Committee

Ms. Avellar reported that the community appeal has already produced \$63,000 in proceeds. She also said that it has been decided that A Novel Affair will be a virtual event this year, which will undoubtedly suppress revenue. How to keep the President's Council, introduced last January, going in a virtual world is being discussed.

Long Range Planning Committee

Ms. Knapp said the upcoming Strategic Plan is being developed. She said that a website developer will be selected soon to create a new site for the library. It will be a four-to-five-month process and will include a corporate identity element. In the meantime, a survey of library users will be conducted to see how and why the community uses the library.

Ms. Knapp concluded by saying that the report on the Innovation Builders program conducted for the Board and staff will be provided in January.

Pension Committee

Mr. Granata reported that the Pension Committee met on December 3, 2020 and reviewed Wells Fargo's investment report and the actuarial valuation. The actuary's recommendation funding for fiscal year 2022 is \$389,000, a considerable increase over 2020-2021 funding. A Third Amendment to the pension plan, to provide another opportunity for plan participants to transfer their accumulated benefit to a 401a plan, was considered by the committee and is being presented to the Board of Trustees. A motion made by Mr. Kim and seconded by Mr. Granata to adopt the amendment was approved. Finally, Mr. Granata reported that the ICMA 403b plan will be reintroduced to the staff.

Personnel Committee

The work of the employees' EDI Council was discussed by Ms. Hubbard. Ms. Knapp said this activity is also being reviewed by the Personnel Committee.

Friends of Ferguson

Ms. Ernst said that the Friends are conducting a membership drive and are discussing a virtual fundraising event to replace the in-library mini-golf event of the past few years. The book shop staff and committee are looking into an e-commerce possibility.

Tenant Lease

Ms. Knapp reported on the Winfield Coffee operation, which has suffered a significant falloff of business. A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept \$2,000 per month in rent, plus utility cost reimbursement, through March

2021. Ms. Knapp said that the situation will be reviewed again with the tenant in a few months to see if a longer term arrangement can be achieved.

Innovation Builders

Ms. Knapp said she is meeting with Jennifer Esposito on the feedback from the Innovation Builders sessions held with the Boards and staff of the library in November. Ms. Esposito is preparing a report for all the participants in January, and programs will be developed to use the data going forward.

South End Branch

Ms. LaPerla reported that the improvement plan for the South End Branch is nearly complete, and the furniture will be ordered shortly.

Operating Budget

Ms. Knapp presented the proposed operating budget for 2021-2022. The request needs to be submitted to the city in January. After discussion, it was decided to defer consideration of the budget to a special meeting in January.

Harry Bennett Branch

Ms. Knapp reviewed a lighting upgrade plan for the Harry Bennett Branch which will be supported by a grant and financing from Eversource. A motion made by Ms. Bromley and seconded by Mr. Frederick to accept the Eversource lighting upgrade plan for the Bennett Branch was approved.

Trustee Resolution

In place of a Board Dinner this year to honor retiring Trustee Tom Cassone, a gift was presented virtually to him with a signed Trustees resolution that was approved at the September Board Meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Robert J. Granata
Secretary