

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Meeting of January 23, 2006

Present: Mr. Bloomberg, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Carrier, Mr. Morin, Ms. Moulding, Ms. Barone. **Also Present:** Sally Edelstein, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Brian Tabor, observer for the Forbes Library Employee Association. **Absent:** Mr. Rowe, Ms. Harding.

The meeting was called to order at 4:08 PM in the Watson Room.

Secretary's Report

Mr. Bloomberg moved that the Secretary's Report of December 19, 2005 be accepted and placed on file with the addition of the word "exceeding" to the first sentence under "Finances" so that it reads "Ms. Moulding reported that she is not terribly concerned at this stage about exceeding the current year's operating budget...". Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Bloomberg moved that the Treasurer's Report be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Morin reported that Mr. Rob Morton, the library's new auditor, could not attend the meeting due to the snow storm. Mr. Morton offered to attend a future meeting, and will send a written report next week that Mr. Morin will distribute to the Trustees. Mr. Morin reported that December had been a 3 pay period month and which had eliminated the surplus in the General Aid Fund. The fund is over-budget by approximately \$2,000. Mr. Carrier reported that the payments from the Clarke (\$1,400) and Earle (\$600) funds were received from the City on January 18.

Budget Revisions

Mr. Morin reported that an additional \$9,510 was received from the City to cover the increase in energy costs. Mr. Morin and Ms. Moulding proposed allocating \$6,647 to the electricity budget, and \$2,863 to the oil budget. Mr. Morin also reported that Forbes had received an increase in State Aid to Public Libraries in the amount \$7,600 which he and Ms. Moulding proposed allocating to employee wages (\$2,600), water and sewer (\$4,000), and equipment (\$1,000).

Mr. Bloomberg moved that the annual budget figures be supplemented and revised as the Director and Treasurer recommended above. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

Director's Report

Mr. Bloomberg moved that the Director's Report be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Ms. Moulding reported that there is a lot of on-going activity at the library including programming, long range planning, a new fundraising committee, a new laptop program, and construction of the new Friends programming room, which should be done in April in time for the Friends annual meeting. Also, the "Open" sign at the front entrance has been very well-received by staff and patrons.

Friends of Forbes Meeting

Ms. Burnham attended the Friends of Forbes meeting in January and reported that they are concerned about coordinating fundraising with the new Fundraising Committee. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Burnham said that Lilly Library does not currently have a fundraising committee, but would like to start one. Mr. Carrier emphasized the importance of coordinating and cooperating with the Friends of Forbes and Lilly Library in fundraising efforts. It will be easier for donors if they are only asked once instead of multiple times, and there will also be cost and time-saving benefits in a united effort. Ms. Moulding reported that the Friends had received a little over \$4,000 in donations in December, which was higher than usual.

Next Meetings

The next regular meeting of the Trustees was scheduled for Tuesday, February 21, 2006 at 3:45 PM in the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum. Mr. Morin will ask representatives of Banknorth to attend.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be February 1, 2006 at 6:30 PM. Ms. Burnham agreed to attend this meeting on behalf of the Trustees.

Communications

Mr. Carrier reported on several communications received this month including a thank you letter from Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hampshire County for the donation of three boxes of children's books. Also received was an announcement for the 6th Annual Trustees Symposium to be held February 11 in Boxborough. Ms. Burnham said she would attend. Also, a letter was received from the MBLC announcing the increase in state aid to Northampton public libraries. Mr. Carrier also reported that the MLA's 11th annual Ways & Means Day would be held February 1 in Boston. It is an opportunity to present library issues to the state Ways & Means Committee.

A letter was also received from Mr. Elliot Offner expressing his appreciation for receiving the annual Trustees' award. Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Moulding to ask Mr. Rowe to contact Mr. Offner about scheduling the awards ceremony after Mr. Offner has recovered from the surgery he is scheduled to have in March.

Open Meeting Regulations

Ms. Moulding distributed copies of the "Open meetings of governmental bodies" document provided by the City. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said there was nothing new in the document.

FY06 Operating Budget

Ms. Moulding reported that the budget is very tight this year, but should be okay if there is no unforeseen crisis. Water and sewer costs are still over budget by about \$1,600, wages are over by about \$2,600, and electricity and oil costs are difficult to predict. Mr. Carrier said that if necessary the Trustees would have to look for ways to make up the shortfall in these budgeted items by reallocating funds. Ms. Moulding said that there was not much room for reallocation in the current budget. Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Moulding to continue to look at every expenditure the library makes very carefully before authorizing it.

Second Century Fund

Ms. Moulding reported that the \$87,952 check paid to Mt. View in November had been voided, and a new check issued for \$68,523 which more accurately reflects the work completed so far. Mt. View will finish the work in the spring, at which time they will be paid the remaining contract price. After Mt. View is paid, there should be about \$2,000 remaining in the Second Century Fund.

Ms. Moulding also reported that a gift of \$25,000 has been received from Roger and Sue Ames in memory of Frederick O. Ames which they designated to "maintaining the building". Ms. Moulding proposed using \$13,000 to pay for HVAC work for the new Friends programming room, and the remaining \$12,000 deposited into the Second Century Fund to be used for other building projects, and some retained for emergencies. Mr. Petcen is in the process of preparing a prioritized list of interior building work to be done including upgrades and repairs for walls, lighting, plumbing, boiler, and other miscellaneous items. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said that the "Open" sign and banners would be paid from a gift from the 350th Committee, not the Second Century Fund.

Election of Officers

Mr. Bloomberg moved that all officers of the board of Trustees continue in their current positions, Mr. Carrier as President, Ms. Harding as Vice-President, Mr. Morin as Treasurer, and Ms. Barone as Secretary. He also moved that the Trustees continue to operate under Roberts Rules of Order, and that the Trustees continue to meet on the third Monday of the month. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Barone to update the Trustees' list of addresses and distribute it to all of the Trustees.

Mr. Carrier suggested that the Trustees adopt the following goals for 2006: 1) to complete the current building projects including the repointing project, the parking and grounds project, the programming room, and the handicap lift project; 2) to establish an annual fundraising program; 3) to complete and submit the long range plan; 4) to continue the work begun on special collections in the Hampshire Room; and 5) to continue to make the library more responsive to community needs.

Fundraising Committee

Ms. Moulding reported that she, Ms. Harding, and Ms. Burnham had met as the new Fundraising Committee, but that representatives from the Friends and from the community were still being sought. Ms. Harding suggested a fundraising goal of \$40,000. One of the first issues the committee must tackle is what the funds should be used for. Mr. Carrier said that he thought the funds should be used for capital improvements and projects in the library, and that people were more likely to give for a specific cause as opposed to supplementing the operating budget. Mr. Carrier also expressed concern that using the funds to pay for operating budget items would set a precedent, and that these items would then never again be funded by the City.

Ms. Burnham suggested that there could be choices on the donation form of how the donor would like their funds allocated, for instance the children's room, arts and music department, building and grounds, etc. Mr. Bloomberg said that it would be in the library's best interest for the funds to be undesignated so that the Trustees could decide how best to spend the funds, and to avoid accounting problems.

Fundraising Committee (continued)

Ms. Moulding suggested that the fundraising program be at the same time each year so that it would be expected, and that the mailing be distinctive and professionally designed. Ms. Moulding requested that \$500 be allocated as seed money for the Fundraising Committee. Mr. Carrier said that the seed money could be borrowed from Special Collections, and then paid back when funds are raised. Mr. Bloomberg suggested that the Fundraising Committee develop a more specific proposal and bring it back to the Trustees at the next Trustees' meeting. Mr. Carrier also asked that the Trustees approve the membership of the Fundraising Committee at the next Trustees' meeting.

Funding for Long Range Planning Process

Ms. Moulding requested that the Trustees allocate \$2,700 for the Long Range Planning Committee to fund a Smith College work study student for 5 hours a week to perform clerical duties including copying, collating, distributing surveys, and survey data entry (\$2,000); \$500 for printing costs; and \$200 for online survey software (Survey Monkey). Ms. Moulding proposed allocating the \$2,500 gift received from Edmund P. DeLaCour.

Mr. Bloomberg moved that \$2,700 be allocated to the Long Range Planning Committee as proposed by Ms. Moulding, \$2,500 from the DeLaCour gift, and the remaining \$200 from Special Collections. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Request for Funding from Friends of Forbes for Programming

Ms. Moulding asked the Trustees to approve a request to the Friends of Forbes for funding made by Ms. Downing for \$2,000 for library programming. The request was approved by the Friends at their January meeting, contingent upon the approval of the Trustees. Ms. Moulding reported that the Friends are very pleased with the amount and type of programming in the library. In past they have give \$1000 per year, but the library is doing much more programming now, and would like to double the amount this year.

Mr. Bloomberg moved to approve the request for funding to the Friends of Forbes for \$2,000 for programming. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Ms. Julie Bartlett, Forbes Library Archivist, joined the meeting to tell the Trustees about some of the programming planned for February. Ms. Bartlett reported that there will be a celebration commemorating the 125th Anniversary of Judge Charles E. Forbes death bequest on February 13 at 7 PM. The library will give a brief presentation about the life of Judge Forbes and his importance to the Forbes Library and the greater Northampton community. Items relating to Judge Forbes from Special Collections and Archives will be on display. Presenters include Becky Plimpton Marconi, Director of the Emily Williston Memorial Library in Easthampton and Forbes scholar; Julie Bartlett, Forbes Library Archivist; and Elise Bernier-Feeley, Local History and Genealogy Librarian. Ms. Bartlett invited the Trustees to attend and asked that one of them present the 125th anniversary certificate. Mr. Bloomberg said that the publicity and press release should include the information that the event will be held in the CCPLM. Mr. Bloomberg suggested and Ms. Moulding agreed, that the 125th anniversary of the Forbes bequest could be used by the Fundraising Committee for their kickoff fundraising drive.

Request for Funding from Friends of Forbes for Programming (continued)

Ms. Bartlett also reported that the library will be holding a "Food for Fines" week from February 12-18 to honor the 125th anniversary of the death of Judge Forbes. During this week, patrons may pay the fine for any overdue material they are returning with a canned good or non-perishable food item. All food will be given to the Northampton Survival Center for distribution to those in need in our community.

Gifts

Mr. Bloomberg moved to approve the allocation of the gifts received since the last Trustees meeting as proposed by Ms. Moulding: \$25 from Jeffrey Brown, East Longmeadow, in memory of Ronald Sarazin to the Book Fund; laptop computer from Nancy Reeves, Northampton; 2 laptop computers from Lou and Martha Pacilio, Leeds; \$1,500 from Mary Harding, Northampton, designated to the Hampshire Room; \$500 from David Bloomberg, Northampton, designated to the Staff Development Fund; \$200 from Frank J. Roach, Williamsburg, to the Book Fund; laptop computer from John and Martha Martin, Northampton; \$25,000 from Roger and Sue Ames, Tulsa, OK, in memory of Frederick O. Ames, designated to "maintaining the building" to the Second Century Fund; \$100 from Dana Salisbury, Easthampton, designated to purchase audio books, to the Book Fund; \$25 from Beverly A. Royce, East Longmeadow, in memory of Ronald Sarazin, to the Book Fund; \$2,500 from Edmund P. DeLaCour, Northampton, to pay for Long Range Plan expenses. Mr. Bloomberg also moved that \$13,000 of the \$25,000 Ames gift be used for HVAC work in the new Programming Room. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Ms. Moulding said that with the funding of \$13,000 for the HVAC work from the Ames gift, the Friends would now be able to furnish the new Programming Room with tables, chairs, rugs, lighting, carpeting, sink & counter, and computers. In response to a question from Mr. Bloomberg, Ms. Moulding said that no one was aware of the lack of vents in the new Programming Room until the shelves were removed. Also in response to a question from Mr. Bloomberg, Ms. Moulding said that two bids had been received and that \$13,000 was the low bid, and was from the same company that has worked on the library's HVAC system in the past.

In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said that the library would not charge non-profit groups for use of the new Programming Room, but may charge other groups that are not non-profits. Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Moulding to find out what the Jones Library fees and policies are for charging groups for the use of their programming room. Also in response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said that the library does have a written policy of charging for custodial time during after hours use.

Directors Evaluation

Mr. Carrier reported that the Director's evaluation has been completed and copies will be distributed to the Trustees. The evaluation will be discussed at the February Trustees' meeting.

Parking Project

Ms. Moulding reported that Mt. View will complete the contracted work in the spring, and that the brownstone has been ordered.

Repainting Project

Ms. Moulding reported that the repair of the interior walls of the building has been very difficult. Plans for the interior wall work have gone through many permutations, but the architect and contractor have finally decided on a course of action. Ms. Moulding will ask the architect to write a letter of explanation about the situation that can be given to Mayor Higgins, Chris Pile, Joe Cook, and Jim Dostal of the Capital Improvements Committee. In spite of the problems, the project is still within budget.

Handicap Lift Project

Ms. Moulding reported that the Handicap Lift Project is making progress and should be completed in late February. In response to a question from Ms. Burnham, Ms. Moulding said that the old lift was not ADA compliant and was beyond repair, necessitating the installation of a new handicap lift. The new lift is required to be enclosed for safety reasons.

Programming Room

Ms. Moulding reported that the old bound periodicals have been removed from the new programming room, and she is in the process of finding new homes for them. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said she would provide a list of the periodicals to the Trustees. She has posted them on a listserv, and will donate some to other institutions (approximately 10%). The remainder will be sold. Ms. Moulding said that the interest in the bound periodicals has been minimal since users now prefer full-text online.

Long Range Planning Committee

Ms. Moulding presented a timeline for the long range plan which must be submitted to the MBLC by October 1st in order to be eligible for grant funds. The major component of the plan is data gathering from the community. The committee plans to do online, paper, and phone surveys, as well as soliciting feedback from community members through public comment sessions and focus groups. Ms. Moulding asked the Trustees to attend the public comment sessions to be held in March. The focus groups will be for invited participants only, and will be facilitated by Susan Kohler-Gray who is donating her services. There will also be a focus group for library staff in March. In April the information will be compiled, and goals and objectives will be set based on what the community wants. A rough outline of the plan will be written in June, and a first draft of the plan will be written in July using the MBLC guidelines. The plan will be finalized in August and approved by the Trustees and the Mayor before being printed and submitted to the MBLC in September.

In response to a question from Ms. Burnham, Ms. Moulding said that in subsequent years, an action plan would need to be updated showing the library's progress. A new long range plan would need to be created every 5 year. Ms. Moulding said that creating the plan is a lot of work, but is necessary, and it will permit the library to apply for federal LSTA grants, and will also help the fundraising committee make contacts and set plans.

Ms. Moulding requested Mr. Carrier and the other Trustees to attend the City Council meeting on Thursday February 2nd at 7:30 PM to present the concept of the long range plan, including the reasons the plan needs to be done, and also soliciting input from the City Council. Ms. Moulding will provide the Trustees with a press release and a packet of information about the long range plan prior to the meeting.

Children's Programming

Ms. Moulding submitted the Children's Programming plans, which include adopting a goat for \$75 a year, to be paid out of supplies until paid back by a Children's Room donation drive. The program is a fundraiser for a charity organization that rescues farm animals, and helps to educate kids about the realities of agriculture, farm life, and food production.

Genealogy Resources Tour

Ms. Moulding submitted a report from Ms. Bartlett, Ms. Bernier-Feeley, Mr. Tabor, Ms. Knaack, and Ms. Garrett about their recent tour of the National Archives and Records Administration's Northeast Region in Pittsfield and the Berkshire Athenaeum, Pittsfield's Public Library. Ms. Moulding said that much useful and important information was gathered about how to make the Forbes genealogy resources in the Hampshire Room more accessible to library patrons. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said that the patron surveys conducted as part of the long range planning process will show how important genealogy is to the library's patrons, and the information will be included in the long range plan. Mr. Carrier said it was important for the Mayor and the City Council to know how important these resources are to the public, especially in view of the fact that Ms. Barlett's salary is being funded from Special Collections this year, and that it cannot continue to be funded this way.

Oral History Project

Ms. Moulding reported on the Oral History Project funded by a grant obtained by Adam Novitt from the Highland Valley Elder Services to provide oral history training to prepare participants to record histories in either audio or video format. The first training session was held January 11, and was attended by a maximum capacity audience of 30 participants. Next, Julie Beaulieu from NCTV came and introduced the video recording and editing equipment available as well as her intention to create a programming series once she has several completed histories. She will be returning later in January to give more in depth training. Donna Kenney, President of CLIO Associates spoke about the process of creating an oral history and gave homework to prepare the participants for the following two evenings of training that she will be giving. Elise Feeley gave an inspirational talk about the feasibility and importance of creating oral histories. Once training is complete, students will be using the library's grant funded recording equipment and editing computer. If the student chooses, these histories will be added to the Hampshire Room Collection and aired on NCTV.

Coolidge Minutes

Mr. Carrier presented the minutes from the December 12, 2005 meeting of the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library & Museum Advisory Board. The CCPLM is planning for a 50th anniversary celebration to be held Saturday, September 9th. The event will be small and modest, and will include a guest speaker, photographer Stan Shearer. The committee is also considering an essay contest for high school students.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM.