

**TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY**  
**Meeting of May 17, 2007**

**Present:** Mr. Bloomberg, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Harding, Mr. Morin, Ms. Moulding, Mr. Rowe, Ms. Barone. **Also Present:** Sally Edelstein, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Faith Kaufmann, observer for the Forbes Library Employee Association; Charleene Murray, Shawn Howard, and Dave Murphy, representatives of Banknorth; Ed Shanahan. **Absent:** none.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM in the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum.

**Banknorth Report**

Ms. Charleene Murray introduced Dave Murphy, regional manager, and Shawn Howard, who will be the new lead portfolio manager on the Forbes account. Ms. Murray noted that the estimated annual income on the account is \$83,302, the Banknorth fees are \$8,374, leaving \$74,929 available for distribution. The Forbes monthly distributions total \$93,400. According to the total return approach, the shortfall will be made up from distribution of principal. The total portfolio value is currently \$3,044,915.

Mr. Howard then gave an overview of current market conditions, noting that the stock market has been doing well since last summer, while the bond market has been relatively flat. Mr. Howard noted that due to market appreciation, the equity component of the Forbes portfolio was now about 65%, and he asked if the Trustees were comfortable with that mix. Mr. Bloomberg said that 65% in equities was the target allocation. In response to a question from Mr. Bloomberg, Mr. Howard said that most of the bonds in the Forbes portfolio were corporate bonds, not government bonds. When these bonds were purchased, corporate bonds yielded a higher return, while government bonds were more secure. In the current market, corporate bonds are not yielding significantly more than government bonds, so as they come due he will purchase the more secure government bonds which will help diversify the bond portfolio.

Mr. Howard said that allocation by sector of the equity portion of the Forbes portfolio matched the S & P's sector allocation by broad category. Within those sectors, Banknorth has attempted to purchase the best performing securities. Mr. Howard said that year to date the Forbes portfolio has done a little better than the S & P, although it lags the S & P a bit at one year. In response to questions from Mr. Bloomberg, Mr. Howard said that the Forbes portfolio has emphasized large cap over mid and small cap stocks and that caused it to lag the market a bit over the last year. He said that individually small cap stocks are a little more risky than large cap stocks, but not when they are purchased as a fund. Mr. Bloomberg asked why the Forbes portfolio had taken the approach of investing in individual stocks as opposed to funds by sector. Mr. Murphy said that about half of the endowment funds they manage are done in this way, and this approach could be used for Forbes as well. The Trustees thanked the bankers for their report, and the bankers left the meeting at 4:20 PM.

**Public Comments**

Ed Shanahan introduced himself, and said that he had come to the meeting as a reporter in response to an anonymous inquiry he'd received about the minutes of the March 13 Trustees' meeting. The question concerned the following: "Mr. Bloomberg made a motion to authorize the president of the Trustees to

**Public Comments** (continued)

execute on behalf of the Trustees a certain agreement and release recommended by Attorney Reall to resolve an outstanding dispute. The settlement is to be paid temporarily from the Special Collections Fund, until it can be replenished through gifts or bequests. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously." Mr. Bloomberg said that the issue was a personnel matter, and that the Trustees were bound by agreement not to discuss it. Mr. Carrier asked Mr. Shanahan what his specific questions were. Mr. Shanahan said that he had two questions: 1) what is the certain agreement, and 2) what is the amount of money taken temporarily from special collections to be replenished? Mr. Bloomberg said that the Trustees would consult with their counsel and respond to the extent they are able to at the next Trustees' meeting.

**Secretary's Report**

Ms. Harding moved that the Secretary's Report of April 18, 2007 be accepted and placed on file. Mr. Bloomberg seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report**

Mr. Bloomberg moved that the Treasurer's Report of April 30, 2007 be accepted and placed on file. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Morin reported that May will be a three pay period month requiring an extra \$30,000 for wages, but that it was expected. Everything else is on track, and there is nothing to cause concern. He said that he and Ms. Moulding were still working on reconciling the EFT fund, noting that there were some timing issues there, but nothing major.

In response to a question from Ms. Harding, Ms. Moulding said that the increase in postage costs should not be a large expense for the library. Mr. Morin said that he would explore the possibility of online bill paying through Florence Savings Bank, but that it is slightly complicated by the fact that many invoices are paid at once. Mr. Morin wants to be sure that the payments are applied correctly to the appropriate invoices, without the paper copies being mailed.

**Director's Report**

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

Ms. Moulding reported that Ms. Downing, Assistant Director, will soon be on maternity leave. She has trained Ms. Jennie Pittsinger on many of her tasks. Ms. Pittsinger, who was hired at 25 hours per week, will go to full time during Ms. Downing's leave. Other staff members, including the director, will cover various duties normally performed by the Ms. Downing. Programming and volunteer coordination are very time consuming aspects of the assistant director's job and both of those activities will be cut back during her absence. Mr. Rick Hart will run the adult summer reading program, but no other programs will be initiated this summer. Ms. Moulding pointed out that the summer is a time when Forbes usually cuts back with programming anyway, because fewer people are around and attendance is low. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing said she would be out for two months, return part-time for several weeks, and then ease back into a full time schedule. Ms. Downing said that everyone in the library has been helping by pitching in and picking up some of her tasks while she is away.

**Director's Report** (continued)

Ms. Moulding reported the Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) gives awards at their annual convention and this year Forbes won second place for best library website. Evaluation criteria included graphic design, originality, and presentation. Ms. Moulding and the Trustees congratulated webmaster Faith Kaufmann and her helpers for a website to be proud of.

Ms. Moulding reported that there is a new book case in the main lobby which will be used for the ongoing book sale. The new shelving will provide more space for sale items and eliminate clutter in the lobby. The lobby floor has been stripped and refinished, and looks fabulous. Some of the lobby fixtures have been rearranged, and the Trustees were asked to comment. The Trustees expressed appreciation for the hard work done by Mr. Jason Petcen and Mr. Jason Myers on their work in the Forbes lobby.

Ms. Moulding reported that as requested, she is reviewing the library's more lenient food policy after six months of implementation. The new policy has not been publicized, but is available along with the library's other policies, on the website and at the desks. Staff members seem to agree that there has been no noticeable change in patron behavior since the policy change. It merely makes it easier for staff to rein in patrons who try to eat or drink messy foods and beverages.

April's Code Green winner was Faith Kaufmann who recognized and encouraged fellow staffers in their customer service initiatives.

Ms. Moulding reminded the Trustees that on Sunday, May 20, at 2:00 PM in the Coolidge Museum, the Trustees Award will be presented to Diana Gordon. A reception will follow in the Hosmer Gallery.

**Friends of Forbes Meeting**

Ms. Moulding attended the May 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library, and reported that they funded the Learning Express database, and that they are working on updating their website. The annual Friends of Forbes Garden Tour will be on Saturday, June 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Next Meetings**

The next regular meeting of the Trustees was scheduled for Wednesday, June 20, 2007 at 4:00 PM in the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be on Wednesday, June 6, 2007 at 6:30 PM. Ms. Harding agreed to attend this meeting on behalf of the Trustees.

**Communications**

Ms. Moulding reported that the library received a letter from the UMass Alliance for Community Transformation thanking the library for help and support during the book drive last month. This was a student group from UMass collecting books for a community center they were helping to build in Jonestown, Mississippi.

**FY08 Budget**

Ms. Moulding reported that she and Ms. Downing met with Mayor Higgins and Finance Manager Chris Pile on May 15 to discuss the FY08 budget. Ms. Moulding said that both were sympathetic, concerned, and emphasized how important the library was to them. They talked about the impact of the Lilly Library renovation, and the increase in costs to maintain a larger building.

**FY08 Budget** (continued)

Most city departments are being held to a 1 or 2 percent increase, while both Forbes and Lilly are receiving more. Looking at the Forbes budget, they discussed where it could be trimmed. Ms. Moulding suggested cutting back the technology line item for one year, and then restoring it. The Mayor was reluctant for the library to cut anything back that might be difficult to add back in at a later date. Ms. Moulding also suggested reducing the labor and repair line item. Not many repairs were necessary this past year, but it is difficult to predict what may be required in the future. Mr. Pile said that if a repair came up beyond the budgeted amount, Forbes could come to the City requesting additional funds. The Mayor asked Ms. Moulding to cut \$10,000 from the personnel budget. Ms. Moulding said it was not possible to do that without closing on Sundays. The Mayor's recommendation was that since Lilly is open on Sundays, Forbes could close on Sunday. While the Mayor was not happy about this, she could not see any other options. Mr. Pile was also concerned that Forbes may not have allocated enough for energy costs, but that the library could ask for more later if it was needed. Ms. Moulding presented the following cuts in the Forbes FY08 budget to the Trustees for their approval: \$11,000 in personnel (closing Sundays); reducing the technology line by \$2,000 (from \$12,000 to \$10,000), and reducing the labor and repairs line item by \$1,000 (from \$2,000 to \$1,000) for a total reduction of \$14,000.

In response to a question from Mr. Bloomberg, Ms. Moulding said that even if Forbes closes on Sundays, the required number of open hours to receive state aid would be met since Lilly will be open on Sundays. Ms. Moulding said that Sundays have been busy, but no more than other days. In response to a question from Hs. Harding, Ms. Moulding said that it would not be feasible, or result in enough savings, to close either another morning or evening during the week. In response to a question from Mr. Rowe, Ms. Moulding said that in order to retain state aid, it was not possible to shift money from the book fund to cover operating expenses. In response to a question from Mr. Bloomberg, Ms. Moulding said that it was not advisable to use other funds such as Special Collections or the Second Century Fund because those funds were intended for other purposes.

Mr. Bloomberg asked if the issue of closing on Sundays could be used in the fundraising campaign. Ms. Moulding said that if it was, then Forbes would need to remain open on Sundays. She said that often library patrons are not in a position to donate large sums of money. Ms. Downing added that maintaining current operations is not a compelling goal of a fundraising campaign.

Ms. Harding made a motion to accept Ms. Moulding's recommendations to cut a total of \$14,000 from the Forbes FY08 budget including: reducing personnel by \$11,000 to close Sundays; reducing technology by \$2,000 (from \$12,000 to \$10,000), and reducing labor and repairs by \$1,000 (from \$2,000). Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

On the positive side, Ms. Moulding reported that the City is currently accepting bids to install a new city-wide phone system. Forbes will be included in this project, and will not have to go in front of the Capital Improvement Committee and make its own case for a new phone system.

**FY08 Book Budget**

Ms. Moulding submitted the FY08 Book Budget revenue and expenditure spreadsheets. The book budget has been level funded since the projected income for last year was not met. Although the total estimated income is \$2,000 above the projected income, \$4,200 came from a special transfer of funds from the Bak bequest to jump start the Playaway collection. On the expenditures spreadsheet, things have stayed nearly the same, with some shifting, mostly within categories, to more accurately reflect trends in collection development such as increased media demand and greater emphasis on database resources. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said that weeding of the collection is ongoing to make room for new purchases.

Mr. Rowe made a motion to approve the FY08 book budget of \$149,100 as proposed by Ms. Moulding. Ms. Harding seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

**Second Century Fund**

Ms. Moulding reported that the library has received the final bill for the fence, which completes the renovation project, and there is \$11,000 remaining in the Second Century Fund. Ms. Moulding suggested leaving the money there and waiting to see what other projects may arise. Mr. Petcen has recommended that the library hire a roofing company to inspect and repair the roof. Mr. Carrier agreed that this type of maintenance is important to prevent more extensive repairs in the future.

Mr. Rowe made a motion to approve the director's request to hire a roofing company to inspect and repair the roof as needed. Ms. Harding seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

**Coolidge Letters**

Ms. Moulding reported that the Coolidge Advisory Committee met Tuesday, May 8<sup>th</sup> and discussed the possibility of selling the Washington Letters which are part of the Coolidge Collection. There were many opinions voiced, but after the discussion, the committee voted unanimously to recommend to the Trustees of Forbes Library that the letters and/or book not be sold at this time. They recommended that the archivist, Ms. Julie Bartlett, should investigate a possible sale to a public institution rather than a private collector.

Mr. Rowe said that he thought it was unlikely that a public institution would be able to pay a lot of money for the items. Mr. Carrier said that he did not want the library to commit to a policy of never selling to a private collector, but that in this case he agreed with the CCPLM Advisory Board's decision. The Trustees instructed Ms. Moulding to ask Ms. Bartlett to respond to the inquiry by saying that they have decided not to sell the Washington Letters "at this time."

**Gifts, Bequests, Sales, etc.**

Ms. Moulding reported that the following gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting: an undesignated gift of \$100 from the World War II Veterans Association of Hampshire County, Northampton, to be deposited in the Halberstadt Technology Fund; and a designated gift of \$2,075 from the Friends of Forbes to be deposited in the Book Fund to pay for the Learning Express database.

Ms. Harding moved to approve the allocation of the gifts as proposed by Ms. Moulding. Mr. Bloomberg seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

**Gifts, Bequests, Sales, etc.** (continued)

Ms. Moulding displayed the recent gift from Elliot Offner of a woodcut entitled "A sheltering tree" which has recently returned from being framed. Mr. Carrier expressed the Trustees' appreciation of the gift. Ms. Moulding said that she is looking for a prominent place to display the print in the library.

**Fundraising Committee**

Ms. Harding reported that the Fundraising Committee has not met, and she has not heard back from Sue Wiggins. Mr. Morin said that he was still investigating being able to accept donations online.

**Increasing the Number of Trustees**

The Trustees discussed the provisions for filling vacancies on the board, and increasing the number of Trustees from five to seven. The first choice for filling vacancies would be for the Trustees, with input from the public, to select a candidate and then make a recommendation to the City Council for final approval. The Trustees then discussed the pros and cons of increasing the number of Trustees from five to seven. The possible downside might include longer or more complicated meetings; lack of unanimity; dilution of responsibility; and absenteeism. On the positive side, there will be more people to do the work; more penetration and contact with the community; and more energy and expertise. The Trustees also noted that there was a lot of interest in the Trustees position in the last election, and many qualified candidates who would welcome the honor and the chance to participate. Mr. Bloomberg said that the library would need to convince the probate court judge that there was a need for it in order to increase the number of Trustees.

Mr. Bloomberg made a motion to request the probate court and City Council to amend the Forbes Library charter to authorize a procedure for the Trustees to fill vacancies before the next election. The procedure would be for the Trustees to nominate a candidate subject to the approval of City Council. Ms. Harding seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Bloomberg made a motion that as part of the petition to the probate court, the Trustees also request to amend the trust set forth in the will of Charles Forbes to increase the number of Trustees from five to seven. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Bloomberg will finalize the petition and distribute it to the Trustees at the next meeting.

**Investment Research**

Mr. Bloomberg reported that he and Ms. Harding have talked to several financial service companies, and have received similar reactions to the Forbes current investment strategy. Mr. Bloomberg noted that Banknorth had addressed some of those concerns today in the discussion about corporate versus government bonds, and the use of mutual funds as opposed to individually picked stocks. Ms. Harding reported that she received a letter from George Zimmerman, City Treasurer, providing an overview of the Investment Advisor Selection Process the City went through recently. Mr. Bloomberg said the next steps are to hear from another party, and then to consolidate some recommendations for the Trustees.

**Reports on Workshops/Meeting/Activities**

Ms. Moulding submitted copies of the following reports on events attended by library staff: New England Regional Genealogical Conference (Rick Hart); MLA Conference (Lisa Downing); Sustainability Workshop (Rick Hart); Teen Advisory Board (Stephanie Levine); and Community Preservation Committee (Janet Moulding).

Ms. Moulding noted that the Teen Advisory Board came out of the long range plan, and produced some interesting ideas and recommendations. Mr. Carrier asked Ms. Moulding to compile and submit those recommendations at the next Trustees' meeting. Ms. Moulding also distributed a list of the Community Preservation Committee members, and asked Trustees to speak to members they may know about the importance of funding the project at Forbes.

Ms. Moulding distributed a sign up form for a field trip on June 21 to see the exhibit "Climbing the Ladder: Calvin Coolidge and Bay State Politics" in Plymouth, Vermont, which has borrowed items from the CCPLM. There is room for 29 passengers on the bus, and the Trustees were encouraged to attend.

At 5:35 PM Mr. Rowe moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Bloomberg seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 PM.