

TRUSTEES OF FORBES LIBRARY
Meeting of March 13, 2008

Present: Mr. Adams, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing, Ms. Harding, Ms. Moulding, Mr. Rowe, Mr. Morin, Ms. Barone. **Also Present:** Sally Edelstein, observer for the Friends of Forbes Library; Mr. Jason Petcen, observer for the Forbes Library Employee Association.

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM in the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Secretary's Report

Ms. Burnham moved that the Secretary's Report of February 21, 2008 be accepted and placed on file with a few minor corrections. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Carrier asked the Trustees to send their Director's evaluations to Mr. Adams for compilation and discussion at the April Trustees' meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Harding moved that the Treasurer's Report of February 29, 2008 be accepted and placed on file. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Morin reported that the library received the anticipated state aid grant of \$41,038. Payroll services are higher this month due to the printing of W-2 statements for all library employees. The oil expense is over-budget right now, but will balance out as spring comes and the furnace is no longer needed to heat the building. Mr. Morin reported that he and Ms. Moulding are working on straightening out the Second Century Fund, which currently has a deficit of \$1,563. The Watson Copier fund has a surplus of \$1,673, and is now self-sustaining. The Garvey Parking fund from the parking meter revenue is now at \$23,353. In response to a question from Mr. Morin, Mr. Carrier said that money should be turned over to the endowment fund at Banknorth when it reaches \$25,000, with instructions as to which sub-fund it should be deposited.

In response to a suggestion from Ms. Harding, Ms. Moulding agreed to update the list of library funds to include the newer ones that have been recently created, and to display that list online and in the library to encourage people to support one or more funds through donations and bequests. Ms. Moulding also agreed in response to a suggestion from Ms. Harding to purchase "forever" stamps before the price of postage goes up in May.

Mr. Carrier asked Mr. Morin to check to make sure that the RCCR Centennial Fund maintained the balance stipulated by the Friends of Forbes for that fund.

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 she and Ms. Downing had lunch with Francis DeMenno, the recently hired director of the Easthampton Public Library on

Director's Report (continued)

Monday, March 3rd, and gave him a tour of Forbes. They had an enjoyable discussion about library experiences and interests and agreed to be mutually supportive whenever possible.

On Sunday, March 2nd, Ms. Moulding helped the Forbes Library team serve dinner at the homeless shelter in the First Churches. Organized by Rick Hart, Forbes is responsible for one dinner each month, making and serving the food and cleaning up afterwards. Ms. Moulding found the experience gratifying because many of the shelter residents are regulars at Forbes and relished telling her how much Forbes means to them. Ms. Moulding and the Trustees expressed thanks to Mr. Hart for initiating and managing this great outreach and public service, and for cooking and serving each month.

Ms. Moulding reported that Information Services Coordinator, Katie Krol, has set up an account with Amazon.com which allows the public to choose and purchase audio books for Forbes from a pre-selected list which she has posted on Amazon.com. Two books have been received so far by this method. Audio books tend to be much more expensive than print books and since the medium is relatively new, the library does not have a previously purchased collection of the classics as is the case for print books. "Adopt a Book on CD" is a way for patrons to choose their favorites and contribute to the library. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said that she would also do a press release on the new program.

Ms. Moulding reported that last month's Code Green winner was Katie Krol, one of the Information Services Coordinators, who as an audience member at a program in the Community Room, helped the presenter who was having trouble with her own AV equipment.

Ms. Moulding reminded the Trustees that the Library Legislative Breakfast will be held at 7:30 on Friday, March 21st at the Jones Library in Amherst. Since Ms. Moulding will be Ireland, Ms. Downing will attend the breakfast for Forbes Library and all Trustees are warmly invited to take part in the opportunity to tell our legislators Stan Rosenberg and Peter Kocot why they need to support public libraries.

Ms. Moulding also reminded the Trustees that the Friends of Forbes annual meeting will be Wednesday, April 2nd. They will have their regular business meeting at 5:30 in the Community Room, their Annual Meeting at 6:00 in the Community Room, and then they will move upstairs to the Coolidge Museum for their program which this year will be award winning poetry readings by middle school students.

Ms. Moulding reported that the Trustees' Award Reception will be held Saturday, June 21st from 2:00 to 4:00 in the Coolidge Museum. Entertainment will be provided by a chamber group from the Northampton Community Music School. This year's recipients are former Friends of Forbes board member, Anne Keppler, and former library trustee, David Bloomberg.

Friends of Forbes

Mr. Adams attended the March 5 meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library and reported that their stocks were down slightly, reflective of the market, but their investments were overall still very good. They discussed their newsletter and the garden tour which is scheduled for Saturday, June 4th. The Friends voted on Ms. Moulding's wish list and approved funding for the welcome kiosk for the lobby and banners. The Friends will find out this week

Friends of Forbes (continued)

how much they have been awarded through the Florence Savings Bank Community Customer's Choice Community Grants program.

Next Meetings

The next regular meeting of the Trustees was scheduled for Thursday, April 17, 2008 at 4:00 PM in the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum. Mr. Morin will ask the Banknorth representatives to report on the endowment fund. If they are able to attend, the meeting will begin at 3:45 PM.

The next meeting of the Friends of Forbes Library will be on Wednesday, April 2. They will have their regular business meeting at 5:30 in the Community Room, their Annual Meeting at 6:00 in the Community Room, and then they will move upstairs to the Coolidge Museum for their program which this year will be award winning poetry readings by middle school students. All of the Trustees are invited to attend. Mr. Rowe will attend on behalf of the Trustees.

Communications

Ms. Downing received a letter dated February 22, 2008 from the Northampton Survival Center thanking the library for the recent donation of 874 pounds of food received through the Food for Fines program.

Ms. Moulding distributed a letter sent to the Trustees from Attorney Elaine Reall dated March 13th, summarizing her remarks at the Trustees meeting of January 17, 2008.

Ms. Moulding distributed a copy of an email invitation to the 8th Annual Trustee Symposium from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Massachusetts Library Trustees Association on Saturday, April 5th in Boxborough, MA.

FY09 Operating Budget

Ms. Moulding distributed the budget documents which were submitted to the city for FY09. These were prepared according to the city's instructions: a level services budget and a budget with 2.5% cut from the level services budget. Until a meeting takes place with the Mayor and Finance Manager, these budget estimates are only a theoretical exercise. The meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, April 2, at 3:30 in the Mayor's office. Ms. Moulding, Ms. Downing, and Mr. Carrier will attend the meeting, and the rest of the Trustees are also invited to attend.

In response to a question from Ms. Harding, Ms. Downing said that the library is working on making their Spanish language materials more visible to the public and easier to find. With a limited budget, the focus is on items that have popular appeal. Once the collection becomes substantial enough to draw that community into the building, demand will continue to grow. Also in response to a question from Ms. Harding, Ms. Downing said that she had noticed an increase in Asian language material requests, but with limited funding, and multiple languages, the library needs to look at what is most in demand. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Downing said there was LSTA grant money available for this type of programming. Also in response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said that she had not asked the Friends for help in funding in this area, and that the Friends had just recently very generously agreed to fund the welcome kiosk in the lobby. Ms. Downing said that Mr. Petcen is looking at bids right now and that the kiosk should be installed by June.

Open Meeting Law

The Trustees decided to discuss their reaction to the recent ruling regarding Forbes Library and the open meeting laws at the April Trustees' meeting, after they've had a chance to review the letter sent to them by Attorney Reall.

Gifts, Bequests, Sales, etc.

Ms. Moulding reported that the following designated gifts were received since the last Trustees' meeting: \$1,000 from Anonymous for Special Collections to be deposited in the Special Collections Fund; \$190 from Louisa Ferree, Northampton, to pay for a subscription to Value Line; subscription to the Christian Science Monitor from Margaret McClamroch, Granby.

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

Fundraising Committee

Ms. Harding reported that the fundraising brochure and signs for the collection containers in the library have been printed, and she distributed copies. Ms. Moulding said that all patrons will get a brochure when they check out books, and the brochures will be available at all library functions. There will also be 8 collection boxes around the library. The brochures will be mailed out on Monday, March 17. Ms. Moulding also distributed a printed copy of the library's fundraising web page, where patrons can now make donations online through paypal.

On behalf of the Trustees, Mr. Carrier thanked Ms. Harding and the fundraising committee including Ms. Moulding, Ms. Downing, and Ms. Burnham for their hard work on this project.

Ms. Harding suggested to Ms. Downing that the library consider offering more programs that are science oriented, including the role of science in society. For controversial issues, the library should attempt to present both sides of an issue. Ms. Harding also suggested that the library market its art holdings more to the public. Ms. Moulding said that high quality digital images of the library's art could be used to create an online exhibit, or a printed self-guided tour. Mr. Carrier suggested that perhaps the Friends could help in this area.

Ms. Harding inquired if there were many items disappearing from the library. Ms. Moulding said that most of the valuable items have been removed from the shelves, and there has not been more than the usual amount of theft or destruction of materials.

Increasing the Number of Trustees

Mr. Adams reported that he has not heard back yet from City Solicitor Janet Sheppard about the city's reaction to the library's petition to increase the number of Trustees and establish a procedure for filling vacancies. Mr. Adams said that he believes the Trustees can create their own by-laws because the library is incorporated and there is wording in Judge Forbes' will saying that the Trustees "shall establish all necessary rules and regulations as to the use of the library". A subcommittee was formed to work on the bylaws including Mr. Adams, Ms. Burnham, Ms. Moulding, and Ms. Downing.

Mr. Rowe asked the Trustees to reconsider the decision to increase the number of Trustees from five to seven. The Trustees will consider the question and discuss it at the April Trustees' meeting.

Community Preservation Application

Ms. Moulding reported that the application process for funds from the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) continues. The library made a presentation to the committee Saturday, March 1st. Unfortunately the committee changed its expectations at the last minute and the library presenters were not well prepared to respond. Mr. Carrier and Mr. Petcen gave excellent answers to their questions, but the architect, Ron Alex, was unable to produce certain information and cost estimates that the committee wanted, since he had not been asked to prepare that material. He will send those documents by March 11th as requested by the committee.

The committee scheduled two site visits to the library on Friday and Saturday, March 7th and 8th. Two members of the committee came on Friday and one came on Saturday. The other six members of the committee may request more site visits. Mr. Petcen gave them tours of the building pointing out the quality of the previous repairs and explaining the process of the work. He then guided the committee members to views of the many of the structural problems throughout the building, including climbing into the attic to see the light coming through the holes in the roof. The three committee members who came to Forbes were very impressed and all said that as a result they were convinced the project had to be done and that it would be best to do it all at once, not in phases. The CPC met again on Wednesday, March 12th and Ms. Moulding reported that the presenters spoke on behalf of their projects during the public comments section.

The next meeting of the CPC is scheduled for March 19th, and since Ms. Moulding will be away, Mr. Rowe and Ms. Burnham will attend. At this meeting the CPC will discuss the projects and make their funding decisions.

Forbes Library Employee Association (FLEA) Negotiations

FLEA representatives Jason Petcen, Jennie Pittsinger, Rick Hart, and Stephanie Levine met with Mr. Carrier, Mr. Adams, Ms. Moulding, and Ms. Downing on March 3rd to exchange proposals. Ms. Moulding has consulted with Attorney Reall on the proposals. Mr. Carrier reported that they have reached an agreement in principal, and are now working on tightening up some of the wording. There will be an agreement to vote on at the April Trustees' meeting.

Equal Access Grant

Ms. Moulding distributed a letter from the Board of Library Commissioners congratulating Forbes on having been awarded an Equal Access grant. Information Services librarians, Rick Hart and Jennifer Ditzkoff, wrote and will administer this grant to develop smoother access for patrons attempting to make use of the library's health resources. Ms. Downing said the grant would target both the youth and senior age group markets.

City Phone/Network Planning Process

Ms. Moulding reported that she and Mr. Petcen attended a city phone and network planning meeting on March 4th at City Hall. The city is planning to install a new fiber optic network to include all public buildings. This will put Forbes for the first time on the city's electronic network. That project is still at the design stage in preparation to go out to bid. Overlaid on that network will be a city wide internet based phone system which will greatly improve phone service to all departments. A pilot phone project including the three City Hall Campus buildings and the JFK School is going out to bid this month. The rest of the city's buildings, including Forbes, will not get new phone systems until the summer of 2009 at the earliest. The

City Phone/Network Planning Process (continued)

consultant hired to design this project for the city toured Forbes Library at Ms. Moulding's request. He was then able to clearly understand the needs of this unique operation and building and insure that those needs will be included in the phone RFP. Ms. Moulding has arranged with Ms. Vanessa Oquendo, director of the city's Management Information Systems, for Mr. Petcen to attend all planning meetings in the future. Mr. Petcen reported that Forbes Library is now listed in the RFP for the project, and added that the fiber optic network will improve internet connection speed as well.

Coolidge Law Books

Ms. Moulding reported that the five Coolidge law books, whose purchase was approved by the Trustees in February, have arrived and she showed them to the Trustees. The 19th century books were printed on very acidic paper, which has become brittle, and are now protected by mylar. The books came with a certificate of authenticity. In response to a question from Mr. Carrier, Ms. Moulding said that the library did not pay shipping costs for the books.

Edible Books

Ms. Burnham reported that the Edible Books program is scheduled for Sunday, April 6th, at Lilly Library, from 6 to 8 pm.

Reports on Workshops/Meetings/Activities

The minutes of the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum (CCPLM) meeting of Tuesday, February 19th, were distributed.

At 5:10 PM Ms. Harding moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Rowe seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 PM.