



Board of Library Trustees  
September 13, 2023 at 7:30 PM

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 7:35pm by Chair Carol Hoffman. Present were: Trustees Peter T. Bowman, Carol B. Hoffman, Nancy F. Kukura, Cathryn M. Mercier, Mark S. Robinson, Director Linda C.W. Gardener and Assistant Director Diane Wall. Absent was Trustee Paul J. Fahey.

City warrants and trustee invoices were approved for payment. The minutes from the June 6, 2023 meeting were approved. A card of thanks from Diane Wall was received and read by the Trustees.

**Director's Report:**

**Budget** – The FY2024 budget year is now underway, nearing the end of the first quarter. There is nothing unusual to report.

**Trustee Business** – The First Quarter Trust Fund Summary will be completed next month, and available for review at the next Trustees meeting; Trust fund spending to date is \$18,715.59. Of that amount, \$7,000 was for a single annual invoice supporting the library's Overdrive subscription. Funds have not yet been moved into the regular checking account from UBS. Unspent funds from last year will be expended first.

**Beebe Building** – The lock on the staff door broke earlier this summer. Due to the age of the mechanism, it needs to be replaced entirely. DPW is arranging for a locksmith to take care of it, hopefully this month. A leak in the Friends' area is ongoing, and is monitored by the custodial staff.

**Policies/Administration** – We have discovered a need to update the Patron Payment Refund Policy, which will be addressed later in the agenda. The library union and City have completed the negotiation process for a new Collective



Bargaining Agreement, which is effective as of July 3, 2023. The transfer of funds from the City's Contract Stabilization Fund has been presented to the City Council, and is expected to pass at their next meeting. The Annual Information Report Summary (ARIS) was submitted to the MBLC in August. The Financial Report is due on October 6. The Annual Report for the City, completed by each department, is due at the end of the month. Trustees are also required to provide an annual report, which is incorporated into the library's overall report. It includes information on when the meetings were held, any policies that were adopted or revised, and how the Trustees supported the library.

**Programs** – Diane reported that with creativity and despite weather considerations, staff provided a robust *Find Your Voice* Summer Reading Program, with over 500 children and teens participating, in addition to adults. Children and teens received buttons, attended programs, and participated in passive programming. Teens were tracking the number of days they read, and reached 885 days of reading. Adults also attended programs, and played Summer Reading Bingo. A bingo raffle winner was given a basket of goodies provided by the Friends and local businesses. Diane reported that the staff are very appreciative of the support provided by the Trustees.

**Staffing & Staff Development** – A new staff member was hired to replace Beth Fantozzi, who left in June. Aiden Carroll is the new library assistant in the Children's Room, and is bringing energy and enthusiasm to the job. Our custodian Louis Peck has left and will be replaced by DPW. Staff will be participating in an intensive DEI training that is mandatory for all full time City employees. It will consist of a series of 5 two hour training sessions, resulting in the need to close the library for one Tuesday morning and three Wednesday mornings. The fifth session has yet to be scheduled. These sessions will complete the contractual professional development requirement for the year.



**Friends** – The Friends just had their Victorian Fair book sale, which earned just over \$4,000. They also had a booth on Main Street, and Linda spent the day there, with one Friend for the first half, and another for the second. There was a lot of conversation with Melrosians, with an overall very positive vibe. The Friends are now putting a hold on accepting donations until January, since they cannot have a Winter sale.

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**Patron Payment Refund Policy** – Due to a change in NOBLE's ILS (integrated library system), which keeps track of all patrons and transactions, this policy needs an adjustment to the refund payment period. The current policy gives 90 days, but once an item has been paid for, the transaction is anonymized after 35 days, to protect patron privacy.

Carol moved to revise the policy's 90 days to 30 days. Nancy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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### **Renovation Report**

A meeting was held with attorneys for the City and for the contractor, Castagna and City staff, and the surety company. It remains to be seen what the surety company's assessment of the situation will be. Due to the uncertainty of the actual completion date, staff are now telling patrons that we will be in "next year" or "mid-year". The City Council requested an update on the project at a meeting next Thursday, the 21st.

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**Trustee Bylaws** – Cathie reported that she and Paul are working on the Trustee Bylaws, which were largely in good shape. One item for Trustee consideration will be the possibility of term limits. Cathie is still investigating other boards' practices and will provide the results at the next meeting.

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**Holiday Hours** – Christmas and New Year's Day fall on Mondays this year. In appreciation of the staff's work throughout the year, Peter Bowman moved that



additional time off should be given to staff at Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day, as detailed below. Nancy Kukura seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Close at 1pm the day before Thanksgiving

Close Sundays the day before Christmas and New Year's Day (not an additional benefit, but practical)

Close Tuesday the day after Christmas

Open regular hours Tuesday after New Year's Day, but provide staff with a swing day.

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**Other business** – Peter requested that a representative from UBS come to the November meeting to explain the current status of the trust funds, and discuss long term planning.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31pm.

The next meetings are scheduled for November 14, 2023 and January 9, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter T. Bowman, Clerk

Approved November 14, 2023