

**THE FERGUSON LIBRARY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
September 19, 2023**

Present:

Board Members: E. Bromley (Chair); M. Hyman (Vice Chair); S. Vidan (Treasurer); RJ Mercede (Secretary); S. Frederick; A. Livingston; M. Mays

Citizen Advisors: A. Better-Wirz; T. Cassone; S. Duarte; J. Freeman; A. LiVolsi; M. Metwally; M. Millan; J. Orlikoff; S. O'Shea; S. Perry; D. Stein

Staff: A. Knapp; L. Avellar; C. Harper; C. Hubbard; S. LaPerla
J. Fulcher Anderson; D. Lyles; A. Marrocolla

Ms. Bromley called the meeting to order at 4:32 pm. All attendees introduced themselves in person and from Zoom.

Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Frederick and seconded by Mr. Hyman to accept the June 20, 2023 Board of Trustees minutes. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Vidan reported on the Income Statement as of June 30, 2023, noting that we are in good standing. She spoke about additional grant income of over \$112,000 and revenue from Pay to Print copy machines (which had increased). We are over budget in wage cost, even though there are five open positions to fill. This is due to salary adjustments in accordance with the union contract and annual adjustments to vacation and comp time for purposes of the audit. Expenditures are well reflected showing a net result of just over \$200,000 surplus. Year-to-date expenses for July/August are staying under budget.

CEO's Report

For the fiscal year ending in June, it was easy to do a comparison with the prior year. The number of in-person programs has doubled and it is clear people prefer in-person programming over virtual. Ms. Knapp said we are also comparing the statistical reports to the pre-pandemic year of 2019 and noted that while reference and programming are still behind compared to 2019, e-book circulation in Youth Services is climbing.

She also mentioned the leadership team's DEI discussions and the additional DEI information in BoardEffect that board members will find interesting. The July CEO report centered on Summer Reading Club events and the library's connections with area non-profits to promote summer literacy. The 60th Anniversary of the March on

Washington was the main focus of the CEO's August report, with Ms. Knapp giving highlights on the library's month-long programming centered on the March.

Executive Committee

Ms. Bromley reported on the Executive Committee meeting that was held earlier in the day, in which they discussed today's board meeting agenda.

Building Committee

Mr. Frederick said the Building Committee met on August 22 to discuss the final stages of the Master Plan, which was also presented to the mayor's cabinet that same day. At the next board meeting, the final Master Plan will be presented, with needed upgrades to the Main Library and Harry Bennett Branch. Work is being completed for submission of a \$2 million State Library construction grant.

DEI Committee

After Dr. Robert Livingston's talk last year, it was decided that the library board would form a DEI Committee. The DEI meeting on August 10, 2023 discussed the June board retreat given by Carmen Hughes, Stamford's Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. And Ms. Knapp and Ms. Hubbard spoke on the library's staff EDI Council and their efforts in writing an action plan. At today's meeting there was an in-depth discussion on board policies and future actions concerning DEI.

Pension Committee

There were two Pension Committee meetings held since the June Board of Trustees Meeting. The July 18, 2023 Pension Committee meeting dealt with Hooker & Holcombe's transition as the new advisor and their review and recommendation of funds. The September 12, 2023 Pension Committee meeting was held to approve the pension allocation of 62% equity, 31% fixed income, 5% alternatives and 2% cash, which will make the library's funding now in compliance.

Personnel Committee

On September 14, 2023 the Personnel Committee met to discuss Ms. Knapp's goals for the coming year and approved her salary increase.

Friends of Ferguson

Ms. Metwally spoke on the Friends of Ferguson's mission statement which will now include a DEI statement. The Friends' Stand Against Racism will be holding a Lunch & Learn on DEI Training. Books for Babies is still going strong after 30 years with a giveaway for around 2,000 books each year. The yearly Pub Crawl is being planned for November and Mini Golf for February.

Ferguson Library Foundation

The Ferguson Library Foundation met on September 7, 2023 and elected new Foundation Board officers. The Foundation discussed the investment portfolio, a report from Campaign Counsel, and reviewed a new Foundation logo.

Old Business

The Main Library roof replacement is set to begin on October 3, 2023 and HVAC repair also to begin soon.

New Business

2022-2023 Annual Report

Ms. Avellar presented the Library's Annual Report for 2022-2023 and Board Members were asked to review for accuracy.

Connecticut State Library Grant Resolution

Ms. Knapp presented the Connecticut State Library Grant Resolution for the Harry Bennett Branch Modernization Phase 1 which was approved and moved to accept:

RESOLVED that Alice S. Knapp, the duly appointed CEO of The Ferguson Library, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this organization a certain contract with the Connecticut State Library, State of Connecticut, for a State Public Library Construction Grant.

New Board/Citizen Advisor Orientation

An orientation for new board members and citizen advisors will be held immediately following today's Board of Trustees meeting. This orientation will be recorded for those who are unable to attend.

Ms. Bromley motioned to end today's meeting. All approved the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 5:36 pm.

RJ Mercede
Secretary