

**THE FERGUSON LIBRARY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
October 25, 2022**

Present:

Board Members: S. O'Shea (Chair); E. Bromley; S. Frederick; M. Hyman;
A. Livingston; T. Lucero; R. Mercede; P. O'Brien Morrow; S. Vidan

Citizen Advisors: T. Bartley; J. Block; S. Duarte; S. Fitzgerald; D. Golden;
R. Granata; A. LiVolsi; M. Mays; M. Millan; J. Orlikoff; S. Perry;
M. Sommer; B. Spaulding

Staff: A. Knapp; L. Avellar; C. Harper; C. Hubbard

Ms. O'Shea called the meeting to order at 4:33 pm. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom.

Minutes

A motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the minutes of the September 28, 2022 meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Vidan said that the year-to-date financials are on track. Year over year, the fundraising efforts are down \$30,000 but with the upcoming Annual Appeal campaign and Giving Tuesday, we hope to make up the difference. Ms. Harper reported that some library positions still have to be filled, even though there have been recent hires. The utilities are over budget due to rising costs.

CEO's Report

Ms. Knapp gave the October CEO report. The Entrepreneur-in-Residence Program is still vital, growing and strong. She also noted September's circulation statistics are up as is program attendance. This year's Novel Affair honoree is Polly O'Brien Morrow and Pitney Bowes. Pitney Bowes has been underwriting our summer Sunday hours since 2005, with Sunday being our busiest day of the week per hour. Stephanie O'Shea thanked Polly and Pitney Bowes for their continued support.

Executive Committee

An update on the morning's Executive Committee was given by Stephanie O'Shea.

Pension Committee

The Pension Committee meeting was held on October 11, 2022 and Susana Vidan reported that pension contributions will be lower, as the Defined Benefit Plan is no longer offered to new employees. With the volatility of the current market, the S&P index declined by 20%. There was discussion on the current portfolio. In particular, Susana reported that the investments are in breach of the pension plan, which states allocation of equities should be around 60%. The Pension Committee will reconvene in January 2023 to re-exam the situation and discuss how to proceed.

Friends of Ferguson

Deborah Golden gave a report on the Friends October Board Meeting, noting that income from the Bennett Branch Book Shop is down due to its closure for branch remodeling. The October 12 Pub Crawl was a success and netted \$3,500 with 105 participants. Fiona Davis will be speaking on November 10 with a small fee charged for attending. On November 15, Andrew Morton, author of *The Queen*, will be here. This program is free to attend, since Darien Library is co-sponsoring this event.

Old Business

Bargaining Unit Contract Negotiations

Bargaining Unit negotiations are still ongoing. If there is a settlement before the December Board Meeting, a special meeting will be held for approval of the contract.

Harry Bennett Branch Renovation

Furniture delivery has been slow to arrive due to supply chain issues but if everything arrives we want to hold a November/December open house. There was talk of having the February Board Meeting at the Bennett Branch to show off the renovation.

Diligent/Board Effect Implementation

The Board Effect training will be held at lunch time on either November 28 or November 30. The new system will make viewing of board material easier.

Other

Ms. Knapp spoke of three new hires at the library; Asifullah Safa who will be working in the Business Office. Asif arrived from Afghanistan in 2019, where he was the purchasing agent for the entire country. Eliza Arellano is from Texas and will be a librarian in Youth Services, and Marisol Carrasquillo, from Danbury, a Youth Services librarian at the Bennett Branch. Both Ms. Arellano and Ms. Carrasquillo are bilingual.

We still need to fill two Leadership Team positions, one for Information & Adult Services and the other for Information Technology.

New Business

2023-2030 Capital Budget

Ms. Knapp spoke on the capital budget request of \$100,000 for the Main Library's roof project and elevator replacements. We are also requesting \$250,000 in capital funds for the Harry Bennett Branch modernization. The short-term financing is for PC replacement. We also submitted a request for a Connecticut State Library grant to match the money needed to replace the Main Library's boilers. The library's proposed capital budget request for FY 2023 was reviewed. A motion was made by Ellen Bromley, seconded by Stephen Frederick, and approved to submit the budget to the City.

Campaign Counsel Report

One of the key results of the Campaign Counsel report was a recommendation for the Board and Citizen Advisors to be advocates for the library and all fundraising be done by the Ferguson Library Foundation. A small committee will be formed to work out the implementation details as well as streamline fundraising messages.

Retreat – Next Steps

After discussing the October retreat with Dr. Robert Livingston, the Board voted to form an ad hoc EDI committee.

Board Dinner

After the December 6 Board of Trustees meeting, a holiday dinner will be held at Blackstones Steakhouse.

There being no further business, Ms. O'Shea motioned for adjournment, with all in favor. The meeting ended at 5:32 pm.

Ellen E. Bromley
Secretary