

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

Meeting of the Trustees as a Corporation and Administrative Agency (First Meeting)

Tuesday, May 26, 2020

Held via Zoom <https://boston-public-library.zoom.us/j/82844556151>

MINUTES

The annual meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston (“BPL”) held on Tuesday, May 26, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom conference call.

All Trustees were present at the meeting including: Chair Robert Gallery, Vice- Chair Evelyn Arana-Ortiz Trustees: Zamawa Arenas, Jabari Asim, Ben Bradlee, Jr., Cheryl Cronin, Priscilla Douglas, Linda Dorcena Forry, John Hailer, Jeff Hawkins, and Representative Chynah Tyler. Noting there were a few technological glitches which delayed Mr. Hawkins and Ms. Tyler from joining for the roll call. Also present: Boston Public Library President David Leonard, Clerk of the Board Pamela Carver, Boston Public Library staff, and members of the public.

Chair Robert Gallery presided, and called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. A roll call was taken determining there was a quorum. Mr. Gallery welcomed all and wished everyone well during this unprecedented time. He thanked the management and staff at the BPL for their efforts during this remarkable time of a pandemic. His first matter of business was the approval of the meeting minutes from January 16, 2020. A motion was duly made, seconded, and approved unanimously by the board without questions or comments.

Next, Mr. Gallery designated the Finance and Audit Committee to serve as the “investment committee” per the Library’s charter for the record.

Mr. Leonard began his President’s Report by informing the Trustees that the BPL signed onto the “World Intellectual Property Day” letter. The BPL did so in an effort as part of their membership with the International Federation of Library Associations to call attention to the World Intellectual Property Organizations (“WIPO”) to recognize the importance of preserving cultural heritage worldwide in light of the devastating effects of climate change.

Mr. Leonard referred the Trustees to the draft of the FY20 Accomplishments document, offered as part of the BPL’s budget submission to the City. He highlighted some Collections data that reflected an upwards trajectory of digital borrowing exceeding physical items for the first time. Anticipating the response to the Covid-19 pandemic that those numbers would continue to increase in this direction. Visitor demand has exceeded the previous year by 200,000 visitors to 3.7 million. He noted the focus had been on continuing to expand services in the neighborhoods and our library culture.

Mr. Leonard gave a brief Covid-19 update. The BPL staff pivoted to remote work and providing online services and content since closing on March 16, 2020. Many programs moved online from children’s storytimes, author talks, to conversation circles. In conjunction with the BPL Fund, were able to launch the “Books for Boston” outreach program, which raised approximately \$31,000. This program provided 2,337 books purchased from local bookstores to non-profit organizations such as Boston Healthcare for the Homeless and the Boston Hope Field Hospital located at the Convention Center. The BPL facilities were cleaned to ensure they were safe to return to.

Mr. Leonard reviewed some statistics since March, showing an emerging trend on a weekly basis for new

Library cards, with over 22,816 new BPL card sign ups. Online program showed an increase as well, in total had seen over 140,000 viewed online. On average there were about 72,000 items checked out weekly over a three-week period. Ms. Irmscher clarified this information, noting the ecard sign-ups were up 210% over the same time last year. She added that the digital checkouts would have 3.6 million checkouts, an increase of 1 million from the previous year, particularly noting children content was up 177%.

Mr. Colford added the major difference in switching from in-person to online programming was not being limited by room capacity. He gave the example of story times seeing an increase from thirty children in person to a couple hundred online. The capacity to view programs after the fact resulted in a substantial increased amount of views. In addition to the organizations mentioned by Mr. Leonard, the Department for Youth Services to provide books for incarcerated teens, BCYF Meal Distribution Centers, and YMCA also partnered with our outreach.

Mr. Leonard explained to support the needs from the Collections department the City authorized an additional \$500,000 from the FY20 surplus to spend on E content. This will help decrease wait times and increase availability.

Mr. Leonard then reviewed the possible reopening guidance set forth from both the State and City perspective. He reviewed the Governor's state guidance of Phase 1, which allowed libraries to offer curbside pickup service starting May 25 with indication that broader library services such as browsing or use of the building would not be until Phase 2. Further noting, they required a minimum of three weeks between phases. Due to the density of Boston's urban environment, the City would see a later startup date for various services. The City of Boston's public health emergency remained in effect. The density of Boston's population required a very cautious and thorough approach. Any decisions the BPL made during this time were under the guidance and authorization of the City and the Public Health Commission. All plans would pay attention to issues of equity and ensuring vulnerable populations stay forefront in planning efforts.

He noted Capital Projects under construction were underway. Some limited office space would be permitted as of June 1 within the guidance forthcoming. The initial reopening plans for the BPL were in the final draft stage, but were being reviewed by the Public Health Commission and the City's Operational and Safety Protocol Review Team to look at this from a human resources, administrative, and labor point of view to stay in coordination with other citywide services. Bottom line was that process has to continue before a definitive date for when the BPL would be able to do the first in-person services. Mr. Leonard expected to continue to support employees working remotely while finalizing the review of the BPL plans with the City of Boston. Expected to start with a return with as close to full of the facilities staff. The BPL would begin with hold-pickups at the Central Library. This would be similar to stores versions of curbside pickup; while anticipating following up with this service at some groups of branches. Some staff would be required to offer this service and therefore would return after some reconfiguration of spaces to the service areas to accommodate new safety protocols. He explained the quarantine process for returned materials based on the CDC and IFLA guidance. Mr. Leonard noted that he had joined many calls with the Urban Library Council and other surrounding library directors to learn what/when other institutions were doing in a coordinated communication sharing effort.

The presentation paused for some questions and discussion. The group discussed estimated financial impacts, potential budget changes, PPE requirements, contact tracing, dealing with positive diagnoses.

Next, Mr. Leonard moved to the discussion of renaming of the Dudley branch, He reminded the Trustees that the names of the branches are within the purview of the Trustees. The City of Boston permitted the name change of Dudley Square to Nubian Square after the community voted on a ballot initiative in the last election. The coalition group that advocated for that change has requested the Trustees consider a change to the name of the branch to "Nubian Square Branch". There was also an alternate request from the Friends of the Dudley Branch for a name change to "Roxbury Branch". Both groups had submitted letters of request

accordingly. Mr. Leonard gave a brief history on the branch dating back to the 1970s. This branch replaced two smaller branches in the community, Mount Pleasant Street and one known colloquially as the Roxbury Branch. It has become the home for the Fellowes Athenaeum Trust. He also showed a neighborhood map to show reference to where the branch resided among the broader neighborhoods of Roxbury.

Mr. Leonard ended his presentation by noting the action required on this matter. First, the Trustees need to determine if the name should change, and secondly, what name it should be given.

Ms. Chynah Tyler commented that this was a trending topic in Roxbury, which was her district as State Representative. She explained a ballot initiative was passed after the November 2019 election that resulted in the renaming of Dudley Square to Nubian Square. She added the state just approved legislation for the MBTA bus station from Dudley Station to Nubian Station, This change reflected the fabric of the community and the gentrification in the area of Roxbury.

Several Trustees voiced their support for renaming the Dudley Branch library and were interested in hearing some community input. Some Trustees expressed their concerns for naming the branch Nubian Square which only reflected a subset of the entire community. They felt the name Roxbury had significant historical value and would lose the rich history it represented. Others argued the election vote to rename that section of the neighborhood was enough to justify the will of the residents of Roxbury to rename it Nubian Square.

Mr. Leonard added that if they have not been in the Covid-19 period, we would have hosted an in-person community meeting to review of the status of the branch, get input on the artwork planned for the branch, and take more input than they have on the renaming of the branch questions. He was happy to hear the trustees agreed to rename the branch. He explained there were some suggestions for naming it after an individual. A strong coalition supported the Nubian Square name. There was also a strong sense across the neighborhood there was some value to have the name Roxbury somewhere in the name, particularly as it was colloquially known to be in the past. Mr. Leonard explained they would like some guidance from the Trustees on how best to proceed particularly because they are approximately three months from reopening and they would ultimately love to reopen with the correct signage of the branch. However, if they needed there to be more process, he understood.

Mr. John Hailer clarified that the two names the Trustees were in agreement with as finalists for renaming the branch were Nubian Square and Roxbury.

Mr. Gallery determined as a point of order of business, that after much discussion, the Trustees answered the first question requiring action. The Board was clearly in favor of renaming the branch. He explained that they would hear public comment regarding this matter first to determine how they should continue after. Mr. Gallery changed the order of the agenda to hear public comment to this topic only.

First to speak was Mr. Sadiki Kambon, Director of the Black Community Information Center and the Chairman of the Nubian Square Coalition (a program of the Information Center). He explained it was an all-volunteer center and long before the national movement to take down the signs of those individuals honored that were involved with slavery; they led the initiatives to rename Malcolm X Park, and Malcolm X Boulevard. For the last six years, they have worked on a campaign to take down the Dudley name, because of the fact the family, particularly Thomas who was Governor, oversaw the passage of legislation that legalized slavery in Massachusetts. He heard the Trustees suggested taking a poll and said their opinion was that a poll had already been taken. In reference to the comment regarding “representing all residents of Roxbury”, he reviewed the borders of the Nubian Square campaign, which were agreed by the Mayor and his administration. The ballot question on November 5, it won overwhelming among the residents of Roxbury. this is what he considered to be the poll. He explained there is a uniqueness to Nubian Square that deals with racism, and many other issues that affect this neighborhood but not others. Explaining that young people have embraced the new name of Nubian Square for a reason and reminded the group that the

legislation change for the MBTA station. He noted he gave a presentation to the Friends group regarding his initiative to rename the branch. They had no intention on renaming the branch if it were not for the coalition's efforts. He also noted that they would like to recognize local heroes from the community throughout the years to be represented at the library on a "Wall of Honor". He asked for the Trustees support of the Coalition's efforts.

Next, the Clerk read the public comment of Tracey Wiggins, a resident of Roxbury and employee of the Dudley Branch, into the record. Ms. Wiggins stated, "I started at the Dudley Branch Library in the 1989, and have met many patrons over the years. Many that I have spoken to express the name change to Roxbury Branch over Nubian Branch without knowing that there was ever an option. I am in support of the Roxbury name as well. Many of the older patrons do not have electronic access to computers and feels they will not be heard."

The Clerk read an anonymous patron's statement, "A poll was taken to change the name from Dudley to Nubian, not Roxbury."

Next, the statement of Candelaria Silva-Collins, Project Manager for the Fellowes Athenaeum Trust was read into the record. She stated, "I have used the Dudley Branch since the 1970s and been active with the Friends of the Dudley Branch for years, along with her work as the project manager for the Fellowes group. She was also the E.D. for ACT Roxbury, a program of the Madison Park Development Corporation in Roxbury for years. We created the Roxbury Film Festival, Roxbury Open Studios, and Roxbury Literary Annual and our message was that Roxbury was rich. I support naming the branch the Roxbury Branch. If the Nubian Branch were in fact a black library I would be in support, but it is not."

The public comment continued with Ms. Elizabeth Nagarajah, President of the Friends of the Dudley Branch. She wanted to go on record that this topic was discussed at length among the Friends. Typically, nothing is ever agreed upon whole-heartedly by the group, this topic overwhelmingly had more strong support in favor of the name change to Roxbury Branch over Nubian Square Branch. As it was stated, the neighborhood is no longer just a black neighborhood. It is a very mixed and diverse neighborhood and it was just a reality now. She understood it might not be popular now with everyone that Roxbury is the neighborhood and that there will be things named Nubian in that area. The Friends listened to Mr. Kambon's presentation and appreciate his efforts for the Square, but they are strongly in favor of the Roxbury name for the branch. Ms. Nagarajah asked that it was noted for the record that the majority of the Friends voted and were in favor of a Roxbury name change. She agreed that there was not a recent consideration of a name change until Mr. Kambon's efforts in recent years. However, Friends members recalled a previous discussion for a name change years ago. She asked that it was clear to go on record on behalf of the Friends that this was the direction the group wishes to go. She appreciated the attention this matter was given. She ended that Roxbury has a strong, rich history and that is why she hopes the Library becomes the Roxbury Branch Library.

Tessil Collins, a lifelong resident of 68-years of Roxbury. He is the President and Trustee of the Roxbury Crossing Historical Trust and member of the Roxbury Historical Society. He wanted to note his vote was for the Roxbury name as the branch had always been representative of the entire community and not just the Dudley Square or Nubian Square area. As a history, Roxbury had always had a manulative history in the history of Boston as the mainland of Boston. Most of the history has taken place, although the downtown area is always predominantly recognized. Felt that giving the name Nubian will diminish the community's representation of the wider community of Roxbury; which is a wider area than just the Dudley Square or Nubian Square area.

The Clerk continued with reading Ms. Candelaria Silva-Collins comments that she cut short in error. She continued, Ms. Silva-Collins stated, "A vote was for Nubian Square, not Nubian Everything. Not one person who represents the Friends of the Dudley Branch have not come out in support of the Roxbury Branch. We have had an exhibit recognizing black achievers and leaders at the 'Dudley Branch' and will

continue to do so through programming going forward.”

Oompa, a local artist and lifelong resident of Roxbury as well, wanted to keep the name of Roxbury Branch. She felt it was important to keep the name to keep the legacy, resistance, and spirit of Roxbury intact. As we continue to recognize people of color, particularly black voices, and centralize those voices of Roxbury’s history. She believed we could achieve what we sought to do by changing the name to Nubian Square altogether. She appreciated the recommendation of Nubian but was in favor of Roxbury.

Mr. Gallery thanked the public for their comments. He synthesized where they were on this issue. The Branch was positioning to reopen in approximately three months without a name. He reminded the Board that it was the Trustees responsibility to make important decisions like this. He reiterated that there was a clear consensus that the Trustees and community wanted a name change for the Dudley Branch. Mr. Gallery stated how appreciative he was for all of the feedback from the majority of the Trustees, and hearing at least anecdotally from a representative sample of the neighborhood. Mr. Gallery added that as many have expressed during the meeting, the library does not focus to serve just one subset of any neighborhood, they had a broader mandate to the entire community as Trustees of the BPL. President Leonard was asked if he had any final thoughts, for which he did not. Mr. Gallery affirmed with a full quorum of Trustees, and without a veto or opposition from any of his fellow Trustees to take a vote, a motion was duly made and seconded, and,

Voted by Roll Call: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston vote in favor of renaming the Dudley Branch Library to the Roxbury Branch Library.”

1. Arenas, \- Aye
2. Asim, \-Nay
3. Arana-Ortiz- Aye
4. Bradlee, \- Nay
5. Cronin- Aye
6. Douglas- Aye
7. Dorcena Forry- Aye
8. Gallery- Aye
9. Hailer, Nay
10. Jeff Hawkins, Aye
11. Tyler- Nay

The motion was passed.

Mr. Leonard continued with his President’s report with a brief update on the Fund for the BPL. He noted that due to personal reasons, Mary Myers had to step down from her role as Executive Director. He expressed how incredibly thankful he was for all her hard work. The Fund convened a search committee and were at the final stages of interviews for her successor. They hoped to make an announcement in near future to continue the efforts Ms. Myers had started.

Next, he reviewed the new Meeting Room Policy and Procedures, which help the BPL manage expectations of renters and community groups. There were no questions or comments. Mr. Gallery made a motion that was duly made, seconded, and voted unanimously,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston vote to accept the updated Community Room/Meeting Room Policy and Procedures as presented.”

Mr. Leonard explained that the status of Fines Forgiveness was to waive fines to a certain date. Therefore, they were asking for approval of the Trustees to move forward with the discussion with the City to extend the fines forgiveness period. Patrons were not be able to return materials due to safety concerns related to the pandemic. In an effort not to impede a patron from using their BPL card, they would extend the fine forgiveness period accordingly. There were no questions or comments. A motion was duly made, seconded, and,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston authorize the President of the Boston Public Library to consult with the CFO for the City of Boston and, as needed, extend the waiving of fines for BPL library cardholders up to the extent of the current public health emergency.”

This concluded Mr. Leonard’s report and he shifted the meeting to the Finance and Audit Committee. Ms. Arana-Ortiz complimented the BPL team for a job well done on a thorough and thoughtful presentation to the Ways and Means Committee of the City Council. Ms. Arana-Ortiz explained they would review all the votes and vote on them as a slate at the end.

Ms. Ellen Donaghey reviewed Mayor Walsh’s FY21 Operating Budget. She noted the City Council is due to vote on it in June and they will have a better sense of any many changes at that time. Next, Ms. Donaghey gave a quick overview of the external sources, pointing out that they were anticipating funds to change due to the pandemic. She noted their concerns for lost enterprise revenues due to loss of events’ revenue. With no questions or comments, a motion was duly made, seconded and

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston vote to accept Mayor Martin J. Walsh’s FY21 Recommended Operating and Capital Budgets, subject to further amendments in advance of final approval by City Council.”

Ms. Arana-Ortiz ran through each of the contracts without any questions, Ms. Donaghey added that the contract for the landscaper was with a company that the BPL had used for a number of years. They did not put this matter out for a bid due to the timing of the contract. We asked to move forward without the bid process this year, but hope to do so next year. There were no comments or questions made. Ms. Arana Ortiz made a motion that was duly made, seconded and voted on as a slate, unanimously,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve a third contract in the amount of \$10,000, with Susan Minichello, 60 Adams Street, Somerville, MA, to provide interim contracting services to the Library’s Communication Department.”

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston authorize the President, or designee, on behalf of the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston, to enter into a contract or contracts for various goods or services relating to the Boston Public Library Critical Repair Budget for the period July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 provided that each contract entered into pursuant to this authorization shall have been estimated to be less than one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00). In no event will the contracts cumulatively exceed three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000.00).”

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston enter into a non-advertised contract, as authorized under G.L., c.30-B, Section 7(a), referred to as a “Procurement of Library Books,” between the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston (a Corporation under Chapter 114 of the Acts of 1878), and the vendors listed therein (including any subsidiaries or agents), for the acquisitions of books and for certain other library bibliographical acquisitions materials, in an amount not to exceed the amount appropriated in the Library Department budget for books and other related bibliographical acquisitions materials, during the period July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.”

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston vote to award a contract for landscaping service in the McKim Courtyard in the amount not to exceed twenty five thousand (\$25,000) to Cityscape Plant Care, 197 Clarendon St, Boston, MA.”

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the expenditure from the Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Fund in an amount not to exceed Ninety six thousand twenty dollars and eighteen cents (\$96,020.18) to support the Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Fund Programmatic Plan for FY19 as recommended by the Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee and to be presented at an upcoming meeting.”

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston delegate approval of any contract deemed to be of a critical nature by the President of the Library during the period between May 2020 and September 2020 to the Finance and Audit Committee.”

Mr. Gallery reviewed the proposed calendar of dates and noted that it was subject to change. Due to the uncertainty of Covid-19 protocols, all meetings were proposed to be held virtually.

Proposed Schedule of Trustees Meetings for 2020-2021

- Tuesday, September 29, 2020, 8:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, November 17, 2020, 8:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, January 12, 2021, 8:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, March 23, 2021, 8:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, May 18, 2021, Annual Meeting, 8:30 a.m.

Mr. Gallery asked for New Business, for which there was none. Next, he asked for Public Comment.

The Clerk read the written statements into the record first.

Oompa, Local artist and lifelong resident of Roxbury wrote, “I don’t think the naming is about who it serves, it is about who it honors so it is not a fickle matter about narrowing the scope of service.”

Elizabeth Nagarajah, President of the Roxbury Branch wrote, “The neighborhood voted to change the square and not the entire Roxbury area.

Sadiki Kambon, President of the Nubian Square Coalition wrote, “The community will not be pleased to with the decision to deny the name change to Nubian Library. Please be prepared to hear from us!”

Next, the public comment continued.

Elissa Cadillic, President of AFSCME Local 1526 stated she was pleased to see them all and the Trustees resuming business. She had a few comments related to the topics discussed today. As you know the Governor released a report on the reopening of businesses, and the President touched upon the plan and the reopening of the library. While they had been in a lot of contact with this union, they wanted the Trustees to be aware that the Occupational Health and Safety Organizations had given Governor Baker a failing grade on his reopening plan mainly because his plan does not appropriately protect workers. They just wanted to put a caution in there that while the library does seemingly to be following worker protection, we just wanted to be sure that workers’ safety was the highest concern for us. We do not want to JUST do what others are doing. Ms. Cadillic added that she heard Mr. Leonard mention, “Cambridge is doing this, and Brookline is doing that.” Just because your friend jumps off the bridge does not mean you should do it too is what I heard growing up from my mother and I want to be sure we are not doing that.

Mr. Gallery interjected, stating he generally does not respond to comments made during the public comment section, but he wanted to reiterate two points made earlier in the meeting. First, there is no higher priority for the Leadership (whether it is the Trustees or the Management of the BPL) than the safety of our workers

first, and patrons second. There is no question.

Secondly, that they are going to take guidance from the Governor of the Commonwealth and the Mayor of the City. This information would be channeled through the President and the management team. The Trustees will support what the BPL leadership, Mayor, and Governor believe is right on behalf of all of our workers and our patrons. He wanted to reemphasize that point.

Ms. Cadillic replied that she certainly appreciated hearing that and that the library to this point that the library has seemingly come across as being concerned for worker safety.

Mr. Gallery spoke again. He disagreed with her choice of using the word “seemingly”. Every conversation he has had with President Leonard during the catastrophe that we are all living through had started with and focused first on the safety of our workers. He wanted that point noted for the record.

Ms. Cadillic continued that she appreciated hearing that. They do not know what the plan was yet, so they have a high level of holds pick up, but until they had the a full plan, agreeing that the President had staff meetings and meetings with the unions, has come across as worker safety as a priority. Until they hear the whole plan, she could not commit 100% to knowing that. She did appreciate that and had not said that he had not been.

Mr. Gallery spoke again stating no one had a plan yet. Eeryone was going through unprecedented circumstances and the team was working hard with all the public safety officials to sort that out. He noted they would continue to have this dialogue to commit that the trustees will continue to focus on this with the leadership of the library and in turn with the leaders of the Commonwealth and the City.

Ms. Cadillic thanked the Chair for his thoughts and looked forward to continuing the conversations. She had two other points, one being it was great to hear the dialogue regarding to the renaming of the branch; it showed the path that this Board of Trustees has travelled over the last five years. It showed the willingness to engage with the community and each other. She commended the Trustees for listening, hearing, and debating. It was a testament to them all.

Regarding fine forgiveness, Ms. Cadillic noted she understood the process to have to work in unison with the City. However, when they met months ago to waive fines for children and youth, she stood them and said fines should be waived for all. She felt fine forgiveness should go beyond the pandemic and move forward with waiving fines for adults in its entirety not just for the pandemic.

Elisa Birdseye, President of the Professional Staff Association for the Boston Public Library spoke next. The Boston Public Library Professional Staff Association would like to thank ALL of the library workers who have pivoted so swiftly and with so much dedication to providing services in unexpected and trying circumstances. We hope you have had an opportunity to see some of the online programs for patrons of all ages that we have been providing through a variety of online portals.

We would also like to thank the Library and the City for taking a thoughtful approach to reopening, based on public health data. We are eager to return to delivering in person services to our neighborhoods, while at the same time we MUST make sure that it can be done safely. Reports from other library systems throughout the country give us grave concern that safety of staff and the public is not being taken as seriously in other locations, and we are very concerned for our fellow library staffers elsewhere in the country.

As a truly democratic institution, the Library is the ONE place in any community where ANYONE, regardless of age, job, immigration status, financial means, or education level can mingle freely to meet a variety of educational and personal needs. We are free to all, as it says over the doorway of the McKim Building, but we must also be SAFE for all. The virus has exposed deep fissures in our society which the

library has been helping to address for many years. The digital divide is real, and critical, and dangerous to the stability of our society. The library cannot fix this issue alone, but we can certainly help be part of the solution. The greater issues will have to be solved with a great deal of soul searching and public policy changes and financial investment.

Members of the PSA are eager to be part of the solution, and we welcome dialogue with public officials, with the Trustees, with Library Management, and with the public to help address this critical need. She thanked them for their attention and taking this all very seriously.

David Vieira, member of the City-Wide Friends, He started by saying how they miss their libraries and staff terribly and look forward to the time they reopen and can come in. He apologized he was not able to voice his comments before the decision of renaming the branch was made. He added his personal opinion was if we start renaming branches every time the demographic of neighborhoods change, we would have to do so every couple of years. As someone that worked at both predecessors of the current Branch, at both the Mt. Pleasant and Memorial Branches as a high school shelver. He had deep roots in the neighborhood and look forward to the time when the Roxbury Branch reopens and we can go there. On the point of reopening, would like to set up a communications with the friends group, an outline so they have some guidance in their planning. Many of the branches had called the Citywide Friends looking for what was going to happen next. He explained they did not know what was next because no one had talked to them as a group about what was going to happen. He said even giving a simple email with guidance for future steps would be appreciated.

Fred Grosso, a BPL patron stated that he realized the Trustees are not paid and that he appreciated their service. His wife used to work for the library and he is a frequent visitor of the West End Branch. He thought they stumbled through the renaming process of the branch and thought they probably should have kicked it down the road and thought about it a little more. He did not know how much thought they had put into it, but did not think it showed how it came across. There were some personal statements made and his first question was for the Chair, Mr. Gallery. He went on to say that, Mr. Gallery said he is going to do whatever the Governor and Mayor says; pointing out they are not public health officials. There were still many questions that needed to be answered. This was the first Trustees meeting he attended and noted they all seem very devoted to doing their jobs. He just felt they stumbled through the topic on the renaming of the branch. He added he did not think they were wrong, but the manner in which they did it was not very good. It is not a settled. He believed they should be more assured of making their own decisions and was happy to discuss later with any of the members.

Mr. Gallery thanked the public for all of their comments. Mr. Gallery felt the Trustees were deliberative today and noted that his comments in regards to reopening were not were not intended to imply that any one person has unique capacity to make decisions for us, in fact it was just the reverse. He was assuming the Governor and Mayor were using as much help from the public health experts and in turn, our management would take advantage of that. He did not think that any of the Trustees think they have the right solutions on this pandemic. He wished they did. He thanked everyone for his or her dedication and commitment to this institution. He ended his comments that the trustees do not get the opportunity to have topics like this morning often. He was pleased with the discussion and the Trustees' abilities to take a vote, despite the vote not being unanimous.

With no further business, Mr. Gallery adjourned the first meeting at 10:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Carver