

# TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

Meeting of the Trustees Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee

Tuesday, March 1, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

Held virtually via Zoom Conference Call

## MINUTES

A meeting of the Trustees Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, March 1, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom Conference.

Present at the meeting were: Trustees Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee Chair and Trustee Evelyn Arana-Ortiz, Committee Members: Trustee Rep. Chynah Tyler, Che Madyun, Friend of the Roxbury Branch Library, Priscilla Foley, Director of Neighborhood Services/Branches, and Allen Knight, Roxbury Branch Librarian . Also attending were: Dianna Preusser, Assistant Neighborhood Services/Branches Manager, Candelaria Silva-Collins, Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Project Manager and Pamela Carver, Clerk of the Board. Committee member Sarah-Ann Shaw was not present.

The Clerk noted the meeting was being recorded. Trustees Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee (“Committee”) Chair Evelyn Arana- Ortiz presided and called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. She thanked everyone for coming and asked the Clerk to take roll call. It was noted there was a quorum.

Candelaria reviewed the activities requested for the 2022 Request for Proposals (RFP) this year after some discussion with members of the Friends group and the Roxbury branch staff.

Some suggestions for preschool and elementary grade patrons to include after-school arts, cooking classes, storytelling, music and movement, chess instruction, homework help and mentoring, and crafts. Noting some quiet activities could be held in the Children’s Room, but larger groups and performing activities would need to be in the Community room.

Teen librarian suggested the following activities. Music programming, open mics, digital music programming including how to use ‘Garage Band’, ukulele classes, using 3D printers, comic book creation, and other teen focused programs (i.e. cooking, fashion, or crafts).

Some programming suggested for adults and families were literacy classes in math, English, and writing. Some other suggestions included computer and smart phone instruction. Noting to offer in various languages such as English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Arabic. They also suggested writing classes (i.e. memoirs, fiction, poetry, and essays), music instruction and programming, podcast instruction classes, Multi-language poetry event, cooking classes for all ages, sewing and craft classes, and speakers’ series to present authors and thought leaders in the Greater Roxbury area and on Roxbury history.

The Friends suggested programming around financial education, such as learning how to budget, banking, savings, investments, and financial paperwork. The Friends also suggested health and wellness programs such as yoga, meditation, and stress reduction classes. They hoped to see some classes for adult literacy and technology instruction as well as black history events and programs that highlight creativity, culture, and music.

Chynah Tyler noted that the focused activities presented looked great and asked to include a few more, if possible. Ms. Tyler asked Ms. Silva-Collins to tweak the RFP wording from “homework help/mentoring” to “reading comprehension”. Maybe to add some programming to aid that area noting that younger students under 3<sup>rd</sup> grade do not typically get homework and may need more tutoring. Regarding teens, she asked to widen the scope on technology programming and add more visual technology (i.e. videography-

type programming).

Ms. Tyler asked for some programming regarding CORI. She suggested some programming to help people learn how to clear their CORI to help them enter the workforce. Ms. Silva-Collins said she would try to add them, but noted there were difficulties in technology based instruction classes due to lack of equipment.

The Committee discussed the requirement with CORI and programs. Ms. Silva-Collins explained that anyone that runs programs at BPL has to undergo a CORI check three months prior. Attendees do not need to submit a CORI. They also discussed the parameters of obtaining and complications around technology equipment based programs.

Ms. Silva-Collins briefly reviewed the RFPs application process. She explained she would update the photo on the front of the application. She reviewed the timeline. The proposals would be issued in late May/ early June. There are two technical assistance sessions typically held in mid-June on a Monday evening and Saturday morning. The Notice of Intent is typically due in late June with a final proposal deadline due around July 15. The Grant notification would be in first week of September and contracts beginning in mid-October.

The Committee discussed the feasibility of offering summer programming. They were limited due to limited capacity issues at the Branch and uncertain of when the restrictions would be lifted. Priscilla Foley discussed that in person classes were not approved yet.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz reminded the Committee that the monies not spent this past fiscal year, would be rolled into this year's expenditure. Ms. Silva-Collins hoped to meet with the Business Office to discuss logistics to determine RFP wording and more feasible timelines. Not knowing what the state of the Library will be in a couple of months due to the pandemic requirements, they discussed the need for grantees to be flexible to shift to a hybrid model. The programming may need to be flexible to go virtual and/or use outdoor spaces. Ms. Silva-Collins explained some of the roadblocks and/or realities that need to be considered when requesting applicants to pivot to hybrid if necessary.

Ms. Silva-Collins continued reviewing the RFP application. She noted she would remove the name "Dudley" and replace it with "Roxbury".

Ms. Madyun suggested offering a "special" mini summer session and start the full programming in the fall. She gave an example of offering an online book club. Ms. Foley noted that the BPL A/V staff and Branch staff could not offer support that would be needed to the online services and would have to be built into the programs.

Ms. Silva-Collins moved onto the letter for RFPs that she will send out to applicants that explains expectations and reviewed the contract wording to reflect new wording suggestions to ensure opening the RFP to reach as many applicants as possible and not just the "invite only" as the last several years. They discussed it would be advertised in The Banner, on social media, and webpage. The Committee agreed to add in Covid-19 language from the Boston Public Health Commission.

The Committee discussed outreach-marketing efforts that are required. Ms. Silva-Collins explained that the grantees were expected to distribute flyers and noted the areas where they are typically distributed. She explained the FATC had never hired anyone to flyer in the past. Ms. Madyun noted that applicants may add the expense of hiring staff to assist distributing flyers in their budgets.

Ms. Silva-Collins reviewed required outreach-marketing efforts and safety concerns, roles and responsibilities. She also noted the application process and timelines would be included. The committee agreed to accept RFPs electronically.

The Committee discussed outreach-marketing efforts. Ms. Silva-Collins explained that the grantees were expected to distribute flyers and noted the areas where they are typically distributed. She explained the FATC had never hired a person to flyer in the past, as the grant does not allow for this purpose.

Ms. Silva-Collins finished her presentation by noting that most questions were answered during the technical assistance sessions.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz asked for any New Business for which there was none. She asked for Public Comment.

Elizabeth Nagarajah, President of the Friends for the Branch noted that it was a great meeting and joked that she would need to digest all of the information. Ms. Arana-Ortiz thanked her for joining them.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:21pm

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela R. Carver