

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

Meeting of the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. Held via Zoom

MINUTES

A meeting of the Boston Public Library Trustees Finance and Audit Committee held virtually on Tuesday, March 8, 2022, via Zoom at 8:30 a.m.

Present at the meeting included: Committee Chair Evelyn Arana-Ortiz and Committee members: Zamawa Arenas, John Hailer, Senator Mike Rush, and President David Leonard. Navjeet Bal and Jeff Hawkins were absent.

Also, present were Boston Public Library staff including Chief Financial Officer Ellen Donaghey, Clerk of the Board Pamela Carver, other BPL staff members, and members of the public.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz presiding called the Meeting of the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee (“Committee”) to order at 8:34 a.m. The Chair read the welcoming reaffirmation statement of the Trustees. A roll call was taken and determined there was a quorum. Everyone was reminded that the meeting was being recorded and to sign up for Public Comment.

The first matter of business was approval of meeting minutes of January 11, 2022. With no comments or edits, the minutes were approved via a roll call vote.

Ellen Donaghey presented two contracts being presented in unison as they were related to one another. The first was a contract with Cini-Little, a food service company that assists new businesses get established and also assists in creating and evaluating various food service bids and contracts. The BPL has used them twice in the past, in 2007 and 2016. Cini-Little would assist with the RFP process involving the food service spaces at the Central Library and private events. Mr. Chuck Shuler of Cini-Little introduced himself and explained some of the challenges the food industry is working through “post” pandemic.

The Committee discussed the importance of ensuring that bidders must include metrics on equitable employment and inclusion. Mr. Leonard added that the plan was to base the review on the total criteria necessary to determine the best quality partner to deliver these services for us.

Emily Tokarczyk, Special Events Manager, introduced the next vote. In May 2020, The Catered Affair’s (“TCA”) contract was extended during the pandemic by eighteen months to October 2022. However, the BPL was closed to events for 18 months. Since reopening in July 2021 for events, there have been other variables that impacted service, such as: the mask mandates, vaccine mandates, the Omicron surge, city limits on gatherings, etc. As a result, a 12-month extension until October 31, 2023, was requested. If a new vendor is selected, that vendor would begin contracting for dates booked as of 11/1/2023. This longer period would reduce the number of conflicts after 11/1/2023.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and voted to approve both votes via roll call vote with no objections,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve a contract not to exceed Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$35,000) to be entered into with Cini-Little, 20251 Century Boulevard, Germantown, MD 20874 to assist in the bid process for Catering and Restaurant Services at the Central Library.”

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston recommend the Board of Trustees extend the Catering and McKim Restaurant Contract with The Catered Affair, 70 Ledgewood Place, Rockland, MA 02370 by a period of twelve months to October 31, 2023.”

Next, Ms. Donaghey reviewed the Cityscapes Landscaping contract. They have been used for several years for maintenance of the McKim Courtyard. In past bids cycles, they have been the only bidder. Anticipating a busy spring and summer for events, the courtyard area was going to be revamped after the renovation of the fountain area. This contract would allow them to do necessary upgrades now and a few pre-scheduled maintenance appointments throughout the summer. Ms. Donaghey clarified the BPL plans to do a future landscaping RFP.

The Committee discussed that the McKim Master plan is an opportunity to consider the need for a deeper beautification plan for the courtyard and McKim plaza areas. They also discussed extending the beautification of the landscaping areas to the branches as well.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and voted via roll call vote with no objections,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve a contract not to exceed Forty-Four Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$44,000) to be entered into with Cityscapes Plant Care, 197 Clarendon Street, Boston, MA 02116 for work in McKim Courtyard and McKim Entrance.”

The contract with Arrowstreet was presented by Beth Prindle, Head of Special Collections. She explained that part of the newly renovated Rare Books space includes a public lobby with museum quality display cases. They will house and rotate various items from across the Special Collections. This lobby is a public space that will be accessible to everyone.

Ms. Prindle added that she was looking to create a concept for this space as well as improve larger wayfinding and signage experience around this reintroduction to Special Collections. Arrowstreet has done other signage projects throughout the Central library, allowing for a cohesive design. This contract with Arrowstreet is to design a series of installations that would run over the course of one year to eighteen months. The services would include support of multiple rotations of the displays, potentially the associated fabrication, printing, and install costs. Special Collections Trust Funds would be used for this work up to \$45,000.

The Committee had a discussion with Ms. Prindle around the types of storytelling displays they hoped to show to allow the public to sample the different types of items in the collections. They also hoped to highlight the preservation, and acquisition of these items and their history.

A motion was duly made by Ms. Arana-Ortiz, seconded, and voted via roll call vote with no objections,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve a contract not to exceed Forty-Five Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$45,000) to be entered into with Arrowstreet Inc, 10 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109 for exhibition design services.”

Next, Keith Gillette, Chief Technology Officer, presented the contract award for a 3-year renewal of the software and maintenance services for the Cisco Meraki wireless access point controller and firewall controller software. The renewal was put out to bid under the eRate program, resulting in three responding bids. ePlus was the lowest bidder and one that BPL IT has worked with in the past for other services and products. This contract involves no expansion of services and is simply a renewal agreement with Cisco Meraki to provide updates to our existing software to July 2025. The contract total is not to exceed Sixty-Three Thousand, Three Hundred Two Dollars and Thirty-Four Cents (\$63,302.34), contingent upon receipt of E-Rate funding via the Universal Services Administrative Company.

A motion was duly made by Ms. Arana-Ortiz, seconded, and voted via a roll call vote with no objections,

VOTED: “that there be entered into with ePlus Technology, Inc located at, 13595 Dulles Technology Drive Herndon, VA 20171 the most responsive and responsible bidder in a public Request for Proposal (RFP) process, advertised under M.G.L. 30B, a contract for: *MBLN Meraki Dashboard License Renewal*, specified for three (3) years at the proposed price, at a total not to exceed Sixty Three Thousand, Three Hundred Two Dollars and Thirty Four Cents (\$63,302.34), contingent upon receipt of E-Rate funding via the Universal Services Administrative Company. The Boston Public Library Evaluation Committee performed an evaluation of the proposals submitted by the vendors as described in the RFP documents, and through this process determined the proposal presented by ePlus Technology, Inc represented the best value for the Boston Public Library.”

Michael Colford, Director of Library Services, reviewed the contract to improve the KBLIC’s eleven alcoves with glass enclosures like the existing ones in the Innovation Lab. This would allow uniformity of design and services as well as provide semi- private spaces for interviews, and small businesses as well. The costs would be covered under the Friends of the Kirstein Trust Funds. This vote would ask the full Board to delegate approval of this bid back to the F&A committee. The cost is expected to be over \$100,000. The RFP would be initiated as soon as possible, pending approval. The anticipated timeline for an approved vendor was in the late spring/early summer.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and voted via a roll call vote with no objections,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston recommend the Board of Trustees delegate approval of the contract award for the Kirstein Business Library and Innovation Center glass to the Finance and Audit Committee.”

It was noted that Trustee Zamawa Arenas had to leave at 9:15 a.m.

Ms. Donaghey reviewed the FY23 Maintenance Budget, which was agreed upon with the BPL and the Office of Budget Management which would be submitted in mid-April. The overall maintenance budget was \$42,744,436 and a 1.2% increase.

She noted that the relatively small increases for salary were a result of our contracts with the unions having expired so there have been no cost of leaving adjustments since January 2020. There is also a significant payroll surplus due to the hiring freeze during the COVID pandemic. The overtime budget remained at \$325,000. Other Salary Costs (included Workers Compensation, MBTA passes for employees, and unemployment costs) remained the same as the previous year at \$142,000.

Ms. Donaghey explained that utility costs were managed by the City of Boston centrally. Maintenance and repairs in the buildings include HVAC, plumbing, elevators, fire alarms, and glass repair, repair service of equipment, snow equipment, branch gates, fire extinguishers, etc. this number was anticipated to increase in the coming months and would be adjusted prior to the final budget submission.

Contracted services showed a bit of a decrease due to the elimination of one-time funding for the JOY agenda, money included in FY22 for costs associated with fun events as we began reopening from COVID. (i.e., Read Boston, Boston Saves, and BTU).

Ms. Donaghey reviewed the increase for Collections/Books. The Library's ability to receive state aid (approximately \$900,000) is contingent on several metrics, including spending the equivalent of 12% of our city budget on collection materials.

Ms. Donaghey reviewed external spending projections for 2023, noting they differ from year to year due to a number of factors, including one-time costs or projects. They include funding from six categories: Affiliates, Interlibrary Loan (ILL), Library for the Commonwealth (LFC), State Aid, Trust Funds, and Other. The FY23 budget was \$9,426,621.

There were no questions.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz asked if there was any new business. Ms. Donaghey explained that they released the audit bid and anticipated that contract being below \$100,000. They hoped for the finalists would be scheduled for an Audit review in May.

Mr. Hailer asked if NEPC could provide an update on the market investments within the portfolio and send a summary.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz asked for Public comment for which there was none. She announced the next meeting was scheduled for May 10, 2022. With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:42 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pamela R. Carver, Clerk of the Board