

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

DRAFT MINUTES

A meeting of the Boston Public Library Trustees Finance and Audit Committee held virtually on Tuesday, May 10, 2022, via Zoom at 8:30 a.m.

Present at the meeting included: Committee Chair Evelyn Arana-Ortiz and Committee members: Navjeet Bal, John Hailer, Senator Mike Rush, and President David Leonard. Zamawa Arenas, 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 8:33 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 March 8, 2022. With no comments or edits, the minutes were approved via a roll call vote.

Ellen Donaghey reviewed the Mayor’s FY23 Operating and Capital Budget Executive Summary. She noted that the City Council Ways and Means hearing was scheduled for May 24th after the annual meeting.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and voted to recommend to the full board to approve,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee recommend approval by the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston to accept Mayor Michelle Wu’s FY23 Recommended Operating and Capital Budget.”

Ms. Donaghey reviewed the contracts before the committee for approval. The first was a contract with True Partners. This contract is to hire a recruitment firm to assist with finding qualified candidates for the Research Collections Manager position that has proven difficult to fill. True Partners is a women-owned business and are in the process of registering as a city vendor. The contract was for fifty thousand dollars. Mr. Leonard noted if this is successful, they may consider using them in the future as well.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston authorize a contract in the amount of Fifty Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$50,000) with True Partners located at 9 Purchase Street, Newburyport, MA 01950 for the purpose of recruiting candidates for the Research Collections Manager position at the Boston Public Library.”

Keith Gillette, the Chief Technology Officer presented an employee agreement with Kurt Mansperger, BPL’s former Chief Technology Officer. He would assist with technical responsibilities for the Web Services Manager that was recently vacated and the launch of the long-term device lending program. He would also assist with other projects as needed.

With no questions, a motion was duly made, seconded, and,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve an employee agreement with Kurt Mansperger of 86 Lake Attitash Road, Amesbury, MA 01913 not to exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$50,000) to cover technical responsibilities for the Web Services Manager and the launch of the Long-Term Device Lending program and other projects as needed.”

The next vote was the delegated vote to the Finance and Audit Committee for the KBLIC glass enclosures. Only one bid was received, and it was by a minority owned business called One Way Development in the amount of one hundred ninety-nine thousand twenty six dollars (\$199,226). There were no questions, and a motion was duly made, seconded, and,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston authorize a contract with One Way Development Inc. located at 1408C Centre St, suite 1, Roslindale, MA 02131 not to exceed One Hundred Ninety-Nine Thousand Two Hundred Twenty Six Dollars and Zero Cents (\$199,226.00) to install the glass enclosures in the Kirstein Business Library and Innovation Center.”

Beth Prindle, Head of Special Collections presented the vote for a pilot project. She explained this was the most heavily requested of this collection. They identified sixty thousand dollars in budget to undertake this project with Picturae. They would digitize, catalog, and preserve highlights of the press photography collection, with an emphasis on the Herald Traveler Press photography.

Kristin Parker, Manager of the Arts, gave a brief background into the scope of the project with approximately fifty thousand photos. It would include metadata, digitization, and provide preservation storage to upload to Digital Commonwealth. The expectation was once executed the first part of this pilot, if successful, they would look for external funding to complete the rest of it.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston authorize a contract with Picturae, Inc, 228 East 45th Street, 9E, New York, New York, to digitize, catalog and preserve highlights of the press photography collection, with an emphasis on the Herald Traveler Press photography collection. The contract is not to exceed Sixty Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$60,000).

Next, Ms. Donaghey reviewed the two votes for recommendation to Board. The first was the Mechanical, Electric, and Plumbing (“MEP”) formally known as HVAC. It was a very large contract, that had two responsive bidders. They selected EMCOR who currently holds the contract with BPL. They are on a three-year cycle.

The Elevator Maintenance contract was similar in that it was on a three- year cycle. It would provide repair service and maintenance to the Central Library and the branches. There were two responsive bidders. The BPL has worked with them before having done due diligence with researching their record and response times.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz made a motion that was duly made, seconded, and,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston recommend the Board of Trustees award a contract to EMCOR Services Northeast, 80 Hawes Way, Stoughton, MA 02070 in the amount of Seven Million Six Hundred Seventy Two

thousand Eight Hundred Seventy Eight Dollars and Seventy Two cents (\$7,672,878.72) to provide mechanical, electrical, and plumbing services.”

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston recommend the Board of Trustees award a contract to United Elevator Co., Inc., 165 Enterprise Drive, Marshfield, MA 02050 in the amount of Four Hundred Forty Seven Four Hundred Eight Dollars and Zero Cents (\$447,408.00) to provide elevator maintenance and repair services.”

Ms. Donaghey reviewed the approval for the fire alarm contract. They expected the RFP sometime in June, and therefore requesting this approval vote be delegated to this committee for sensitivity of time. She explained they require a new fire suppressant system which requires a separate sub-bid. The system’s cost was \$275,000 and subject to Chapter 149 requirements. She explained that if a component of the contract is twenty-five thousand or more, it needs a separate DECAM contract. Therefore, the need for approval of this second subcontract. The Committee had a brief discussion

A motion was duly made by Ms. Arana-Ortiz, seconded, and,

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston recommend the Board of Trustees delegate approval for the Fire Alarm Contract to the Finance and Audit Committee.”

Ms. Arana-Ortiz moved to the main topic of the meeting which was to interview the two audit review firm finalists.

Matthew Hunt, CPA and Signing Director of Clifton Larson Allen (“CLA”) was interviewed first. He explained that CLA was the incumbent auditing firm with the BPL. He reviewed some statistics and gave a brief background on the firm. Mr. Hunt noted some key accomplishments from the past few years which included evaluating the retail space and potential vendors, added IT specialists to the library audit starting in FY14, and recommended internal central improvements related to “pay for print” operations. CLA has recommended various improvements to the annual tax return, and helped BPL meet all reporting deadlines every year.

Looking ahead, CLA would be able to hit the ground running and avoid learning curves associated with hiring a new firm and offered a rotating team that would consist of a new audit director and manager with over fifteen years of experience to offer a fresh set of eyes. Despite current inflationary pressures, CLA’s proposed fees increase less than 2% per year.

Mr. Hunt concluded by thanking the BPL for allowing CLA to service the BPL for the past several years and looked forward to a continued mutual relationship.

The Committee engaged in a question-and-answer session with Mr. Hunt.

At approximately 9:26 a.m. Marcum LLP was introduced. James Wilkinson, Audit Partner and Kyle Connors, Audit Director gave the firm’s presentation to the Committee.

Marcum works primarily in Rhode Island and around New England. Mr. Wilkinson explained they adhere to a set of principles: independence, integrity, industry expertise, responsiveness and personal service, and value received for fees.

Mr. Kyle Connors, Director on Non-profit and Municipal group explained he had 13-years' experience and gave a background on Marcum and the Inflo Organizational tool they use. He explained that they would look at transaction cycles. Integrating the IT system and prioritizing communications to avoid any surprises, relating findings as they go.

Mr. Connors recognized that moving to a new audit firm could be challenging but ensured that Marcum would make the transition seamless. He reviewed the benefits Marcum would provide and concluded his presentation by thanking the BPL for their consideration.

The Committee engaged in a question-and-answer session with Mr. Connors.

After the two firms presented the Committee deliberated on their impressions of the interviews, noting that both firms gave great presentations. After some discussion of the pros and cons of each firm, they ultimately determined it was beneficial to change the controls. They took a vote and unanimously voted for Marcum LLP.

Next, Jane Sproul opened their bid proposal which reflected a contracted service fee of \$106,000. Since it exceeded \$100,000, they would offer their recommendation to approve this contract to the full board at the May 24th meeting.

Ms. Arana-Ortiz asked if there was any new business. She noted that the South End Branch had a recent flood and would probably be looking for approval of repairs over the summer.

Next, Ms. Arana-Ortiz asked if there was any public comment.

Ms. Elissa Cadillic, President of AFSMCE 1526, expressed concern with Mr. Mansperger's contract. She noted that he resigned due to personal reasons and was then immediately contracted to work with the BPL. She asked that the trustees review the process/procedures by which contracts are awarded. The Applications Manager gave a notice of his retirement nine months in advance, and it had not gone to bid yet seven months later. She felt awarding employee contracts like Mr. Mansperger's was a slap in the face to employees who must abide by the City's residency requirements.

With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 10:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela R. Carver, Clerk of the Board