

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

Meeting of the Trustees as a Corporation and Administrative Agency

Tuesday, November 7, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

Roslindale Branch Library

4246 Washington Street Roslindale, MA 02131

AGENDA

I. Chair's Report

Priscilla H. Douglas, Chair

- A. Call to Order
 - 1. Acknowledge EDI statement.
 - 2. Roll Call
 - 3. Review and Approval of Minutes for September 26, 2023 meeting.
- B. Welcome Remarks
- C. Introduction of New Trustees
 - 1. Jim Canales, Barr Foundation
 - 2. Ray Liu, M.D., Mass General Brigham Global Advisory
 - 3. Porsha Olayiwola, City of Boston Poet Laureate

II. President's Report

David Leonard, President

- A. Invited Guests
 - 1. Jennifer Hawes, Roslindale Branch Librarian
 - 2. Linda Jackson, The Friends of the Roslindale Branch Library
- B. National and Global Library Trends
David Leonard
- C. BPL Utilization Data review (Reach) for FY19, FY21, and FY22
David Leonard and Lisa Pollack, Chief of Communications and Marketing
- D. Branch Facilities & Services Protocols Review
Sarah Zaphiris, Chief of Staff
Josh Rosenthal, Director of Operations
- E. MBLC Action Plan
Michael Colford, Director of Library Services

VOTED: "that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the Boston Public Library's 2024 MBLC Action Plan."

III. Trustees Finance and Audit Committee

John Hailer, Committee Member

Emily Tokarczyk, Chief Financial Officer

A. Approval of Votes

Emily Tokarczyk, Chief Financial Officer

1. Company One Contract

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the contract with Company One Theatre, 539 Tremont St, Boston, MA 02116 in the amount two hundred fifty thousand dollars and zero cents (\$250,000) over three years for theater productions, programming and community engagement.”

2. Loading Dock Repair Contract

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the award of a fully bid Ch. 149 construction contract to Structural Preservation Systems, LLC, 1755 Highland Avenue – Building B, Cheshire, CT 06410 in the amount of Four hundred twenty-five thousand five hundred dollars and zero cents (\$425,500) to repair the concrete platform of the Central Library loading dock.”

3. Strategic Planning Consultant Contract

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the award of a contract to Gensler, One Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108 not to exceed two hundred thousand dollars and zero cents (\$200,000) for services as a Strategic Planning Consultant.”

B. Delegation of Approval to Finance and Audit Committee

Emily Tokarczyk, Chief Financial Officer

1. Multi-Function Printer Contract

Keith Gillette, Chief Technology Officer

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston delegate approval of the Multi-Function Printer (MFP) service and equipment 5-year contract to the Finance and Audit Committee. This contract will be for systemwide printing, scanning and photocopying capabilities for patrons and back of house use, and is a service that must be compatible with our current Pharos “pay-for-print” software. It is estimated that the total 5-year contract should not exceed seven hundred fifty thousand dollars and zero cents (\$750,000).”

2. Newspaper Digitization Contract

Jessica Chapel, Chief of Digital & Online Services

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston recommend the Board of Trustees delegate approval to award a five hundred thousand dollars and zero cents (\$500,000) contract for Newspaper Digitization to the Finance and Audit Committee.”

C. Review of Gift/Donor Report

Emily Tokarczyk, Chief Financial Officer

IV. New Business

V. Public Comment

“Please sign up for public comment the first 30 minutes of the meeting to support effective time management. On occasion, additional public comments on matters formally on the agenda may be allowed at the discretion of the Chair, and time allowing. Members of the public are also reminded that comments may alternatively be submitted in writing in advance to the Clerk of the Board for distribution to the Trustees.”

VI. Adjournment

Priscilla H. Douglas, Chair

Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston

Priscilla H. Douglas, Chair; Evelyn Arana Ortiz, Vice Chair,
Navjeet Bal, Joe Berman, Jim Canales, Cheryl Cronin,
John Hailer, Jeff Hawkins, Ray Liu, Porsha Olayiwola, Jose C. Masso III,
Senator Mike Rush, Representative Chynah Tyler, Christian Westra, and Lynn Perry Wooten

President, David Leonard
Clerk of the Board, Pamela R. Carver

This is an open meeting.

The public is welcome to attend in-person or stream virtually.

Zoom: <https://boston-public-library.zoom.us/j/85184356211>

Webinar ID: 851 8435 6211

Call in Option: 305 224 1968, 312 626 6799, or 646 558 8656

2023-2024 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 8:30 a.m. (Executive Committee only) via Zoom

Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 8:30 a.m., Central Library

Tuesday, May 21, 2024 at 8:30 a.m., Annual Meeting, Central Library

**Subject to Change, see website for details*

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

Meeting of the Trustees as a Corporation and Administrative Agency

Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 8:30 a.m.

Central Library, Rabb Hall

700 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

DRAFT MINUTES

The Meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston (“BPL”) held on Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. at the Central Library in Rabb Hall.

Present at the meeting included: Chair Priscilla H. Douglas, Vice Chair Evelyn Arana Ortiz and Trustees: Navjeet Bal, Joe Berman, Jeff Hawkins, Jose C. Masso III, Representative Chynah Tyler, Christian Westra, and Lynn Perry Wooten. Not present: Cheryl Cronin, John Hailer, and Sen. Mike Rush (who was attending required military training with the US Navy) Also present: BPL President David Leonard, Clerk of the Board Pamela Carver, BPL staff, and members of the public.

Chair Priscilla H. Douglas presided, and convened the meeting at 8:35 a.m. She greeted all with some welcome remarks. She acknowledged the EDI statement, a roll call was taken and determined there was a quorum.

The clerk reminded that the meeting was being recorded and to sign up for public comment by 9:00 a.m.

The first matter of business was approving the meeting minutes from May 23, 2023. With no edits, a motion was duly made, seconded, and approved the minutes.

Ms. Douglas continued the order of business and announced the appointment of three new trustees, Jim Canales, Ray Liu, and Porsha Olayiwola. Each joined via Zoom and gave brief introductions. Mr. Leonard added that the new trustees’ appointment letters were filed on Friday, September 22, 2023 but until they are formally sworn in, they would not join in an official capacity until November.

Ms. Douglas took a few minutes to acknowledge the outgoing trustees. Jabari Asim, Ben Bradlee Jr, and Linda Dorcena Forry, all whom she thanked for their service to the library. She read their sentiments they asked be shared with the Board and staff.

Chief Jose F. Masso, Chief of Human Services of the Mayor’s Cabinet was introduced. He gave an overview of the six departments of the Office of Human Services. They include the Boston Public Library, Boston Centers for Youth & Families, Office of Veterans Services, Age Strong Commission, Office of Returning Citizens, and the Office of Youth Engagement & Advancement. The mission is to provide equitable access to high quality services, resources, and opportunities so that every Boston resident- especially those with greatest needs- has what they need to thrive.

He noted that Human Services serves all ages, from the youngest to the oldest and everyone in between; meeting people where they are. Each of the departments within this division focuses on these principles. The objective is to break down barriers and advocate for policy and systems change.

Mr. Masso noted he visited all the locations of the BPL within his first 100 days to learn about each of the branches and their patrons’ needs.

Next, Mr. Masso reviewed the four main goals of the cabinet. One of the larger goals for the upcoming years was tackling social isolation especially on the heels of the pandemic which affected older adults and younger adults with mental health issues. The four goals are:

1. Improve infrastructure and programming at our community centers (there was a gap with libraries and Community centers, needed and deserved to be modernized)
2. Reduce Barriers to access for residents and provide High quality services.
3. Provide more comprehensive programming to older adults.
4. Make Boston a leader in youth engagement.

He noted that thriving neighborhoods offer access to parks, retail, libraries, and community centers. The library plays a major role in executing the human services' goals. He offered all to provide feedback or share ideas to help amplify their goals.

The Board thanked Chief Masso for this discussion. They discussed Q&A on collaborating and framing partnerships.

Ms. Douglas continued with the order of business with the report on Trustees Committees. She announced that the Special Collections Committee will be led by Joe Berman and Elliot B. Davis. She introduced Ms. Davis who gave brief remarks on her professional experience.

Christian Westra provided brief updates on the Strategic Planning Committee. He explained that they developed an RFP for a consultant and had a robust response with twelve applicants. The key stakeholders have selected five that will be interviewed over the coming weeks to make the final selection. Once selection is made, they will move forward and provide updates accordingly.

Ms. Douglas highlighted some recent events and notable programs with photos. Including the Negro Baseball League talk in Rabb Hall, LMEC Building Blocks exhibit, the Special Collections Lobby Sampling, Little Amal's visit to Boston at the East Boston Branch, and Book it Around Boston among other events.

David Leonard gave his President's report. He acknowledged two awards that the BPL was given. The first was the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay's award to the Central Library for "*extraordinary intellectual, cultural, and societal contributions to our community*". They have been strong partners in Back Bay with the library.

The 2nd award is the Shattuck Award, which is given by the Boston Municipal Research Bureau. It is given to unsung municipal employees of the City of Boston. This year, Barbara Rose, the Children's Librarian at the Jamaica Plain Branch will receive the award. Next month, Ms. Rose will celebrate 40 years of service at the BPL.

Mr. Leonard continued that it had been a busy summer; he drew attention to the audit report. Within the report it points to the many accomplishments and highlights of the BPL's work from the previous year.

Next, Mr. Leonard highlighted the capital projects. He ran through the list which included the renovations of the Faneuil Branch in Oak Square, Fields Corner, and the South End. The South End recently added some temporary services while they go through the administrative approvals in response to the catastrophic flood at the branch. He also noted a Fenway proposal. Though it is not a formal project, he mentioned it as there was some coverage in the press recently as a proposed smaller branch. The proposal is currently being vetted to determine if it is viable with several criteria to address.

The trustees discussed the process of offering services during closures, with special attention to services offered for the South End Branch.

Mr. Leonard noted that coming out of first phase of covid, staff hiring was, and remains, the biggest challenge. The BPL was currently staffed at 435 employees. There were several internal promotions and moving to new positions. They hired 113 new staff as of July 1st. There were still 67 vacant positions,

which is a substantial amount to fill. There are many hurdles due to a lack of capacity and can be challenging to do everything that is required of them or what the community expects of the library.

He highlighted some upcoming events/Programs. The first was that the Friends group get together with leadership was postponed a couple months due to recent outbreak of Covid. He explained that Banned Books Week was the week of September 30th and said to be on look out from an announcement from the BPL Fund and the BPL. He announced some dates of upcoming events that included: The Associates Writer-In-Residence reception, Boston Book Festival, BPLF Night in the Stacks, Museum of African American History's Stone Book Award, Salvaging Celtic Spirituality, and the Druker Lecture & Award.

Mr. Leonard concluded his report by noting that the staff were looking forward to a strong year ahead and the Strategic Planning process.

Ms. Arana Ortiz gave updates on the Finance and Audit Committee. The FY23 financial statements were reviewed by the committee members with the auditors. There were no major findings. She noted it was a very seamless and efficient transition from Chief Financial Officer Ellen Donaghey to Emily Tokarczyk. She praised the finance team for their hard work on ensuring these reports are done in a very quick turnaround.

There were no questions. A motion was duly made, seconded and unanimously voted to approve.

VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Board of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the Boston Public Library’s Draft Audited Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2023.”

Moving on, Ms. Arana Ortiz gave updates on the Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Fund Advisory Committee. She provided a brief history of the fund.

She reviewed the grants summary for Fiscal Year 2024. There were approximately 50% repeat programs. There were twenty nine grant proposals, twenty were awarded and will begin October 2023 and run until July 2024 for a total of \$147,685.07.

In addition, the committee approved an annual distribution of \$5,000 to the Roxbury Branch, \$2,500 for administrative costs, along with the Program Manager’s contract. The grand total was \$200,905.83.

The Board had discussed some of the programming offered through the grants offered from the FATF.

Ms. Douglas asked for any new business, for which there was none.

Ms. Douglas asked for public comment.

Sadiki Kambon, Director of the Black Community Information Center, an all-volunteer organization, was speaking on behalf of the organization’s efforts to rename the branch in Nubian Square. He provided some background on initial renaming of some streets, and the process to change Dudley Square to Nubian Square and the subsequent MBTA station to Nubian Station. He was opposed with the way the Board took a vote with lack of community involvement and asked for them to consider reopening this topic.

Priscilla Douglas thanked Mr. Kambon for his comments, and appreciated his providing some history on this matter. However, she noted that the Board did take a vote after hearing from several community members and groups, many who preferred the name “Roxbury” over “Nubian”. She noted the Board appreciates their efforts and therefore pays tribute to that community by referring to it as “Roxbury Branch in Nubian Square”.

Charles Cary, of SES, noted that the closing of the South End Branch is an important issues. He felt the process is taking forever to repair and reopen the branch. Everyone from the South End would appreciate the Board doing everything they possibly can. He added that the two and a half hours at USES is great, but they need twenty hours. He asked that they please push for more.

Jamaada Smith, she was very thankful for the Boston Public Library and the trustees for all they do. She did want to say something about the Nubian Square name, and understands that the Chair Douglas said that the issue was closed, per se, so she felt there was no need to expound on it any further. She welcomed the new trustees and for the most part everything was coming up roses!

Yvette Jarreau, President of the Friends of the South End Library. She appreciated the discussion that they had regarding services during closures. She was there today to alert the Board that she send in recent history regarding the South End Branch (to the Clerk and distributed to Board via email) given the timeframe that has already occurred, which was over a year closure and upcoming continued closing. We need more than just 2.5 hours at USES. They need 3-4 days a week with several hours a day to regain the vibrancy to use the branch. They had a welcoming place where patrons/staff are known and offered important learning. Unless more services are available the connections are not happening because the branch is closed is affecting seniors and children.

Ms. Douglas noted that the next meeting was on November 7th at 3:00 p.m.

With no further business, Ms. Douglas adjourned the meeting at 9:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela Carver, Clerk of the Board

Boston Public Library, Boston	YEAR
Michael Colford, mcolford@bpl.org	2024

Goal (from library's Strategic Roadmap extension of Compass Plan)

Becoming an anti-racist organization

Objectives (if included in current strategic plan)	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
Develop Equity Plan 2.0	Launch Simmons University work-study program	Spring/Summer 2024	Library Services/HR
	Complete Language Communications Access assessment and implement recommendations	2024	Communications

Goal (from library's Strategic Roadmap extension of Compass Plan)

Delivering programs and services that build and maintain equity

Objectives (if included in current strategic plan)	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
Target underserved communities in need of services	Implement Trauma-Informed Approaches	2024	Leadership & Library Services
	Hire Peer Resources Navigator to expand expand support for those in need of social services	Winter 2024	Library Services
Provide public programming that is targeted, unified and has maximum reach.	Prioritize Workforce Development using a holistic approach that incorporates ESL and Digital Literacy Services to help patrons attain personal success	2024	Library Services
Prioritize and deliver Youth Services that serve the City of Boston's priorities	Reposition Scholastic support to provide more STEM activities, and test prep for high school students	Winter 2024	Youth Services

	Expand early literacy programs through the Future Readers Club, and partnership with the Basics	2024	Youth Services
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Goal (from library’s Strategic Roadmap extension of Compass Plan)

Building and Maintaining our Collections

Objectives (if included in current strategic plan)	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
Reorganize Research Services and Collections	Create new leadership positions to oversee Research Services and Collections in a collaborative model with Library Services and Special Collections	2024	Special Collections / Library Services
Update Collection Development Policy	Engage staff in an update of the current policy to reflect the principles of Edquity, Diversity, and Inclusion, and to better bolster the library against book challenges	2024	Library Services

Goal (from library’s Strategic Roadmap extension of Compass Plan)

Expanding our Impact

Objectives (if included in current strategic plan)	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
	Launch Strategic Plan process	2024	Communications / All
	Finalize and share interim services model for branch closure	2024	Neighborhood Services
	Manage appointment of new Trustees	Winter 2024	President’s Office

	Update Trustee Committee Management Goals	Winter 2024	President's Office
	Expand hours of service	2024	Neighborhood Services
	Founding Research Collection project - phase 2	2024	Library Services

Goal (from library's Strategic Roadmap extension of Compass Plan)

Providing Inspiring Spaces for All

Objectives (if included in current strategic plan)	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
McKim Renovation Planning	Define public service vision for McKim Renovation.	Winter 2024	All
	Development of BPLF fundraising initiative for McKim renovation	2024	President's Office
	Conduct Facilities Condition Assessment of McKim	2024	Operations
Continue focused work on capital projects	Ensure capital projects are supported/on schedule	2024	Operations

Goal (from library's Strategic Roadmap extension of Compass Plan)

Creating Connections Through Technology

Objectives (if included in current strategic plan)	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
Develop Data Analytics Strategy	Identify and hire key Impact and Evaluations position	Winter 2024	Leadership
Reposition Digital and Online Services for the future	Create a plan for the newly configured and staff Digital and Online Services Department	Winter 2024	Library Services
Create technology tools to assist staff in their work	Reboot and reconfigure staff Intranet	2024	IT / Digital and Online Services

Goal (from library's Strategic Roadmap extension of Compass Plan)

Investing in Our Staff

Objectives (if included in current strategic plan)	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
	Prioritize Professional Development to Managers and Supervisors	2024	All
	Continue to provide enhanced EDI training to all staff	2024	President's Office
	Provide training to public service staff on best practices for engaging with teens	Winter 2024	Library Services

	Optimize Vacancy management	Winter 2024	Leadership/HR
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Goal (from library’s Strategic Roadmap extension of Compass Plan)

Expect the Unexpected

Objectives (if included in current strategic plan)	Actions	Timeframe for Activity	By Whom
	Launch Genasys emergency notification	2024	Operations
	Replace McKim Fire Alarm Panel	Winter 2024	Operations
	Evaluate addition of cameras at branches without coverage	2024	Operations / Neighborhood Services
	Begin formal crisis planning process	Winter 2024	Leadership / Communications
	Implement new Incident Report System	Winter 2024	Operations / IT

	FY19 Program		FY19 Visitors	FY19 Circulation	FY19 Wireless Sessions	FY19 Computer Sessions	FY19	
	# of Programs	Attending						
Adams	415	7,401	46,745	75,221	1,580	4,932	Adams St.	136294
Brighton	221	3,641	68,458	111,246	5,193	9,153	Brighton	197912
Charlestown	383	6,858	84,002	83,983	2,705	8,073	Charlestown	186004
Chinatown	210	1,991	59,060	37,929	6,264	1,210	Chinatown	106664
Codman	445	6,468	82,890	51,682	3,560	16,122	Codman Sq.	161167
Copley	2,547	89,585	1,747,910	846,112	300,588	221,077	Copley	3207819
Connolly	442	9,210	65,147	92,729	2,262	6,782	Connolly	176572
Community Learning							Community Learning	0
East Boston	473	11,423	136,730	148,753	9,258	29,150	East Boston	335787
Egleston	280	3,059	41,154	43,928	1,746	9,725	Egleston	99892
Faneuil	369	5,805	55,267	89,554	1,420	3,322	Faneuil	155737
Fields Corner	264	3,500	61,657	65,083	3,294	12,681	Fields Corner	146479
Grove Hall	891	12,265	90,122	52,936	6,245	25,435	Grove Hall	187894
Honan-Allston	501	4,186	58,436	78,736	6,369	7,509	Honan-Allston	155737
Hyde Park	703	11,131	80,890	85,780	5,262	15,085	Hyde Park	198851
Jamaica Plain	514	16,604	120,261	206,020	8,887	11,769	Jamaica Plain	364055
Lower Mills	225	2,193	45,082	42,219	1,602	6,134	Lower Mills	97455
Mattapan	428	2,752	111,769	51,024	6,741	27,502	Mattapan	200216
North End	263	3,812	91,986	67,785	4,478	8,324	North End	176648
Parker Hill	218	2,519	35,260	33,678	1,992	4,600	Parker Hill	78267
Roslindale	342	7,795	89,323	98,625	3,317	13,034	Roslindale	212436
Roxbury (Dudley at the time)	47	357	-	-	-	-	Roxbury	404
South Boston	318	6,604	83,307	101,046	2,821	9,699	South Boston	203795
South End	397	5,222	78,837	80,821	2,706	10,774	South End	178757
Uphams Corner	202	2,202	27,143	32,189	1,302	5,563	Uphams Corner	68601
West End	579	14,538	104,180	105,961	2,705	14,120	West End	242083
West Roxbury	229	4,938	90,000	150,658	4,873	8,547	West Roxbury	259245
Digital Borrowing				2,292,348			Digital Downloads	2292348
	11,906	246,059	3,555,616	5,126,046	397,170	490,322		9,827,119

COVID-era stats for Central

Year	# of Programs	Program Attendance	Visitors	Circulation	Wireless Sessions	Computer Sessions
FY19	2,547	89,585	1,747,910	846,112	300,588	221,077
FY21	1,093	225,852	132,589	287,507	14,315	6,560
FY23	3,200	56,682	1,016,311	601,704	348,673	78,727
% FY23 of FY19	125.6%	63.3%	58.1%	711.4%	116.0%	35.6%



Total REACH

3,207,819

667,916

2,105,297

65.6%

FY23 Gift Report

Friends Groups:

The Fund for the Boston Public Library	2,558,415.66	
The Associates of the Boston Public Library	1,182,924.32	
CityWide Friends	23,321.57	
		3,764,661.55

Branch Friend Groups:

Friends of Brighton	2,187.91	
Friends of Connolly	950.66	
Friends of East Boston	750.00	
Friends of Egelston	527.00	
Friends of Parker Hill	1,840.00	
Friends of Grove Hall for Zoo Passes	250.00	
Friends of Jamaica Plain	2,626.00	
Friends of Lower Mills	400.00	
Friends of South Boston for Zoo Passes	845.00	
Friends of West Roxbury	1,815.00	
Friends of West End	195.00	
Friends of Uphams Corner	400.00	
Branch Friends Groups:		12,786.57

Boston Red Sox (game tickets)	73,450.00	
Estate-Miltiades Karamchedis	9,000.00	
Donation Boxes	9,582.78	
Donation-grant for DYS visits	10,000.00	
Amazon Smile	251.66	
NE Baptist Hospital	900.00	
Miscellaneous	525.80	

Total Gifts 3,881,158.36