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SPECIAL COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE CHARTER (DRAFT)

Purpose

The Special Collections Committee serves in an advisory capacity for a variety of matters, including the development, stewardship, and promotion of the Boston Public Library's exceptional Special Collections. These rare and culturally significant materials—collected from the earliest years of the library to present day—span a wide variety of periods, subjects and formats, including rare books, manuscripts, maps, archives, prints, photographs, music, and works of art.

As a public institution, the Boston Public Library holds its Special Collections in public trust. One of the primary roles of this Committee is to bring broader public awareness to the activities and priorities within Special Collections. This will be achieved through regular reports on collection development, access and outreach efforts, major projects, stewardship work, and other initiatives as appropriate. Committee members are asked to advise on the library's ongoing strategic initiatives and priorities for Special Collections. They support and promote, these efforts among affiliate groups, external stakeholders, community organizations, and the broader public with the goal of aligning and leveraging advocacy for Special Collections to amplify the BPL's larger institutional mission, services, and strategic priorities.

Committee Composition

Library Trustees, individuals from the library and cultural heritage fields, representatives of library affiliate groups, members of the community at large, the President of the BPL, and the Director of Research & Special Collections serve on the Special Collections Committee.

Committee Responsibilities

- Offer community perspectives and input on relevant policies, projects, and processes that affect stewardship of and access to Special Collections.
- Provide recommendations to the BPL Board of Trustees on Special Collections matters requiring Board approval.
- Review regular reports on new acquisitions, initiatives, accomplishments, and strategic goals for Special Collections in conjunction with the overall BPL strategic priorities.
- Build awareness and foster connections among relevant local, peer, and philanthropic communities for greater support of the library's ongoing Special Collections stewardship, discovery, and outreach efforts.

Committee Engagement

The Committee shall meet three times annually and report annually to the Board of Trustees on its activities and progress toward goals supporting BPL's strategic priorities.

