

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

Meeting of the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee
Tuesday, October 31, 2023, at 8:30 a.m.
Held via Zoom

MINUTES

A meeting of the Boston Public Library Trustees Finance and Audit Committee was held virtually on Tuesday, October 31, 2023, via Zoom at 8:30 a.m.

Members present at the meeting: Committee Chair Evelyn Arana Ortiz and Committee members: Navjeet Bal, John Hailer, David Leonard, and Senator Mike Rush. Jeff Hawkins was absent.

Also, present were Boston Public Library staff including Chief Financial Officer Emily Tokarczyk, Clerk of the Board Pamela Carver, 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 8:31 a.m. The Committee Chair wished all a happy Halloween. She then read the welcoming EDI statement. Roll call was taken and determined there was a quorum. Everyone was reminded that the meeting was being recorded and how to sign up for Public Comment.

The first matter of business was the approval of the minutes from the May 16, 2023 and September 9, 2023 meetings. With no edits or comments, the meeting minutes were approved.

Ms. Arana Ortiz explained that there were a combination of delegation votes for the Board to delegate approval back to the Finance and Audit Committee as well as Committee recommendation votes for the Full Board. She invited Emily Tokarczyk to review them.

Ms. Tokarczyk started with the delegation votes. The first was for a multi-function printer contract for \$750,000 contract over five years. It was for scanning, printing, and copying systemwide as well as for patron use. A key component for the selection is it must be integrated with our Pharos “pay-for-print” software and therefore it takes longer to test and analyze. They hoped to have a selection in the next couple of weeks. This contract would be for both the equipment and its servicing.

Ms. Tokarczyk noted that the RFP was completed but they have not made their recommended selection yet. They are asking for the delegation vote so they do not have to wait until the end of January for Board approval.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and voted unanimously to approve.

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 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).”

The Newspaper Digitization contract was explained. It is for a three-year contract that is not to exceed \$500,000. It is the second phase of the newspaper digitization project. The bids for this contract are not due until mid-November so requesting delegation to Finance and Audit approval so as not to delay the start of the work until next year.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and voted unanimously to approve.

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 three-year contract not to exceed five hundred thousand dollars and zero cents (\$500,000) for Newspaper Digitization to the Finance and Audit Committee.”

Ms. Tokarczyk explained the Company One contract was for a three-year contract for programming, production, and community engagement systemwide for \$250,000. They have done three productions at the Central Library in the past. Mr. Colford explained that this was a three-way partnership with the City’s Office of Arts and Culture. Company One offers acting workshops among other programming and outreach throughout the branches in addition to the performances at Central.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and voted unanimously to approve.

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston recommend the Board of Trustees 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.”

Next, the loading dock contract was explained. It was for necessary structural repairs to the concrete platform in the loading dock at the Central Library for \$425,500 with Structural Preservation Systems.

David Leonard explained while some critical repair funds will be used, reserved funding was moved into the operating budget several years ago, so it is no longer a standalone fund. The finance team was checking with the City’s Budget office to see if there were any additional fund sources that could be used to cover the balance. Otherwise, they would look to use State Aid or enterprise funding. Regardless of the funding source, approval for this contract is needed.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and voted unanimously to approve.

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston recommend the Board of Trustees 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.”

Emily Tokarczyk reviewed the Strategic Planning Consultant contract. As part of developing a new Strategic Plan this upcoming year, they were seeking to hire a consultant to aid in this process. The RFP was issued over the summer and twelve bids responded. They were scored internally by a staff committee and identified five finalists. A strategic planning consultant selection committee, comprised of BPL staff as well as trustees Westra and Masso of the Strategic Planning Committee, interviewed the five finalists. The highest scorer from this process was Gensler.

The selection committee are recommending approval of Gensler for this contract in the amount of \$200,000 for a one-year contract. They noted that Gensler partnered with Margaret Sullivan Studios, a library planning expert. Their combined references included work with many of the large urban public libraries across the country.

The Committee discussed the expected deliverables of this consultant. They included a strategic plan for the next 5-10 years, a communications audit on messaging and patron reach, as well as updating our 10-

year-old Compass Strategic Plan. This process will help prioritize our mission, vision, values, and initiatives that can take us forward.

Mr. Leonard pointed out that this vote technically falls under the purview of the Finance and Audit Committee in regard to approval thresholds. However, due to it being part of the larger Strategic Plan, it would be more appropriate for the full Board's attention.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and voted unanimously to approve.

VOTED: “that, the Trustees Finance and Audit Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston recommend the Board of Trustees 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.”

Ms. Tokarczyk reviewed the FY23 gifts and donor report. She pointed out that many groups gave more in FY23 than in FY22 and highlighted the programming that the funding supported. Ms. Arana Ortiz thanked all supporters for their ongoing generosity.

Next, Ms. Arana Ortiz asked for New Business. She noted she would be absent from the Board meeting on November 7th and that John Hailer would give the Finance and Audit Committee report.

Ms. Arana Ortiz asked for Public Comment for which there was none.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:53am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pamela R. Carver, Clerk of the Board