

**TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON**  
**Meeting of the Trustees as a Corporation and Administrative Agency**  
**Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 8:30 a.m.**  
**Central Library, Rabb Hall**  
**700 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116**  
**MINUTES**

The Meeting of the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston (“BPL”) held on Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 8:30 a.m. at the Central Library in Rabb Hall.

All present at the meeting included: Chair, Dr. Ray Liu, Vice Chair Evelyn Arana Ortiz (Remote) and Trustees: Navjeet Bal, Joe Berman, Jim Canales, John Hailer, Julie Kim, Jonathan Lavine, Jose C. Masso III, Porsha Olayiwola, Senator Mike Rush, Christian Westra, and Lynn Perry Wooten. Jeff Hawkins and Cheryl Cronin were absent.

Also present were BPL President David Leonard, Clerk of the Board Pamela Carver, BPL staff, and members of the public.

Dr. Ray Liu, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. He read the Trustees Reaffirmation Statement. The Clerk conducted a roll call, confirming a quorum. She noted one trustee participated remotely (noted) and that two trustees (Masso and Bal) joined at 8:37 AM after the roll call was taken. Everyone was reminded that the meeting was being recorded for administrative purposes, and they were provided with instructions on how to sign up for public comment.

The first matter of business was the approval of the meeting minutes from February 4, 2025. No comments or edits were made, and the board voted to approve them.

Dr. Liu offered brief remarks. He congratulated BPL President David Leonard on his recent marriage and shared his appreciation for the opportunity to deliver remarks at BPL’s All Staff Day. He noted that All Staff Day is a biennial event that highlights staff achievements and supports professional development. Chief Jose Masso also attended and addressed the staff.

Dr. Liu invited David Leonard to give his President’s Report. President Leonard introduced an update on the Appropriate Use Policy (“AUP”) noting that a formal vote on the revised version will occur at a future

Audrey Wynne presented. She noted that the goal was to foster institutional understanding and ownership of this public-facing policy. The policy update process will serve as a template for future policy revisions and establish a tracking system for all public-facing documents. Ms. Wynne will focus on three key policies: AUP, incident reporting, and trespassing. She noted that staff were engaged in feedback collection; emphasized the importance of access to tools for enforcement. The approach is trauma-informed and aligned with social work best practices. Ms. Wynne noted that the final draft revised policy has been prepared and will be presented for a formal vote in May.

The Trustees had a brief discussion and emphasized the need for a clear escalation framework, governance of incident tracking, and the need for psychological safety and staff support.

Jessica Chapel presented an update on the AI-Enhanced Digitization Initiative with OpenAI. The focus is digitizing complex collections and enhancing metadata, text clarity, and accessibility. There was a Letter of Intent signed in December 2024, working with the City’s legal team to finalize details. She said they

were aiming for a May approval; project to span three years with potential two-year extension. The first pilot will include 1 million items, scheduled for early 2026 production phase if benchmarks are met.

The Board had a discussion and asked several questions. They asked about access and ownership for which Ms. Chapel confirmed BPL retains full control, but OpenAI can use the content for training. They suggested forming a coalition with peer institutions using similar technologies (Currently Harvard, Yale and Northwestern are using Open AI). .

President Leonard reported that the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) has proposed funding cuts that pose a serious threat to libraries. Trustees were urged to evaluate individually and provide their recommendations.

Next, Ms. Arana Ortiz gave the Finance and Audit Committee report. She explained that after 87 years, a permanent location has been identified for the new Chinatown Branch. She asked Ms. Tokarczyk, Chief Financial Officer, to present the proposal.

Ms. Tokarczyk explained that the city is purchasing a condo which will be constructed by ACDC and include the new Chinatown Branch location. The branch will be approximately 17,000 sq. ft. She explained that the City of Boston will own the property for which the BPL will occupy for the Chinatown branch. The Trustees need to take a vote to approve this purchase.

Mr. Leonard said that this is a huge milestone as the first BPL project with a multi-use purpose that includes housing.

Ms. Arana Ortiz made a motion that was duly made, seconded and voted to approve.

**VOTED: "that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve the purchase of the condominium for the purpose of establishing the Chinatown Branch Library at 49 Hudson St, Boston MA 02111 in an amount not to exceed eleven million eight-hundred twelve thousand five-hundred dollars (\$11,812,500.00) from the Asian Community Development Corporation, 38 Oak St Boston, MA 02111.**

Ms. Arana Ortiz presented the annual e-Rate contracts that were recommended by the committee. There were no questions. A motion that was duly made, seconded, and voted to approve them as a slate.

**VOTED: "that, the Board of Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve a one-year contract with option to renew for two additional years, not to exceed Six Hundred Five Thousand Two Hundred Eighty Dollars (\$605,280.00) with the City of Boston Department of Innovation and Technology, One City Hall Square, Boston, MA 02201.**

**VOTED: "that, the Board of Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve a one-time contract, not to exceed Four Hundred-Ninety Thousand Seven-Hundred Thirty-Six Dollars and Thirty-Five Cents (\$490,736.35) with ePlus Technology, Inc., 13595 Dulles Technology Drive, Herndon, VA 20171.**

Dr. Ray Liu requested a vote to enter an Executive Session. The purpose was to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining given that the chair has declared that an open meeting discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the library, under exemption #3 of MA Open

Meeting Law. The Executive Session will be held at the conclusion of the public meeting. The Board of Trustees will not reconvene in a public session.

Dr. Liu made a motion that was duly made, seconded, and voted to approve via a roll call vote.

**VOTED: “that, the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston approve to enter into Executive Session for the purpose to discuss collective bargaining strategy under Exemption 3 of MA Open Meeting Law.”**

Dr. Liu presented New Business. He announced and congratulated Trustee Porsha Olayiwola on the opening of her bookstore, Just Bookish, in Fields Corner. He also announced that the Mayor’s State of the City address was scheduled for the following day.

Dr. Liu asked for public comments.

Elissa Cadillic, President of AFSCME 1526 spoke about the AUP. She emphasized the need for consistent system-wide understanding and implementation. She supported Audrey Wynne’s work and highlighted the importance of union engagement on matters such as the Chinatown Branch.

Amy Layton, a BPL staff member, thanked the Leadership team for mentioning IMLS funding challenges. She expressed concern over lack of communication regarding policy changes and transparency.

With no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:39 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

***Pamela Carver***

Pamela Carver  
Clerk of the Board