

TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON

Meeting of the Trustees Executive Committee

Monday, November 4, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

Central Library, Commonwealth Salon

700 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

MINUTES

The meeting of the Boston Public Library (“BPL”) Trustees Executive Committee (“Committee”) was held on Monday, November 4, 2024, at 4:00p.m. at the Central Library.

Committee members present at the meeting included Dr. Ray Liu, Chair, Evelyn Arana-Ortiz, Vice Chair and Trustees, Joe Berman, John Hailer, and Christian Westra. Cheryl Cronin and Jeff Hawkins were absent.

Also present were David Leonard, President, Pamela Carver, Clerk of the Board, Trustee Jose C. Masso III, Erin Corcoran from Gensler, staff, and members of the public.

Dr. Ray Liu, Chair of the Board presided and called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m. Those in attendance were reminded that the meeting was being recorded and how to sign up for public comment. He read the Trustees reaffirmation statement, roll call was taken and determined there was a quorum. The first matter of business was approval of the October 15, 2024 meeting minutes. With no edits or comments, the meeting minutes were approved.

Chair Liu provided opening remarks. Erin Corcoran thanked the committee for their feedback from the previous meeting, noting it helped refine the strategic goals. The discussion then moved into review and refinement of the BPL’s Strategic Plan.

With the assistance of Erin Corcoran from Gensler, the committee’s discussion first focused on mapping and accuracy. Emphasis was placed on ensuring geographic accuracy, especially regarding Roxbury. There was a recommendation to remove the term “district.” and they noted the absence of digital representation and suggested this be addressed.

Next, they discussed vision and the mission of the library. They gave language updates to clarify the meaning of “Free to All.” and wanted to be certain to ensure the phrases are distinctive to the Library.

They reviewed the language around the strategic roles and goals to ensure inclusivity and alignment with mission. Proposed removing the box around “Key Initiatives” and simply listing them out.

1. Lifelong Learner

Discussion on geographic scope: whether to focus wording on Boston/Commonwealth or acknowledge global reach. They clarified BPL primarily serves Boston and the state but recognizes its broader impact. Several language tweaks were suggested for clarity.

2. Welcoming Destination

Remove numbered labels from top boxes and “Key Initiative” text within boxes. Topics discussed included diversity, citizenship, immigration, language accessibility, and cultural relevance.

3. Trusted Resource

The language was found to be clear and action oriented.

4. Community Engager

They raised questions about “data-driven” language and recommended the removal of “BPL to Go.” They pointed out the duplicate bullet regarding “Nourish Civic Literacy.”

5. Organizational Readiness

They suggested depicting upstream/downstream dynamics. Strategic partnerships were highlighted as equally important as Human Resources in enabling success. The need for clarity in both internal and external communications. They thought this area needed to be revised the most.

The Committee then moved onto the implementation roadmap. The plan centers on a 5-year horizon. They discussed a potential refresh at year 4 to extend it through year 10. They expressed there were three phases.

- Short Term: Lays the foundation
- Medium Term: Realize the vision
- Long Term (5+ years): Scale the impact

The Trustees should reflect the broader community and city. They discussed Trustee involvement and the potential timing of the plan's approval. Consideration of how approval affects the implementation timeline. Agreement to keep the plan presentation high-level. They suggested presenting the plan at the November 19th Trustee meeting, with a special meeting in December for the formal approval.

Dr. Liu made a motion that was duly made, seconded and voted,

VOTED: “that the Executive Committee of the Public Library of the City of Boston recommend to review and present to the Board of Trustees the BPL’s Strategic Plan as discussed and presented.”

Dr. Liu called for new business and public comment, for which there was none. With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:37p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela R. Carver, Clerk of the Board