

# **TRUSTEES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON**

**Meeting of the Trustees Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee**

**Wednesday, July 30, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.**

**Shaw-Roxbury Branch, 149 Dudley Street, Roxbury, MA 02119**

**Learning Lab, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**

## **DRAFT MINUTES**

A meeting of the Trustees Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee (“FATF Committee”) was held on Wednesday, July 30, 2025 at 1:00p.m. at the Shaw-Roxbury Branch. It was also streamed via Zoom for the public.

All members were present at the meeting : Trustees Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Advisory Committee Chair/Trustee Evelyn Arana Ortiz, Committee Members: Priscilla Foley, Allen Knight, and Elizabeth T. Nagarajah, and Jacqueline Johnson.

Also present: Diana Preusser, Assistant Neighborhood Services/Branches Manager, Deandra Williams, Program Supervisor and Fellowes Athenaeum Trust (“FATF”) Program Manager, Pamela Carver, Clerk of the Board. Members of the public were also in attendance.

The meeting convened at 1:05 p.m. Committee Chair Evelyn Arana Ortiz presided and read the Trustees’ reaffirmation statement. Participants were reminded that the meeting was being recorded for administrative purposes and outlined the process for public comment. A roll call was taken and determined there was a quorum present.

The first matter of business was approving the meeting minutes from April 2, 2025 which were approved.

Ms. Arana Ortiz reviewed a snapshot of the FY26 budget. The carryover from FY 25 was \$10,439.20 so the total available for FY26 Programming was \$114,333.00

Priscilla Foley provided general updates from BPL. The Public Facilities Commission officially approved the renaming of the Roxbury Branch to the “Shaw-Roxbury Branch.” She highlighted BPL’s “Read Your Way to Fenway” summer reading initiative and encouraged participation in the ongoing Summer Reading BINGO Challenge.

Deandra Williams introduced herself and gave an overview of her role and the Programs Department’s activities. She gave an overview of the Fellowes Athenaeum Trust Fund RFP process:

- RFP and evaluation process is now fully digital.
- Application period: July 1–August 15
- Information sessions: 4 total (3 in-person, 1 virtual), with 27 attendees and 7 applications received as of the meeting date.

Tentative Timeline:

- Committee review: September 3–5
- Notification to applicants: September 8–10
- Program launch date: October 18, 2025 (to be corrected in presentation materials)
- Orientation session post-selection will include support with promotional material development, CORI checks, and City of Boston supplier setup

Ms. Williams emphasized her goals to increase both the number of applicants and approved programs. She hopes to strengthen collaboration with branch librarians and the Friends Group. She is planning to promote events via the BPL webpage and develop a dedicated FATF landing page featuring grantees and programs.

The committee discussed this and provided some feedback. Elizabeth Nagarajah stressed the importance of community connection. The Committee suggested some application edits (e.g., expanding space for applicant explanations). Ms. Williams noted applicants responded positively to the digital process. They discussed some ways the Friends could provide a deeper collaboration with the branch and Ms. Williams' programming.

The Clerk will send the FATF landing page link to committee and public when available.

Ms. Arana Ortiz asked for new business. They set their next meeting for Wednesday, September 3, 2025 at 10am at the Shaw-Roxbury Branch. They will review and vote on the FY26 FATF-funded programming. She noted this will likely require 3 hours.

Mr. Knight requested more money be granted to the branch this year. Priscilla Foley recommended presenting formal justifications at the next meeting.

Ms. Arana Ortiz called for public comment. The Clerk requested that the attendees be given three minutes to speak, all were in favor. There were five members of the public that signed up.

Sadiki Kambon

- Shared the historical background of efforts to rename Dudley Square to Nubian Square.
- Expressed concern and disappointment over the decision to rename the library branch after Sarah-Ann Shaw, citing lack of transparency and community involvement.

Klare Shaw

- Expressed gratitude to the Friends of the Library and acknowledged calls of appreciation regarding the renaming in honor of her mother, Sarah-Ann Shaw.

Zakiya Alake

- Voiced support for Sadiki Kambon's advocacy and the original Nubian Square renaming campaign.

Judge Lesley Harris (Ret.)

- Long-time friend of Sarah-Ann Shaw.
- Suggested alternate recognition such as a Wall of Honor or room naming, rather than renaming the entire branch.

George Greenidge

- Urged transparency in future meetings and broader community dialogue.
- Praised efforts to engage local students, noting that 40 students participated in a recent visit, with 24 obtaining their first library cards.
- Commended the branch staff and Deandra Williams for their support and leadership.

In closing, Ms. Arana Ortiz noted that an Excel spreadsheet of applicants will be created by Deandra Williams and shared with the committee one week prior to the September meeting.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 2:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela R. Carver