

**Free Library of Philadelphia
Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 13, 2018
8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.**

Attendance: P. Dembe (Chair); D. Carney; J. Chizick-Aguero; J. Cooper; M. DiBerardinis; G. Generals; M. Grimm (on-phone); A. Gupta; R. Heim; N. Kolb (on-phone); J. Maddox; S. Simons; J. Soroko; B. Sutherland; E. Tomlin

Guests: Irv Ackelsberg; Nick Thome (Board Fellow)

Staff: S. Reardon; J. Benford; S.; A. Gerz; S. Horrocks; C. Kowalski; J. Meier; E. Miller; S. Moran; J. Pecora; L. Walker; J. Wright

Chair Remarks – P. Dembe

P. Dembe called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. welcoming the Board members. She stated S. Horrocks, Vice President of External Affairs, would be retiring the following week after serving the Library for over seventeen years. She also mentioned the Board Retreat is scheduled for March 7, 2019.

Consent Agenda – P. Dembe

With regard to the Consent Agenda, P. Dembe shared the transfer of the Automobile Reference Collection is still in progress and the Special Collections Committee will be reviewing other collections for refinement and/or deaccession. The Humanities Committee focused on the recent mid-term elections and is determining the role for the Library in the upcoming elections in 2019 and 2020. She went on to share Kingsessing, Lawncrest, and McPherson Square Libraries have been announced as Rebuild sites. Then, P. Dembe made a motion for the approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion was made seconded and approved.

Technology Update – P. Dembe (J. Meier, E. Miller, & J. Wright)

- Website Update (J. Meier)

J. Meier, Deputy Director of Digital Strategies and Information Technology, shared the Library is currently working on three website initiatives. First, the Library is transferring from physical servers to virtual servers, which is a significant improvement to the Library's technology infrastructure. Next, is a revamping of the content management system, which will enable more staff to create content for the website, and this is scheduled for completion by April of 2019. Finally, there will be a complete redesign of the information architecture of the website. This will change the way the Library communicates with the public through the website. Events and materials in the catalog will be better connected creating more traffic. This will roll out with the content management system as well.

- Virtual Reality at FLP (E. Miller and J. Wright)

J. Wright, Chief of Materials Management, shared through a grant from the Patrick J. McGovern Foundation, the Library has developed and facilitated virtual reality (VR) programming as a way to improve communication, enhance digital literacy, bridge the digital divide, teach literacy, and entertain an array of audiences. J. Wright then introduced, E. Miller, the VR Coordinator at the Library, to the Board. He explained VR provides an immersive experience, and in particular, the Library has been

focusing on teens in partnership with schools and in the neighborhood libraries; adults and adults with special needs focusing on fitness and art classes along with CPR training in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania; and Senior Citizens focusing on fitness and travel. Thus far, the program has trained staff at eight neighborhood libraries along with hosting 12 events at various locations, including Bartram's Gardens and South Philadelphia High School with over 500 individuals participating.

Moving forward more staff will be trained on the VR equipment in order to hold their own programs along with being trained on how to create content as well.

Six-Day Service – S. Reardon

S. Reardon shared as of January 19, 2019, thirty-five neighborhood libraries will be offering six-day service. An additional ten libraries are being considered for Saturday service in lieu of Friday service; however, this schedule change requires approval from the labor unions. In order to have these additional libraries open for six-day service, J. Benford explained hiring is in process and overtime will be offered to staff as well. It was asked if the libraries had to close on one day, which day would be best, and S. Reardon shared data from other urban library systems is being reviewed, but she noted many close on Thursdays. With regard to the spreadsheet of the additional libraries being open for six-day service, it was requested information of this nature be provided to the Board prior to the meeting.

Governance Committee – J. Cooper

J. Cooper shared Dr. St. Geme of the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia will be invited to join the Board with a vote to be completed shortly. He went onto share in 2019, there will be two more vacancies on the Board, one being a Mayoral appointment, and the other being a Library appointment. It was inquired if the Board has a matrix detailing Board members information, and J. Cooper shared the matrix will be presented at the next Board meeting and it will be included in the packet of materials sent out prior to the meeting as well.

Parkway Central Project – P. Dembe (J. Pecora)

J. Pecora highlighted the time lapse video of the construction project from the past year. He explained 66% more of the building thanks to this project will be open to the public. He also shared as of December 28, 2018, the Library will have a certificate of occupancy for the space with furniture and other installations beginning in January. The grand opening is scheduled for March 2019.

With regard to maintenance issues, Rebuild, and neighborhood libraries, J. Pecora stated funding for some building issues is being provided through Rebuild. He also shared a Property Manager with mechanical skills has joined his staff and will focus the neighborhood libraries.

Strategic Plan Oversight Committee – A. Gupta (S. Moran)

- **“Build a Culture of Literacy”**

A. Gupta shared at each Board meeting for the rest of the fiscal year, one goal of the Strategic Plan will be reviewed focusing on its importance and its progress as a way to better understand the Dashboard and its metrics.

S. Moran reviewed the progress of 2018 indicators being tracked under the goal of “Build a Culture of Literacy in Philadelphia” highlighting the “twelve early learning centers receive training and materials” indicator. With support from the Vanguard Strong Start for Kids program, the Library's *Literacy in Early Learning Spaces* initiative is focusing on providing professional development and materials to

underperforming child care centers. Currently, S. Moran explained there are fourteen centers participating and they have been reviewed under the following criteria: print-rich environment, instructional materials, resources, strategies, and participant knowledge. As the project continues more data will be tracked and progress will be reported.

A discussion focused on data and partnerships/collaboration with the Mayor's Office of Education, the Philadelphia School District, and the Community College of Philadelphia followed. It was inquired if the Library could make their impact more visible through data in regard to Read by 4th efforts. Also, it was asked if *Early Learning Spaces* would be expanded and if City Council members were aware of the project. It was explained by S. Moran since the program has recently begun these concerns and inquiries would be reviewed.

President's Remarks – S. Reardon

S. Reardon shared the results of the recent mystery shopper customer service project will be presented at the next Board meeting explaining the project began in October of 2018 and three rounds of shopping were performed. Overall, she stated, the results were positive, and these results will enable the Library to customize future trainings for staff.

Also, it was noted Rebuild announcements for the Kingsessing, Lawncrest, and McPherson Square libraries were announced and the grant applications are to be submitted shortly. She shared the Fairmount Park Conservancy will be a partner with the Library on all three sites. In addition to Rebuild, the Overbrook Park and Paschalville Libraries have received funding from the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program.

She went on to share AmeriHealth will be offering funding to the Ramonita G. de Rodriguez Library to assist with building maintenance of the library as way to sustain consistent service.

New Business – P. Dembe

P. Dembe noted the annual gala, Feast Your Imagination, was a success.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:34 a.m.