



Attendance: P. Dembe, Chair; D. Allie; C. Arlene; D. Carney; J. Chizick-Agüero; J. Cooper; M. DiBerardinis; G. Generals; A. Gupta; R. Heim; N. Kolb (on-phone); J. Maddox; S. Olanipekun-Lewis; M. Rashed; S. Sanchez; S. Simons; J. Soroko; B. Sutherland; E. Tomlin; N. Torres

Guests: I. Ackelsberg; G. Adesanya; S. Miller (BoardEffect)

Staff: S. Reardon; J. Bogoni; C. O’Connell; D. Dreher; C. Kowalski; J. Pecora; L. Walker; J. Wilson

I. Call to Order / Chair’s Remarks – P. Dembe

P. Dembe called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. and welcomed the Board. She announced D. Carney would be resigning from the Board as he has accepted an employment opportunity in Boston, Massachusetts.

P. Dembe then recognized the untimely passing of Miriam Spector, a Board of Directors member who was a very active and an engaged supporter of the Library. P. Dembe expressed Miriam is dearly missed and requested a moment of silence in her memory.

II. BoardEffect Training – BoardEffect

S. Miller of BoardEffect provided an overview of the online portal, which the Board will now be utilizing to access all Board-related information.

III. Consent Agenda – P. Dembe

P. Dembe called for approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion was made, seconded, and carried.

IV. Buildings Committee – D. Carney

D. Carney referenced the Neighborhood Libraries Conditions List and Summary of Capital Improvements documents briefly. With regard to Rebuild, he introduced Cassie O’Connell, the Project Manager of the Library for Rebuild. He commended her skill set and experience stating she was a great fit for the position. He then returned to discussing the capital improvement document noting the need for \$25M is directly tied to years of deferred maintenance of the buildings due to lack of sufficient funding via the City budget for decades. P. Dembe stated the impact of deferred maintenance resulting in library closures needs to be quantified in order to emphasize why \$25M in capital funding is urgently needed.

J. Pecora shared Haddington Library has been closed since August with the tentative date to reopen on October 28th due to mold remediation, which required the ceiling to be demolished in the process. He noted this, too, was the result of deferred maintenance. The overall project is costing the Library between \$75K to \$125K.

V. Library Services Committee – N. Torres

N. Torres explained the Library Services Committee is charged with reviewing the Library’s policies and procedures. He then shared with that the Committee is recommending the elimination out-of-state cards. It was explained since digital media recourses are pay-per-use costing the Library up to \$288.00 per user per year, the Library has to limit the number of items users can check out along with the duration of the loan period due to cost and budget, and since out-of-state cardholders (1,600 currently) utilize these resources significantly, their use is impacting local residents’ accessibility. While these users pay an annual fee of \$50.00 resulting in revenue of \$80K, eliminating their use will bring back about \$380K in funding for resources.

It was noted within the Action Item, it was incorrectly stated the cardholders are costing the Library \$80K, and not generating revenue for the Library. With this amendment to be made, a motion was called for the Trustees to accept the recommendation of eliminating out-of-state cardholders. The motion was made, seconded, and carried.

Additionally, it was noted the Committee is reviewing the proposal of eliminating fines and fees.

VI. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee – C. Arlene / S. Olanipekun-Lewis

C. Arlene began by sharing the Committee is meeting monthly and they are currently reviewing data focused on Library staff demographics, Library contract demographics, and are interviewing staff to collect qualitative data. All of this data is being analyzed through the lens of the Library’s Diversity and Inclusion Plan, which was adopted by the Board in 2017. Furthermore, he noted the Committee is learning there are areas in which the Library is improving, but there is a need to better improve communication around this, but he also acknowledged there are still considerable challenges and areas for improvement.

P. Dembe also noted, the Committee is gathering data from other City agencies as well to establish the context of where the Library stands in comparison to the rest of the City. It was shared the Committee is preparing for the hearing with the City Council Legislative Oversight Committee.

VII. MacMillan Ebook Purchasing Model Changes – J. Wilson

J. Wilson of the Materials Management Department shared five major publishers control the pricing model for ebooks. Since 2009, he explained the cost and use of ebooks has increased considerable. With this, the model has shifted over time to libraries renting a number of copies, and he noted, these copies are priced significantly higher than print copies.

Even with that arbitrary pricing model, one of the five publishers, MacMillan has announced it will only be providing libraries one digital copy of a title for an eight week duration when it is first published at a fee of \$60.00, and thereafter, purchases of additional copies will be based on a meter use cost for twenty-four months. J. Wilson explained this change will negatively impact customer service by resulting in longer wait times for hold requests, and that this is extremely important because a significant part of the Library’s circulation is digital, which is continuing to increase each year.

He further shared the overall library field is protesting this purchasing model shift with the American Library Association (ALA) creating a petition, the Urban Libraries Council publishing an opposition statement, and with some libraries publically stating they will boycott MacMillan items.

It was inquired if the public was aware of the situation and J. Wilson explained much of the public beyond the library field is not, and S. Reardon noted the public needs to be made aware of this. It was inquired if there is a social media campaign and it was explained the Library is posting about this on the Library's blog, social media accounts, and is including it in the e-newsletter. The discussion continued focusing on how to educate the public on this matter and how this is a very concerning equity issue.

VIII. Read by 4th – J. Bogoni

J. Bogoni shared there is an ever growing presence of Read by 4th (RB4) in communities with book nooks, reading captains, the "Talk it Up" program, and more. However, she noted there is a need to increase action explaining while progress is being made it is difficult to show long-term improvement of the initiative as the topline metrics and indicators for this progress track slower than others.

With this in mind, J. Bogoni went on to explain in order to keep the campaign growing, a paradigm shift needs to occur, which is to focus on family literacy and family success by approaching RB4 and literacy from a public health perspective highlighting the positive impacts of reading. In 2020, the campaign will switch to "My Reading Promise." This approach is currently being tested within a focus group and a test run is scheduled to occur in a neighborhood in West Philly and one in North Philly to evaluate its impact.

Additionally, in 2020, RB4 will facilitate a city-wide festival and will focus on increasing the number of reading captains. It was discussed how RB4 is a movement within the city with the Library acting as the project manager.

IX. President's Remarks – S. Reardon

S. Reardon stated the Library has launched its six-day service with 224 new staff members hired, which included promotions of seasonal staff to part-time permanent positions. Also, with this service the Library is now able to provide LEAP on Saturdays.

Next, she shared the Library is working on its target budget meeting with the City, and as of now, there is no indication of a reduction in the set budget.

With regard to the transfer of the Automobile Reference Collection (ARC), D. Dreher shared, the transfer deal has been provided to the Attorney General's Office and then will be presented in Orphan's Court.

It was also shared researchers have recently discovered the first folio of Shakespeare's work, which is part of the Library's Rare Book Collection, contains annotations of poet, John Milton, and this news is receiving worldwide attention.

Additionally, S. Reardon shared the Library has opened a new department, the Language and Learning Center, which focuses on adult learning. Something of note, she shared is returning citizens are active users of the center, especially with regard to teaching digital literacy to their peers, and so, the Library is identifying funding sources to employ these individuals as peer teachers.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:48 a.m.