

**Free Library of Philadelphia  
Board of Trustees  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 6, 2019  
8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.  
Lovett Memorial Neighborhood Library**

**Attendance:** P. Dembe (Chair); C. Arlene; D. Carney; J. Chizick-Aguero; J. Cooper; M. DiBerardinis; T. Dichter; M. Grimm; A. Gupta; R. Heim; J. Maddox; S. Olanipekun-Lewis; S. Simons; J. Soroko; J. St. Geme; B. Sutherland; E. Tomlin; N. Torres

**Guests:** Irv Ackelsberg; J. Gurtman (Coyle Hospitality); J. Kenney; J. Rivers; Nick Thome (Board Fellow); D. Wilson

**Staff:** S. Reardon; J. Benford; C. Kowalski; S. Moran; J. Pecora; L. Walker

**Chair Remarks – P. Dembe**

P. Dembe called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. welcoming the Board along with welcoming new Board member, Dr. St. Geme. She announced the Legislators' Breakfast is scheduled for March 26<sup>th</sup> with a dinner to be held the evening before as well. She encouraged Board members to attend.

**Consent Agenda – P. Dembe**

P. Dembe shared highlights from the President's Report followed by a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded and carried. R. Heim inquired about data concerning six-day service discussed at the previous Board meeting. S. Reardon explained forty neighborhood libraries are open for six-day service currently with equitable distribution throughout each City Councilperson's district. Furthermore, it was explained with the remaining twelve libraries, staffing logistics are still being determined, but the goal is to have all libraries open for six-day service in the fall of FY20.

**Buildings Committee –D. Carney**

The "Facilities Report" provided a scaled list of neighborhood library conditions. It was noted the listing changes from month-to-month as building conditions change. Overall, during the last four years \$45M has been invested in these libraries as an effort to manage years of deferred maintenance. This investment has resulted in the replacement of thirteen roofs, the replacement or upgrade of twenty-seven HAVC systems, installation of twenty modern security systems, and improvements to seven elevators.

Currently, there are several upcoming major projects, including installing new roofs on the Overbrook Park and Frankford Libraries, extensive masonry repairs at Walnut Street West Library, and installation of LED lighting at Roxborough Library. Funding for these projects has come from an array of resources beyond the Library's capital budget, such as the Mayor's Emergency Fund.

An inquiry was made with regard to the amount of funding needed to complete all the necessary repairs and improvements to the neighborhood libraries due to the years of deferred maintenance. D. Carney noted J. Pecora has utilized resources the best way possible and commended him for this consistent commitment.

### **Strategic Plan Oversight Committee – A. Gupta**

S. Moran explained the strategic plan goal of “Delivering an Exceptional Customer Experience” has a three-fold intent focused on the changing needs of library users, which include staff training to engage customers, providing welcoming physical and digital environments, and pioneering new offerings in the cultural and civic arenas. The Library is tracking eight measures to gauge progress with this goal, which includes ensuring 100% of staff has customer service training, on-boarding of new staff within sixty days of hire, and utilizing new recruitment tactics.

### **Mayoral Visit – Mayor Kenney**

Mayor Kenney highlighted the importance of the sugary beverage tax in the upcoming city elections emphasizing the positive impact the tax has on the community schools, pre-K, and Rebuild initiatives.

He also shared the Library has an active role in the city’s newly announced “Poverty Reduction Plan” because of the Library’s role in education and workforce development. He further shared an increase to the Library’s budget was proposed to ensure all libraries are offering six-day service emphasizing the importance of Saturday service.

### **Results of Mystery Shopper Study – Coyle Hospitality Group**

During 2018, Coyle Hospitality Group performed three rounds of evaluations at every library focused on:

- Ensuring staff is knowledgeable, maintains a professional demeanor, and provides superior customer service.
- Assessing the physical plant (facility, restrooms, etc.) and determine areas for improvement.
- Identifying any areas where employees may need internal coaching and training to continuously achieve service excellence and a superior customer experience.

At the conclusion of the presentation, S. Reardon noted the results from this study will build the foundation for the Library’s future customer experience training.

### **President’s Remarks – S. Reardon**

S. Reardon shared a number updates, including collaborating with the Philadelphia Zoo, the opening of the new space at Parkway Central on April 10<sup>th</sup>, and the completion of the Friends of the Free Library agreement with the Free Library Foundation. Also, S. Reardon shared over the weekend a number of substance overdoses occurred at neighborhood libraries and the Library is committed to developing support for staff, including trauma training.

Following this, an Executive Session was called.