



Free Library of Philadelphia | Board of Trustees Meeting
Friday, June 2, 2023 | 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Leavitt Gershman Conference Center at the Franklin Institute

Attendance: F. Olanipekun-Lewis (Chair); J. Chizick-Agüero; P. Dembe; R. Heim; J. Hinckley; J. St. Geme; S. Simons; E. Tomlin; L. Walke

Staff: K. Richards; D. Cottman; D. Henderson; C. Patton; J. Pecora; G. Sims; P. Suero;

I. Call to Order and Chair’s Remarks – S. Simons

F. Olanipekun-Lewis called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. and welcomed the Board of Trustees. F. Olanipekun-Lewis provided highlights for the 2022-23 fiscal year, including the \$10 million received from the mid-year transfer for capital needs and the increased budget received for FY23. F. Olanipekun-Lewis also thanked Mayor Kenney for his support, the Board of Trustees for their time and service and the Franklin Institute for hosting this meeting.

II. President and Director Remarks – K. Richards

Info Item: President and Director Report

K. Richards acknowledged his appreciation for the help received from staff and the Board. K. Richards expressed how proud he was of all that was accomplished including:

- \$700,000 spent on civic programming
- 150 new hires welcomed
- 10 libraries with Saturday Service for the first time since early 2020

K. Richards remarked that stabilizing service is his priority and main goal.

R. Heim congratulated K. Richards, D. Henderson and the staff on their successes. E. Tomlin echoed these sentiments.

P. Dembe inquired about the number of staff in DROP. D. Henderson replied that 25 employees are in DROP.

III. Action Item: Consent Agenda – F. Olanipekun-Lewis

a. Minutes of the March 17, 2023 Board Meeting

The consent agenda was deferred to the September 22, 2023 meeting as the Trustees did not have a quorum.

IV. Budget Briefing – P. Suero

Info Item: FY23 Operating Budget

P. Suero shared that there are no changes in the Q3 numbers of the FY23 budget and the Library is awaiting an update from City Council regarding the FY24.

R. Heim inquired about the expectation for a line item request in the budget for \$3.8 million. P. Suero noted that these funds will be utilized for staffing to achieve 6 day service. P. Dembe asked how many staff will equate \$3.8 million and D. Henderson replied that she will get this number to the Trustees.

V. Facilities Report – J. Pecora

Info Item: Info Item: Status Report

J. Pecora stated that his division is utilizing the \$10 million received from the City during the mid-year transfer.

The Facilities Committee, formerly known as the Buildings Committee, was re-established in March and will be important going forward as we work to get more resources.

Chestnut Hill was closed from November through April for unexpected renovations. Frankford's renovation will begin soon. Rebuild work is ongoing at Kingsessing and Paschalville. Lawncrest and Cobbs Creek will have closures for Rebuild renovations soon. Design work is underway for Cecil B. Moore. Rebuild work will begin soon at Wynnefield and McPherson Square.

Integrated automation of HVAC will be included in Rebuild renovations. Upon completion, 67% of Neighborhood Libraries will be automated to allow faster repairs.

The \$10 million from the mid-year transfer will support various projects.

Seven roof projects are in process and will account for \$3 million. Twenty HVAC projects, including eight major projects, total \$5 million. Twenty-three additional capital projects will total \$2 million.

If all projects are completed in FY24, there will be \$500,000 in deferred maintenance. The Library will need at least \$7 million annually for maintenance.

J. Pecora is in the process of identifying a contractor to sanitize the exterior of McPherson Square. The Opioid Response Unit and CLiP agreed on a 5 day per week schedule for sanitizing year round. Department collaboration will be important for safety this summer.

E. Tomlin asked to be invited to any public conversations regarding discussions about Greater Olney's roof and HVAC issues. J. Pecora mentioned that Greater Olney is one of the five roof projects that will be starting within the next month and information showing progress at Greater Olney is available.

J. Hinckley asked J. Pecora to discuss the RACP strategy. J. Pecora explained that the state process for reimbursement is lengthy and an organization must have the funds to cover the costs upfront.

J. Chizick-Agüero asked for information regarding the Richmond roof work. J. Pecora shared that work will start in mid-August via Rebuild, with a total cost of \$950,000.

J. Chizick-Agüero also asked about the dampness and needle removal process for McPherson. J. Pecora stated that the dampness will be resolved and the needle removal process involves thorough sweeps for needles and sanitizing for fecal matter.

VI. Hiring Status – D. Henderson

Info Item: Staffing Report

D. Henderson thanked the HR team for all of their work. HR has processed 102 internal promotions and is working to fill the remaining vacancies. Six hiring events for Library Assistant 1 vacancies were held throughout fiscal year 2023.

R. Heim asked how the Library advertises vacancies to increase the applicant pool. D. Henderson stated that hiring occurs through the civil service process and the workforce planning process. Also, applying for employment at the Library goes through the City’s website.

J. Hinckley asked for the timeline for getting staffing for six day service. P. Suero said that leadership is in discussion with the unions regarding Saturdays and analyzing the staffing needs. Neighborhood Libraries will be prioritized. J. Hinckley asked if this process can be expedited, as other City departments use continuous hiring. P. Suero will reach out to OHR about this possibility.

VII. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) – G. Sims

Info Item: Quarterly Report

G. Sims worked with Materials Management staff to increase the materials in the Library’s Islamic collection.

Parkway Central Library hosted a screening of the film “Trigger” which was presented by First Person Arts.

The Education Assistance Fund currently has ten employee participants. F. Olanipekun-Lewis thanked the Foundation for supporting the educational endeavors of ten staff members.

VIII. Policies for Elimination – F. Olanipekun-Lewis

F. Olanipekun-Lewis defers this action to the September 22, 2023 meeting as the Trustees do not have a quorum.

IX. Public Comment - J. Chizick-Agüero

There were no public comments submitted.

X. New Business – F. Olanipekun-Lewis

F. Olanipekun-Lewis asked the Trustees if there was any new business and none was brought forth.

XI. Adjournment

F. Olanipekun-Lewis called for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made, seconded, and approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:17 a.m.