

Cambridge Public Library
Board of Library Trustees
January 7, 2020
Minutes

A meeting of the Board of Library Trustees was held on January 7th at 5:00pm in the Trustees' Room, 449 Broadway. The following members of the Board of Library Trustees were present:

- Janet Axelrod, Karen Kosko, James Roosevelt, Nancy Woods
- *Also present:* Maria McCauley, Director of Libraries, Emily St. Germain, STEAM Program Manager
- *Absent:* Omowale Moses

Minutes from the December 2nd meeting were approved.

NOTE: Trustees' March meeting moved from Tuesday, March 3 to Wednesday, March 4 at 5:00 PM.

New Business

- **STEAM Update:** Ms. St. Germain informed the Board that the Tech Bar has been installed and The Hive is 99% complete. We hope for permits to be issued this week, then we will install and configure Hive tools and equipment. We hope to have recording studios running in early February. Next week, the artist from Eyewire will be painting The Hive mural on canvas in the Learning Lab, which will be open to the public.

Due to delays with furniture and delivery, we will delay The Hive/Tech Bar Opening Celebration to **March 19, 3:00-5:00 PM**, with a snow date of Wednesday, March 25, 3:00-5:00 PM. We will also host 4 Open Houses in March: two to align with school early release schedules, one on a Saturday, and another on a weekday evening. **Action Item:** Ms. McCauley to send all Hive event dates to Trustees.

New STEAM staff have been selected, accepted offers and we hope to have them start in late January. Staff training is planned and underway, including training to support the Learning Lab, Tech Bar & Hive service desks. All staff are invited to drop-in sessions this month and Hive tours & a workshop in design thinking in February. We are also thinking about future training (e.g. employee onboarding). Staff are currently learning to use makerspace tools such as a laser cutter, digital sewing machine & button-maker.

We are planning for volunteer recruitment by developing the volunteer process & training. We are looking for people reflective of the Cambridge community who are comfortable working with the public. They will help support Library staff by offering workshops and one-on-one patron support.

Partnerships with Innovators for Purpose, CCTV and Fab Foundation continue. STEAM Academy (ifp) will allow us to continue programming/workshops for local youth, offering a city-funded stipend for participants (like the MSYEP program). With new STEAM spaces, we have selected equipment that is streamlined with CCTV & CRLS (where possible), which will enable us to offer more than introductory courses at the Library. Fab Foundation is a global organization that we will be working with to develop equipment certification for the public.

- **Space Explorations:** Ms. St. Germain provided an overview of this series from spring 2019, which was the first STEAM workshop the Library offered for the public on satellites and the democratization of space. This effort was a collaboration with MIT Media Lab's Space Exploration Initiative and its Public Library Innovation Exchange (PLIX), and the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. The curriculum developed for this is now being piloted around the country.

There was great excitement for this series, patrons learned a lot about coding and expressed interest in more related programming. It was intended for a teen audience, but we actually facilitated a wide range of ages- mostly youth with adults. We realized we may have tried to be too much, for too many. This topic was not an area of Library expertise and the content proposed was not at the right level for the public- lots of tweaking was required.

Going forward, we plan to give more thought to what is a good fit partnership- shared core values and strategic goals and ensuring our partners communicate & relate in a way that makes sense. We need to keep equity at the forefront and have attendees direct our programming. The next project is in the planning stages: developing curriculum for a young audience with NASA educators that will culminate with building a satellite receiver on the roof of the Main Library. **Action Item:** Ms. Axelrod to connect Ms. St. Germain with Smithsonian scientists from Cambridge.

- **eBooks:** Ms. McCauley explained current concerns about electronic content at the Library. Physical books can be purchased easily, in the amount desired. Libraries can sometimes even get a discount when purchasing multiple copies. For electronic content, 5 publishers own 80% of content and therefore control the numbers. They place restrictions on libraries and price gouge. For example, MacMillan allows us to only purchase a single copy of a popular item for 8 weeks and only after the 9th week can we purchase more. A 2-year lease of that single item also costs more than \$500. As more players enter the marketplace, content has skyrocketed, but libraries remain constrained. Power and advocacy of libraries is limited compared to the power of the publishers.

Action Item: All Trustees are requested to consider signing the American Library Association's petition at <https://ebooksforall.org/>

Action Item: Ms. McCauley to send her DC meeting times to Mr. Roosevelt to help her connect with Senator Markey.

- **Branch Hours:** We will be hosting a community drop-in session about extending branch hours at Central Square on Jan 14, 5:30-7:30 PM. All branches are inviting patrons to participate in the online (and print) survey available from our website until January 22. From resulting data, the Library will make a recommendation to the City Manager about how to extend the branch hours at Boudreau, Collins & O'Neill, as he has committed to restoring service at these branches to 5 days per week.
Action Item: Trustees are requested to participate in the survey about branch hours on the CPL's website.
- **Strategic Planning:** We are working with DHSP to consider the option of having a social worker working out of Central Square. This would enable the Library to improve our services and incident responses, as well as offer training for staff.

Library Update & Upcoming Events

- Ms. McCauley invited Trustees to the upcoming 45th annual MLK Day celebration at Central Square on January 16 at 6:30 PM, featuring Emily Bernard.
- Ms. McCauley also mentioned that the upcoming workshop with Dr. Robin DiAngelo on January 18 at 1:00 PM has been moved to the MIT Kresge Auditorium due to extremely high interest from the public.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Woods, Secretary