

Minutes
Board of Trustees Meeting for November
Tuesday, November 14th 2023

Attending: Maria McCauley, Michael Baenen, Risa Mednick, Kaija Langley, Karen Kosko, Jim Roosevelt, Laura Schinn

1. **Public Comment:** None.

2. **Informal Check-in**

Discussion about Tiedemann Collection, and the letter drafted by Jim Roosevelt

- The concern is the care of this collection and what will happen to it
- A phone or in person conversation may be better than writing back and forth
- The letter is to go on record that we want to be a part of this discussion
- Do we know if others are interested in this collection?
 - i. MIT, medical schools
- The letter is a good start, but it won't be solved by correspondence alone. The letter reminds of the history and formally expresses that CPL has an interest in this.
- We will invite Alyssa to our next meeting and then we can decide if the next step is to send the letter or have a conversation with the involved parties. There is a real concern about the collection itself.
- (Laura – invite Alyssa to December 5th meeting. *Update – she will attend the January 9th meeting)

3. **Hive and STEAM Overview with Em St. Germain and Damon Avent**

Overview of STEAM by Em

The Hive is part of Cambridge's overarching STEAM initiative founded in 2016

- It is a cross city initiative to enhance STEAM education opportunities for people who live here
- We are part of the pipeline of cradle to career, with companies and institutions here
- We use a racial justice lense as a framework
- Cambridge is already recognized as a leader, recognized around the world in education
- Library has already been known as a hub for community to connect to resources, learning, literacy. It is only natural that it's a hub for this initiative and partnership between the Department of Human Services, Cambridge Public Schools, and the Cambridge Public Library
- Offer close to 30 regular program offerings that are STEAM aligned
- Offer Special workshops as well
- Also offer take-home STEAM kits
 - Very popular

- An example is our Star gazing backpack. These kits are wonderful opportunities to use items that could be cost prohibitive for a patron to buy, like binoculars.

STEAM academy

- Intensive programs that are aligned to specific careers skills, we partner with Innovators for Purpose on this
- Students are tackling real world challenges
- Looking at AI and biases that could be in the field, based on those who are creating the technology

Partnerships with schools and after school Programs

- These are key
- Last year we piloted a multi engagement visit tied to circuitry and art with 4th graders
- It was aligned to their science curriculum in school and was very successful.
- We are looking to expand upon that pilot and have more 4th graders across schools participate, and then work with other grade levels.

Americorp Maker Fellow

- We had a year-long fellowship and brought in Lorenzo, who helped us look at sustainable growth
- Key areas he worked on: teen programming, and how to make sure our items are accessible to rest of cities and branches as well

CPL Nature club

- Branch staff have launched this club
- Hosted 6 events across the city in more typical nature settings.
- In 1 month of programming, we had 130 participants

Panel Discussions on AI

- In March we're hosting first series of panel discussions on AI and will bring in some big names in the field
- We will have students who are involved in STEAM academy do presentations as well

Pollinator Garden

- We have a small fenced in area behind the library that we are transforming into a pollinator garden
- This will address the need for pollinators in Cambridge community and serve as educational tool

Overview and Tour of the Hive by Damon:

We are standing in equipment studio section.

- After you learn the tool, you are welcome to reserve time on that tool.
- You can create what you would like on that tool

- Many patrons are trained on multiple tools
- 3,000 or so folks who have been trained on one skill if not more
- The Hive is picking up Steam now that we're out of the Covid shutdown

Question, Kaija: How often are trainings offered?

Answer, Damon: We offer 65-70 a month, clocking 150 hours of trainings. There are 9 different types of trainings.

- We have Software for audio and video editing
- We offer a Sticker making class. This is popular with teens to design and create
- Laser Cutting. Cuts a variety of materials
- We have starter equipment, and people work up to more advanced equipment.
- Sewing machines are very popular. Serger is more advanced and industrial, we also teach a class on that
- The limitation is more getting everyone time on the machine than the space
- Lorenzo with Americorps built capacity for more teen engagement

Question, Liz: How do you keep up with equipment?

Answer, Damon: Staff is very talented, and they help teach public classes so I can work on special projects and programs. In terms of technologies, we can fix some machines more easily than others. We look up what's new and keep up with innovations with machine types.

Question, Michael: Do you have ongoing budget for tech renewal?

Answer, Damon: Yes, we renew as needed. We have ability to forecast new parts we will need, etc. This helps ensure we're not spending the whole budget on a machine at once.

Question: Do industry partnerships lend equipment or just expertise?

Answer, Damon: It's our own equipment. Partners can teach classes.

4. Approval of Minutes from October 3rd, 2023.

A few typos were pointed out the minutes. The changes were noted and made. The minutes were approved unanimously by the Board.

5. Library Updates by Maria McCauley

Communications:

- The Berry Pickers author Amanda Peters is coming Thursday Nov 16th
- The programs team is doing wonderful work
- Trustee Liz Werby attended some programs, such as Women writers in Cambridge – which were fabulous.

Adult Services:

- Some highlights include our chef series and Navigating Solo series
- George Lockwood

- Tech Bar got more portable DVD players which are popular
- Kanopy increased our monthly allocations!

Branches:

- O'Neill is hosting Wednesdays of Wonder
- At Boudreau, the Nature Club is very popular, staff are working across the library system and across branches on this. It offers multiple kinds of classes
- Central Square – Erin Wells started as our new Assistant Director of Branch Services. She is getting to know staff and supporting the branches. This is our most critical recent hire

Intellectual Freedom:

- More staff have completed this important training
- Kathy and Julie will bring this training to the Trustees soon *Update, it will be during the March Trustees meeting

Digital Equity:

- We will hear more from Sarah and Brooke at an upcoming Trustee meeting *Update, it will be the December Trustee meeting
- This ties in to Digital Equity in the City. IT and Maria are writing an update on our Digital Equity work.
- Collaborators put a Digital Equity proposal to provide Digital Navigators across locations. If we're able to get that, the Grant is for two years. That person could work in the library and then make the case of a permanent position. No word on this yet.

Youth Services:

- Family literacy fun day recently at City Hall
- Partnership with DHS, Mayor's office, etc.
- Cambridge Universal PreK – amazing that this is happening!

Facilities:

- Things move slowly
- O'Connell HVAC is underway. Done by end of this year we hope.
- Work here at Main is also underway.
- Menstrual products are free now in the library – three more dispensers that need to be installed. The rest are already installed.
- Collins – engineer is now contracted. Others in the city are putting in a fire alarm system at Collins.

6. **Central Square Planning**

Does anyone have input from attending the sessions that CDD did?

- Biggest thing I took from breakout session was that everybody agreed on the importance of the library as an anchor for this whole section of the city, whichever site that may be (Michael)
- Listened to report out yesterday: Overwhelming 100% council support for moving the library. No dollar signs attached to any recommendations. CDD presented the library move as almost in the cards it seems. (Liz)
- At the city council open forums, many of the city council/incumbent/candidates talked about the current CSQ location as the obvious next spot for affordable housing. The extent that that is a push in the city, will also push the that the library as the next tenant for the Mass Ave space. Could push things more quickly. (Michael)

Maria: City residents always ranks affordable housing as number one or other issue.

- Green street lot could build a lot of housing. Maybe 200 or more units
- All seem to like 689 Mass Ave as library
- Most like current library location as housing
- 689 is currently used for staff space
 - At this point, they think the top would be staff pace, below that the library, and unsure about basement
 - I really think that we need the whole building. We need 30,000 square feet
 - It's our responsibility to try to make a case for what is going to last not just short term, but for residents for generations to come
 - I did pass that along to Yi-An and Owen that I think we need a building program study. Refreshed minds that we did not do the second part of the library program study.
 - My worry is that we could get fit into a space and have a lackluster library that is not the grandeur that it could be. It should be the anchor for the community in Central Square.
 - The council wants direction. They want the next vision and steps.
 - Yi-An thinks it is on the staff side to come up with next steps and bring to council.
 - To Trustees: You should all also get to know the councilors.
 - Discuss how much we want to push to look at the full building or different scenarios of the space

Kaija Langley departs for the remainder of the meeting

Maria will create a draft we can all weigh in on.

- The library has used the support the City has given well and effectively.
- If the library and trustees have this vision, we want to make sure we have our statement out there of what we really want.
- Maria: action item: have conversation about the bid and ecosystem of Central Square.

Meeting is Adjourned.