



**Minutes of Open Board Meeting May 24, 2016
Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology Room 202A**

Directors Present: Betsy Hall, Regina Pyle, John Alekna, John Chambers, Michael Hall, Jane Siegel, Patty Brennan, Gretchen Chauncey, Dave Crowley, Tony Gordon, Gordon Holmes, Yvonne Lee, Marie Schappert, Ellen Sheets, Carol Trust, and Mike Worhach.

Incoming Directors Present: Emily Aaronson, Bobby Berstein, Chris Block, Ross Bundy, Jack Fitzgerald, and Jason Nardella.

Executive Director: Stacy Koepfel

Members Excused: Leo Delaney, Ed MacLean, Toby Rodman, Bill Gregor, John Herbert, Paul Duffy, Barbara Hoffman, and Kim Schultz.

Members Absent: Ken Tutunjian

Guests: Jeremy Kazanjian-Amory and Liz Steinhauser, of St. Stephen's Youth Programs.

Regina Pyle called the meeting to order at 6:35.

Treasurer's Report: Michael reported we continue to be in good financial shape.

Executive Director's Report: Stacy projected \$45,000 revenue from the June 19th Fundraiser. We are wrapping up sponsorships and the program book is at the printer. The annual Yard Sale is scheduled for September 24th, most likely at BFIT and coincides with Open Studios. Membership renewals will begin July 1st.

Community Outreach: St. Stephen's Church partners with the Blackstone School and provides after school programs for 250 children year round. There is another site on Lenox Street near Ramsey Park. Ellis can be involved in several ways. Members are invited to call for an appointment or stop by Monday through Friday 2:00 – 7:30, may participate in an MLK Day of Action at Blackstone, read to children weekly, help middle-schoolers on evening academic nights, or mentor teens. June 2nd from 6 to 8 is an end-of-year celebration for high school seniors.

We are building a relationship with the McKinley School. John Chambers demonstrated the paucity of the school lunch. There is a talent show May 26th, and a Sole Train-sponsored run on Sunday, May 29th. Stacy reported that Ellis is helping the school to form a 501C3, which will allow them to raise money to spend on needed improvements instead of going into the Boston Public School's general fund.

Development, Licensing, and Zoning: Jack Fitzgerald reported on the Back Bay Station plans, which affects virtually the entire Ellis. The ramp onto I-90 on Clarendon Street will be closed during construction and may be closed permanently. The turnaround location for the 39 bus will be decided. The project chair has followed up on our offer to come before Ellis. Members raised many concerns, including on-site affordable housing, public areas in Back Bay Station being usurped, potential closing of the on-ramp at Clarendon, increased traffic congestion, four major construction projects at one time, potential loss of public space in the station, and fumes from the station. Tony noted we should insist on giving no resident parking stickers to the buildings.

Pride March: Ellis will march in the Gay Pride parade June 11th. Breakfast and an afternoon barbeque will be at the home of Ellen Sheets and John Yates.

Neighborhood Services: Frank O'Brien will meet with Ellis in the Trophy Room on May 26th to review the plans for improving Berkeley Street. Some issues to raise with Mr. O'Brien: filling in the tree pits by July 1st, some of the sidewalks do not meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, Lawrence Street is non-ADA compliant and eventually there could be no trees on Lawrence or Gray Streets. Tony suggested one could get a variance from the State Access Board.

Young Professionals: The YP's are working on an events calendar. They have 35 members and hope to double it. They will be volunteering on June 15th at the Boston Food Bank and on June 17th at the Greenway. They are exploring a barbeque and a network event with Ellis.

Bobby Berstein reported there will be a Japanese Garden Installation on the Berkeley Plaza of Atelier for three weeks beginning June 18th.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane Siegel, Clerk