

June 5, 2023

DFPL Long-Term Response: Name Review Process

The Board of Trustees of the Desmond-Fish Public Library on May 13, 2023 approved moving ahead with the following process as a continuation of the long-term response by the Library to aspects of the history of our co-founder, Hamilton Fish III. The long-term response, which began in January 2023, includes:

- 1) continued historical research and exploration, 2) continued programming and collection development, and 3) a name review including other possible restorative justice actions.

With regard to the name review and restorative justice responsibilities, the Board recommends the following steps. The recommended actions described below will be shared publicly at each step.

1. A **name review working group** will be formed with participation from board, staff, and patrons, including current Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) Committee members.
 - a. The **name review working group** will be co-chaired by the library director and a member of the RESJ.
 - b. The Director will request all potential **name review working group** members to complete a short application form. The application form will be completed by all applicants (board, staff, and patrons).
2. The RESJ Committee will hold three community listening sessions to solicit community feedback on the name and other possible restorative justice actions.
 - a. One of the community listening sessions will welcome Fish family members and give them opportunities to speak.
 - b. The RESJ committee will format open-ended questions to set the tone and solicit feedback in advance of each session.
3. The **name review working group** will hold an organizational meeting to outline its process and goal. The working group's charge is to:
 - a. Evaluate possible names and/or restorative justice actions

- b. Carry out a comprehensive review of all relevant material.
 - c. At the completion of the evaluation process, make a summary recommendation to the Board.
4. The **name review working group** will assess, analyze and share the feedback obtained from the community listening sessions.
5. A public survey will follow after the community sessions. The survey content will generally solicit a response to the question similar to: “what do you think the library at Routes 403 and 9D should be called?” with options to include:
 - a. Keep the current name (with explanation why)
 - b. Suggest new names (with explanation why)
 - c. Recommend possible restorative justice actions (with explanation why)
6. The **name review working group** will share the results of the survey publicly in a timely way.
7. The **name review working group** will meet to review results and narrow the name options to the final 3 choices (or other number if needed). For each final name choice, the name review working group will prepare a narrative addressing the case for the adoption of the possible name.
8. The **name review working group** will also evaluate possible restorative justice actions and will also prepare a narrative for the possible implementation of restorative justice actions.
9. Public comment period will be open via survey for the final naming suggestions and any restorative justice actions recommended by the **name review working group**. Comment period will close within a reasonable time frame.
10. The **name review working group** will assess survey results and other feedback, and make a summary recommendation to the Board.
11. The Board will vote on the **name review working group** recommendation.
12. The Board will provide a public summation of the results of the name review process.

Regardless of the outcome, the Board will ensure that the history of the Library's founders will continue to be told within the Library.

The RESJ will continue during and after this process to carry out historical research, plan programming, and collection development.

The RESJ will also continue with its all-important role of working to expand our Library's commitment to social justice.

The Desmond-Fish Public Library (DFPL) trustees and staff are committed to doing the best Library work for our community as described in the [ALA Library Bill of Rights](#), including the providing of materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues.