

**CITY OF NORWALK  
PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
REGULAR MEETING  
MARCH 8, 2018**

**ATTENDANCE:** Alex Knopp, Chair; Ralph Bloom, Tabor Hamilton, Mary Mann, Jannie Williams, Patsy Brescia, Moina Noor (7:25 pm.)

**LIBRARY STAFF:** Christine Bradley, Director; Sherelle Harris, Asst. Director; Thomas Schadlich, Technology Department

**OTHERS:** Lori Torrano, Edward Jones Financial Advisor

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Knopp called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. A quorum was present.

**ADDITION TO AGENDA**

There was no additions to the agenda at this time.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There was no one present from the public who wished to address the Board at this time.

**ADMINISTRATION REPORT**

**5A. NPL Technology Plan.**

Mr. Thomas Schadlich came forward and explained that the Federal grant requires the Library to do a technology plan on a yearly basis. He said that previously the Federal grant would reimburse the Library for both the phone costs and the network costs, but they have recently stopped paying for the phone costs and may be reducing the funding for the network costs.

Mr. Schadlich said that the plan was to make the technology more visible by bringing it up to the first floor.

Mr. Knopp asked about the future access to the new technology and a review of the projects that the Library needed to address. Mr. Schadlich said that projects such as having a self check out station is a very expensive project. They have requested funding in the budget for many years, but the funding has not been available. Mr. Knopp asked if they could install that type of system at the South Norwalk Library. Mr. Schadlich said that each item in the library would have to be tagged for the system. Mr. Knopp said that

many of the current projects involved property issues and construction plans that may take years to implement. This would be a good project to focus on because it would not displace any of the other property projects. Mr. Schadlich said that it would be good to start tagging the new books and then start working on the items on the shelf. Mr. Knopp said that he felt that the Library should proceed on making plans for a Capital Request for the self checkout system. Ms. Bradley said that she would be thrilled to have this system.

Ms. Brescia asked if the books could be tagged as they are taken out. Mr. Schadlich explained that they could not do that because it would take too much time at check out, however, he suggested that when the items are returned to the library, they could be tagged.

**\*\* MS. MANN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE TECHNOLOGY REPORT AS THE PLAN FOR THE LIBRARY.**

**\*\* MS. WILLIAMS SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**RECESS.**

Mr. Knopp declared a recess for the Board meeting at 7:14 p.m. in order to have a Executive Board Financial Presentation by Ms. Torrano.

*Ms. Noor joined the meeting at 7:25 p.m.*

Mr. Knopp reconvened the Board of Director's meeting at 7:42 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 14, 2017**

**\*\* MR. BLOOM MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 14, 2017.**

**\*\* MS. MANN SECONDED.**

Mr. Knopp noted that many things had changed since the December minutes. The December minutes stated on page 2 that "the RFP for the area bounded by Belden Avenue, Mott Avenue, Union Park and Byington Place was currently on hold". The Redevelopment Agency had since decided to merge the original planning area stated in that RFP into the larger Wall Street area. Mr. Knopp explained that the Board would be discussing this change later in the meeting.

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 14, 2017 AS SUBMITTED PASSED WITH SIX (6) IN FAVOR (KNOPP, BLOOM, HAMILTON, MANN, NOOR AND WILLIAMS) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (BRESCIA).**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 25, 2018**

- \*\* MR. BLOOM MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED.**
- \*\* MS. WILLIAMS SECONDED.**
- \*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 25, 2018 AS CORRECTED PASSED WITH SIX (6) IN FAVOR (KNOPP, BLOOM, BRESCIA, MANN, NOOR AND WILLIAMS) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (HAMILTON).**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 24, 2018**

- \*\* MR. BLOOM MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 24, 2018.**
- \*\* MS. BRESCIA SECONDED.**
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 24, 2018 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**a. Building Management Monthly Report**

Ms. Harris said that there was a final fire inspection and both of the Libraries had passed as of February 28, 2018.

Mr. Knopp said that he had attended a Black History event at the South Norwalk Branch and the carpet had looked very nice. Ms. Harris explained that there was a problem with the carpet not laying flat. The installers had been back to try to correct the problem. Ms. Mann said that when the chairs are up, the installation seam problems become apparent.

**b. Update on post-Option Agreement Facility and parking planning**

Mr. Knopp said that the Board had decided to set aside 1/6th of Capital budget for the property issues. However, the Finance Director has removed that and decided it would be better to fund it all when the project is done. The next step will be when the Parking Authority commences work. Mr. Knopp said that there have been some difficulties involving the exact location of the Library east property lines between the bank property. A brief discussion followed about whether the Library staff would have a chance to look at the plans before they are implemented.

**c. Update on status of NPL Operating and Capital Budgets**

The Planning Commission has approve the Capital budget without the 1/6th property allocation and next step will be the Mayor's recommendation and that will be followed by a Council public hearing. Mr. Knopp said that he had asked Ms. Bradley and Ms.

Harris to create a sample schedule for the mobile library. There was an excellent article in The Hour about the increased emphasis on summer school. He said that they would try to tie into the locations for the summer school classes for the mobile library.

In terms of the Operating Budget, everything was approved by the Board of Estimate and Taxation including the transfer of the volunteers payments. The Passport accounts have been turned over to the City. Ms. Bradley noted for the record that they do owe the City the checks for the Passport account funds that have already been collected. Mr. Knopp said that he had already signed two checks recently. A brief discussion followed about the Passport income.

#### **d. Legislative public hearings on Net Neutrality legislation**

There were two hearings held recently regarding the State taking a position on Net Neutrality. Mr. Knopp said that he was concerned that the cost of the Internet service for libraries could increase if the providers started creating fast and slow lanes of data transmitting. Mr. Knopp said that he was in favor of Senator Duff's bill regulating net neutrality in the State, which was presented earlier in the day. The hearing on March 5th focused on state contracts with internet providers include net neutrality provisions. Mr. Knopp said that there was a lot of opposition to these bills from the general business community. The FCC went a step too far by pre-empting states from enacting Net Neutrality on their own. This is highly controversial. The reliance on Internet based content is increasing while the reliance on book content is not growing as quickly and in some instances, actually declining.

#### **e. Follow up on joint consult re school libraries**

There was no discussion of this item.

#### **f. Status of new NPL Board member nomination**

A new Board member was nominated but that individual travels for business and had requested that his name be re-considered in June. The candidate was a former assistant to Congressman Jim Himes.

#### **g. Innovation District Planning**

Mr. Knopp said that copies of the Innovation District Plan would be emailed to the Board Members. The City is attempting to design a district that would encompass West Avenue, down the river to King Industries and the library neighborhood as part of a Innovation area. The area would include tax incentives for the small businesses and other assets focused on innovation and cultural facets. The previous Redevelopment area that was discussed has been absorbed into the main plan for downtown Norwalk. The update was presented to the Board at the previous meeting.

## ADMINISTRATION REPORT CONT'D

### **b. NPL Statistics as of December 31, 2017**

Ms. Bradley said that usually she presents monthly statistics, but these are the statistics for six months.

### **c. 2018 LitCrawl**

The 2018 Norwalk Library LitCrawl has been scheduled for Tuesday, April 3rd from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. and will benefit Norwalk Reads. Tickets can be purchased online by donating \$10 to Norwalk Reads. This year the group will all convene first at the Wall Street Theater at 5:30, and then move on to the restaurants for the poetry readings from 6:30 to 8:00 pm.

### **d. NEH Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grants**

Ms. Bradley said that the grant would be a good thing for the Library. However, after the staff had reviewed the qualifications for the “NEH Infrastructure and Capacity Building Challenge Grants” and consulting with Dr. Cutler at the NEH Division of Preservation and Access, it became apparent that the Library needs to be a bit further along in the planning. The grant wants to support the humanities

Ms. Bradley distributed copies of a brochure from an organization called Newsbank that handles digitalization of newspaper. The brochure describes the current project for making The Hour available and Mr. Bloom was quoted in the brochure. The library had been granted funding for the first of five years of the digitalization project.

Ms. Bradley then referred to the consultants comments about moving the library forward and said that one part of that would be moving the maker’s space on the Main Level. She said that she would like to replace the murals in the stairwells which are very dated. She suggested the Board consider possibly commissioning new murals.

### **e. The Impact Vine and Homework Help support project.**

Ms. Harris then spoke about Baywater Properties, a full service commercial real estate company, which is owned by David Genovese. Mr. Genovese has been a supporter of SoNo. He has assisted the library with purchasing software and other project. Mr. Genovese along with two friends have proposed a project that is a hyper local Go Fund Me. It is closely monitored and would help with the marketing plan. It is online based and the funds raised would go to the Homework Help program. Mr. Knopp said that he had suggested that any funding that came in through this marketing effort be placed in a restricted account for Homework Help.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**a. Update and report on Technology Plan from Tom Shadlich**

Mr.. Shadlich gave his presentation earlier in the meeting.

**b. LitVol Advisory Committee recommendation for April NPL meeting**

This will be discussed at the April Meeting. Ms. Noor said that she would not be able to attend the March meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to address at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

- \*\* MS. BRESCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- \*\* MS. MANN SECONDED.**
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services