

**CITY OF NORWALK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
JANUARY 14, 2021
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Alex Knopp, Chari; Sharon Baanate; Ralph Bloom; Patsy Brescia;
Mary Mann; Moina Noor; Janine Williams

STAFF: Sherelle Harris, Interim Director

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Knopp called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

2. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:

Mr. Knopp called for a Moment of Silence in memory of Jane Goldstein, NPL Children's Department part-time staff, and her spouse; and John McPherson, spouse of NPL Library Clerk Tammy Grimes-McPherson.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No members of the public wished to comment this evening.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**** MS. NOOR MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 29, 2020**

The following correction was made: add Ms. Noor to attendance

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MS. WILLIAMS MOVED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 8, 2020**

The following correction was made: correct the footer to reflect the correct date.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MS. BRESCIA MOVED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 12, 2020**

The following corrections were made to page 2: correct hire a consultant to hire an Executive Director

Add – the Board asked Mr. Knopp to get clarification from the City.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MS. BRESCIA MOVED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 10, 2020 WITH CORRECTIONS AS PRESENTED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

5. PRESIDENTS REPORT -- Alex Knopp

A. Status of NPL reopening plan – new operating hours and closures

Mr. Knopp reported that the Library requested permission to close each of the two facilities one day a week.

Ms. Harris explained that this request is to allow the staff a break and peace of mind. In addition, closing a day a week helps with coordinating teams A and B. Belden Avenue will be closed on Wednesday and South Norwalk will be closed on Thursdays. The staff will be in the building, but they will be closed to the public. Ms. Harris said these are the least busy days of the week for the Library.

Ms. Harris said she will be sure the current hours are posted and the closures will be reviewed on a monthly basis.

B. Status of Review NPL ED Search

Due to a potential conflict of interest, Ms. Harris recused herself and left the meeting.

Mr. Knopp reported that he spoke with Mr. Daniels and the City agreed to review the job description for the Executive Director's position. He reviewed the recruitment process followed by a discussion with the Board.

The Board discussed the makeup of the Search Committee and the importance of including a Library Director who has experience with demographics that are similar to Norwalk.

Mr. Knopp will write up his understanding of the concerns presented and send that document to the Board members before he sends it to the City.

Ms. Harris returned to the meeting.

Ms. Baanate returned to the discussion about the Library closures. Ms. Harris explained that the days the Library is closed will give the staff a day to work on behind the scenes projects. The buildings will be closed, but the teams will be working.

Ms. Brescia asked about the new arts center on West Avenue. Mr. Bloom said there is interest in working with the Library. It was suggested that Ms. Harris reach out to them.

Ms. Harris added that she reached out to Mr. Knopp and Mr. Daniels about closing. Ms. Williams said it is important to be mindful of the employees. Ms. Harris said they can revisit this request. The Board members agreed that closing the Library makes sense; they want the employees to be happy.

C. Follow-up re NPL FY 2021 Operating Budget Request

Mr. Knopp reported that he discussed adding the Custodian with Mr. Daniels; however, he had not indicated a willingness by the City to reinstate that position. Mr. Knopp said that he received a notice that the City is not going to hold up filling vacancies. Ms. Mann said it was important to be sure to bring up that this is a very crucial time to cut the Custodian position. Ms. Brescia added that this is when they need to keep up with sanitation in the buildings.

D. Update on Library Capital Budget status of 11 Belden Ave. Option and Construction:

1. NPL Capital Budget presentation on January 19, 2021

2. Economic Development Capital Budget re NPL: By email: “Good evening Alex - happy new year to you and your family. I wanted to provide an update since the last time we spoke. The library expansion funding will be pushed by one year. There is a capital request in FY23 to exercise the option on 11 Belden and a request for \$25M in FY24 for the construction. I also wanted to share that the library’s capital budget will be heard by the planning commission on January 19 at 5:30pm. Thank you. Jessica”

Mr. Knopp said the Library is involved in two capital budgets.

6. ADMINISTRATION REPORT— Sherelle Harris

A. Monthly report update: Adult and children’s services snapshot, copier report, employee staff health report, library closings, BOE collaboration, VITA tax help update

Mr. Knopp commended Ms. Harris for the new format of the monthly report.

Ms. Harris reviewed her monthly report.

Mr. Knopp asked about the status of the Board of Education Learning Pods. Ms. Harris explained they are still in session.

Ms. Baanate asked why the Instagram following dropped. Ms. Harris explained that she did not have one of the reports. The following actually did not drop.

B. State of CT update on digital equity | Cares Act consideration Attachments: Digital Equity and GNLV articles

7. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed this evening.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. Status of repair of Flag Pole at Belden Ave.

Ms. Harris said she received a quote from Flagman and they are ready to start working. Mr. Knopp asked if it would be possible to put up a temporary flag. Ms. Harris said it was.

9. ADJOURNMENT OF DIRECTORS MEETING

**** MS. BRESCIA MOVED TO ADJOURN
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services