

**CITY OF NORWALK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
SPECIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
APRIL 28, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: Alex Knopp, Chair; Sharon Baanate; Ralph Bloom; Patsy Brescia; Moina Noor; Janine Williams; Thomas Cullen (on phone), Ralph Bloom, Mary Mann, Laurel Peterson

STAFF: Sherelle Harris, Executive Director

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Knopp called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

Chair Knopp welcomed Ms. Peterson as a new board member and asked all present to introduce his/herself to Ms. Peterson.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 10, 2022 MINUTES

**** MS. BAANATE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 10, 2022, AS SUBMITTED**

**** MS. PETERSON ABSTAINED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments made this evening.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

A. At 7:15 Chair Knopp asked for a moment of silent with regard to Mr. Mark Kravarik passing of his father.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

B. Updated action on Capital Budget Request

Chair Knopp asked for input by members on the “efficiency study” which this Board was not asked to participate in to give input with regard to the Library.

Ms. Brescia inquired whether there will be an opportunity to give input and recommendations in future.

Chair Knopp spoke to the secretary about having an opportunity to review the report and make decisions on the future for this Board based on the Evergreen study findings and its recommendations.

Ms. Brescia stated that the issue is what is this Board’s jurisdiction with the conflict of statutes that do not give this Board a true description of the roles and responsibilities. Ms. Brescia has a copy of a memo with the corporation counsel on the state statute that will go out to all members to review.

Chair Knopp agreed with Ms. Brescia and distributed a memo in today’s package.

Ms. Baanante and Ms. Noor agreed as well with the need to comment on the Evergreen report about appointments with regard to personnel action.

Ms. Brescia asked who was interviewed on the management team.

Ms. Harris stated there were five persons making up the team who spoke to the Evergreen staff.

Ms. Peterson asked what does this Board want. That has to be established and then look through the statutes that conflict and see where the Board can act.

The comments reiterated that the desire of the Board to make decisions about personnel issues as regard employees of the Library are in conflict with the state statutes.

Chair Knopp commented that none of this Board was spoken to offer input or make suggestions.

Mr. Bloom stated that a discussion of our needs and wants needed to be taken into consideration. If they are wrong then this Board would be corrected.

Chair Knopp suggested that it would be wise to divide up this Board’s concerns and work out comments based on the decisions made in the Evergreen report.

**** MS. BAANANTE MOVE TO GO FORWARD WITH CHAIR KNOPP’S PLAN.**

**** MR. BLOOM SECONDED**

Chair Knopp rescinded the motion to move forward as this Board had no say in the Evergreen Report findings and recommendations.

Mr. Cullen interjected that he has read the report and that this group should be spoken with.

Chair Knopp will inquire whether there could be an interview process with Evergreen and what cost would be involved. Possibly since it was not in the contract it may be something to consider.

Ms. Brescia asked what else came out of the study and what was the data and can it be measured?

Ms. Noor stated it should be looked into as to where the information was drawn as this group did not participate.

Ms. Brescia inquired whether Board members talking to city employees on personnel matters is possible? It is something to consider seriously.

Chair Knopp and Ms. Harris will both be on the committees. He will put out a list what each will volunteer to work on. There will be a joint meeting if the interview is conducted.

Ms. Williams repeated what the Mayor had talked to this Board previously on this very matter. These are legal matters that will have to be developed by the Common Council and legal counsel. The City code is what this Board works under.

Chair Knopp suggested speaking with the HR director.

Ms. Brescia asked that this problem be tabled until Chair looks into the matter further and avoid a union issue.

Chair Knopp commented to keep moving forward and if necessary go to HR when necessary and other persons and proceed, not table this plan.

Again Ms. Noor stated what is the determinate, state statute or city code.

Ms. Harris commented on Evergreen's findings which put the Library in the middle.

Ms. Baanante and Ms. Noor commented that there are structural items that need to be ironed out so that the Library can move forward.

Ms. Williams commended Ms. Harris for all that she does because she is so committed to her work.

Chair Knopp commented that the Library needs to be restructured in view of personnel that is lacking.

Ms. Brescia ask what has been done thus far.

Ms. Harris commented there was an effort to hire but it was recanted. She felt this was not a discussion for an open public forum.

Chair Knopp stated that he would like to defer for two weeks and have Ms. Brescia approach the ones who need to give the Library answers.

Ms. Peterson asked whether the plan of Chair Knopp could go forward and inquiries be done at the same time.

The Library currently reports to Community Services who needs to be involved as recommended by Ms. Williams.

Chair Knopp restated that the memo includes Lamont and the Board. He should be in these discussions also.

**** CHAIR KNOPP MOVED TO TABLE THE PLAN TO THE NEXT MEETING.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Circulation Policy – Ms. Harris

Ms. Harris reviewed the changes to the policy with additions on screen which participants received a copy to review prior to the meeting.

Mr. Cullen inquired will there be a way to determine a person has a card but has forgotten it.

Ms. Harris stated that there will be unique questions to verify they have an assigned card and prove who they although they are in the data base.

Ms. Peterson asked what is the bill for since it is a free library.

Ms. Harris stated they still have to pay for books they loose

Ms. Peterson asked if the website will change the mission statement than what is posted in the library.

Ms. Harris will check the discrepancy

Ms. Noor asked where this will be homed.

Ms. Harris stated that it will be on the website.

Ms. Baanante asked whether it will be in various languages.

**** MS. MANN MOVED TO APPROVE THE POLICY UPDATE AS PRESENTED.**

**** MS. NOOR SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Chair asked that the Board approve an installation of an aquarium in the children's section of the Library. Engineering has been involved to check the flooring of the building for the spot in the library. He suggested voting approval now as it moves forward.

Ms. Brescia asked what the cost will be going forward before the Foundation accepts the project.

Chair Knopp stated the donors will support the maintenance. There will be more information forthcoming

**** MS. PETERSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONCEPTUAL PROPOSAL TO INSTALL AN AQUARIUM IN**

THE CHILDRENS' SECTION OF THE LIBRARY

**** MS. BAANANTE SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

ARPA Grant Update

Ms. Harris reported that \$21,000 was allocated for PPE items. This included furniture, a solar station in the children's area. The furniture did not have cushions which are now hygienic. The study unit has arrived just awaiting the right size door for usage.

Ms. Baanante asked about money that was not used.

Ms. Harris commented because it was a grant the unused funds were returned.

Earth Day on the Green

Took place May 23, 2022. The turn out was very good and Ms. Harris will be receiving pictures from participants which will be posted.

World Bee Day partnership with Land Trust

May 20th and they will partner with the Library. There is a woman in Wilton who makes honey and has written her second book. The foundation can partner and purchasing books will be a fund raiser. She will also speak about honey production and her two books. It is a fund raiser event and the Library will purchase books through the Foundation.

Solar Charging Station: Main Library

The spot that seems to be best is the Peninsula. Choosing the foundation is of concern as concrete is expensive, so gravel is under consideration at this time.

No Mow Day

This is to help the bees and other pollinators to producers do their work. A sign will be posted during this time of this activity so no one will complain that the lawn is not mowed.

Planning for “hybrid” In-person and Zoom NPL April Board Meeting

There will be an update at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was discussed this evening.

NEW BUSINESS

There is tea party planned. Space between the city building and library is being considered.

Ms. Brescia asked about training for emergency services with the deliberators.

Ms. Harris will look into that with the Fire Department and others ER groups for training.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alvina LR Decker
Telesco Secretarial Services