

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 10, 2022**

ATTENDANCE: Moina Noor, Chair; Ralph Bloom, Patsy Brescia, Mary Mann, Laurel Peterson; Jannie Williams, Alex Knopp (7:09 p.m.)

STAFF: Sherelle Harris, Norwalk Public Library Executive Director

OTHERS: Patsy Gill, Gill & Gill; Shelly Yong, GNLV; Lauren Thompson, Richard Todd

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Noor called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

• Sept. 8, 2022 meeting

**** MS. PETERSON MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 8, 2022 MINUTES WITH THE CORRECTIONS AS NOTED BY MS. WILLIAMS.**

**** MS. BRESCIA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 8, 2022 MEETING AS CORRECTED PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (BLOOM, BRESCIA, THOMPSON AND WILLIAMS) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MANN).**

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda at this time.

LAUREN THOMPSON INTRODUCTION

Ms. Harris introduced Ms. Thompson, who is the newest Norwalk Library Staff member.

Ms. Thompson said that she had been working as the Branch Manager for just under a month and was really excited to work at the Library.

Mr. Knopp joined the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

GILL & GILL PRESENTATION

Ms. Harris introduced Ms. Patsy Gill of Gill & Gill.

Ms. Gill said that she was present to hear feedback from the Board about the recently submitted plans. Mr. Knopp said that he would like some clarification on the plans. Ms. Gill then displayed the floor plan and gave a brief overview of the two different options for the back L shaped portion of the building.

Ms. Brescia asked for a recap on the project, which Ms. Harris reviewed with her. The discussion moved to which of the options was the least expensive of the two. There is no cost breakdown available at this time. Once a decision is made in terms of which option the Board wishes to pursue, the architects can move forward and develop the cost estimates. Discussion followed about which options the Board preferred. It was the consensus of the Board that Plan B would be the best choice.

SHELLY YONG GNLV UPDATE

Ms. Harris then introduced Ms. Yong, the Greater Norwalk Literacy Coordinator. Ms. Harris said that Ms. Yong began working with the Library at the South Norwalk library since 2008 and has been an exemplary team member.

Ms. Yong then gave a brief overview of her background. She is from Taiwan, she received a TESOL degree from Brigham Young University in Hawaii and began working with the Greater Norwalk Literacy Volunteers (GNLV) department during the pandemic when classes went from in person to online. She then gave a brief overview of the extensive training the department underwent to put Norwalk on the map as an online testing site. She said the students appreciate the online classes because they don't have to worry about getting child care or transportation. She talked about the advantage to students with GNLV being a non-semester-based programs. She said that currently, they have 30 tutors and 215 students and they are getting more students now that people realize the program is still open and online. She said she will look into in-person classes after the room is renovated.

Mr. Knopp thanked Ms. Yong and asked whether the number of students had increased since the pandemic. Ms. Yong said that she did not have that figure, but would get it to Ms. Harris.

Mr. Knopp asked what the top languages that were requested other than Spanish were represented. Ms. Yong said that there were students who spoke Haitian Creole along with Chinese and Ukrainian.

Ms. Brescia asked about the age range of the students. Ms. Yong said that they only offer classes for adults aged 18 years or older and most of the students are middle aged. Ms. Harris stated that youth under 18 are in the SLIFE program. Discussion followed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

1. Governance sub-committee update

Ms. Noor said that she would like to thank Mr. Bloom and mentioned that she had volunteered at the book sale. There is a tremendous amount of work that happens behind the scenes.

Ms. Noor said that she was able to attend the Indy Author event. She said that there had been authors from all over the state at the event.

She mentioned the upcoming November 14th Wall Street Plan and the recent Halloween event. It is good to see the level of activity at the libraries.

Ms. Noor then spoke about the Governance Committee and said that they had met on November 2nd. They will be submitting a memo to the Mayor and Common Council by the end of December. This will include research other similar municipalities for the structure and codes in order to move forward. Discussion followed. The next meeting will be on November 27th.

2. Walk-through follow-up

Ms. Noor thanked everyone for their attendance at the walk-through. She spoke about some safety concerns in stairwells and clarification for the signage on conference rooms. There needs to be some cosmetic improvements such as painting and replacement of carpets along with more quiet space.

Ms. Harris then gave a brief overview of some of the changes that the staff had already implemented, including cleaning out the north entrance and the storage of snow blowers for the maintenance staff. Ms. Brescia said that she was concerned about changing the door handles to safety handles. Ms. Harris said that she has been mentioning ADA-compliant doorknobs for years and that they are included in the Capital Budget request.

Ms. Noor said that she had been working on starting conversations about the Library footprint, along with discussions about the 11 Belden and 3 Belden properties. A discussion followed about the fact that 3 Belden Avenue is now the Redevelopment office.

Ms. Williams said that they were still in need of Board Members.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Capital budget requests

Ms. Harris said that she had created the 2022-23 Capital Budget and had requested a van. Ms. Noor asked what the van would be used for. Ms. Harris said some of the uses include moving

items between the branches, taking items to the dump when needed, picking up books from various location.

Mr. Knopp said that they had requested that the Library have an EV charging station and asked that the new utility van be a hybrid vehicle or one that is fully electric. Ms. Harris said that was a great idea and that she had thought of it last year, but that the EVs were quite expensive. She said she can get another price comparison for the Capital budget. Discussion followed.

Ms. Harris then reviewed the remaining the details of the Capital Budget requests. The discussion moved to potentially having outdoor furniture at the South Norwalk Branch.

The discussion then moved to the having the remaining years of the Norwalk Hour digitalized and the cost of the project. These will be available on the Library website for the public to research.

2. Access Services Manager job description (funded in 2022-23 budget)

Ms. Harris said that the job description was in the packet and the position has been funded. It is being sent to Personnel for posting. Discussion followed about off-site collection, access team members and pop up sites, which this position would include as part of the job description. Ms. Harris said that she would like to have someone hired for the position by February.

3. Costs to pack books and move shelves per SoNo Library repurposing project

Ms. Harris announced that Ms. Thompson was working on the cost for packing up the books and moving the shelves at the SoNo library. Discussion followed about where the books would be stored during the work.

4. Proposed Library Board meeting dates

Ms. Harris included proposed Board meeting dates in the meeting packet. Ms. Noor asked about the fact that the City administration had announced that the meetings would remain virtual. Ms. Harris said that there were some meetings that were being held in hybrid situations such as Charter Revision and the Common Council. Ms. Brescia asked if the schedule included the City's meeting policy. Ms. Harris said that she did include it.

**** MR. KNOPP MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED LIBRARY BOARD MEETING DATES AS PRESENTED.**

**** MS. PETERSON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. Tax help schedule

Ms. Harris reviewed the schedule for the Tax Help program. There will be one weekday at SoNo and one weekday at Main with alternating Saturdays. Ms. Brescia asked that a report on the numbers of clients be prepared.

6. Election turnout

Ms. Harris said that the turnout for District A was very good, and very steady all day, but that she had not received a returned phone call asking for the total numbers of voters.

Ms. Noor asked if there were any candidates on site and wished to know where they were standing. Ms. Brescia said that they had to remain 75 feet away. Ms. Noor said that the Board needs to discuss if they want to become a long term voting location.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to consider at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Bloom asked about the Foundation agenda. Ms. Harris said that she would send Mr. Bloom the Foundation agenda. She noted that when the voters were waiting to cast their votes, they were also browsing the free books.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services