

**CITY OF NORWALK
LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS
JANUARY 12, 2023
VIA TELECONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Moina Noor, Chair; Sharon Baanante Ralph Bloom,
Patsy Brescia, Tom Cullen, Alex Knopp, Mary Mann, Laurel
Peterson, Janine Williams

STAFF: Sherelle Harris, Executive Director

1. CONVENE MEETING

Ms. Noor called the meeting to order at 7:10pm and called the roll as indicated above.

2. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 8, 2022 MEETING MINUTES.

**President's Report, last sentence, change too "of most of Connecticut libraries,
Norwalk is unusual because the mayor hires the library director".

Ms. Banaante said that the minutes felt incomplete.

****MR. KNOPP MOVED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 8, 2022 MEETING
MINUTES AS AMENDED.**

****MS. PETERSEN SECONDED**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no action on this item.

4. ADDITION TO AGENDA

There was no action on this item.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A. Governance Subcommittee

Ms. Noor said she'd shared a draft with the subcommittee and expected a few more drafts before it was final. She said she'd received historical correspondence from 2014 and prior about these governance issues, noting that there had been a lot of discussion about it. She said she was planning to have something to the Board for the February meeting.

B. 2023 planning

Ms. Noor said that the planning was still topline. She said she was thinking that after they completed the governance work in response to the efficiency study, she would like to look at the 2015 bylaws and potentially update them. She said that it would be a good exercise. She said she wanted to revisit the strategic plan they'd started before COVID and update it with Ms. Harris as Library Director. She said to do that she wanted to schedule a retreat potentially in June or July. She said Ms. Harris's goals will be presented in an upcoming meeting.

She thanked Ms. Harris and the GNLV for holding the Ukrainian Christmas event, noting that it was great that they'd made space for that community.

6. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Harris shared the Library Director's report, apologized that she had not been able to send it out in advance of the meeting, and said she would share it after she presented.

A. Capital Budget

Ms. Harris stated that most of the capital budget remained unchanged, but that they had moved the pre-processing of books line item to the operating budget.

She said that last year they had requested 3-D printers and laptops for this year, and this year they'd requested outdoor furniture for the next fiscal year. She said the timing of the furniture would allow time to coordinate with Wall Street to give a synchronous look.

Mr. Knopp asked if they segmented The Hour digitization, would they be able to get the outdoor furniture earlier. Ms. Harris said that there was roughly a \$7000 savings by digitizing all at once. Mr. Knopp suggested they request the outdoor furniture this year, even if they were denied, noting that it was inviting to library patrons.

Ms. Brescia said she thought they should ask for both furniture and digitization because the amounts were small, and they were holding on big projects. She said they should ask for what they wanted and that they weren't looking for cost savings for The Hour, they were just trying to get the materials there for patrons.

Ms. Banaante said the outdoor furniture also served people who wanted to sit outside, still wanting to feel safer as the world came out of the pandemic.

Ms. Brescia said she could investigate getting benches that were currently in Mathews Park.

Ms. Harris said the review with Planning and Zoning was scheduled for Tuesday, January 24 5:30-7:30 with all community services on Zoom

****MR. KNOPP MOVED TO APPROVE CAPITAL BUDGET AS AMENDED.**

****MS. PETERSEN SECONDED**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

B. Operating Budget to the agenda?

Ms. Harris said the personnel request had not changed, and noted they still had the vacant position but there was a candidate to interview for the position at the SoNo Library. She said the Marketing and Communications Coordinator request was still in the budget as well.

She noted that she'd increased the Telesco budget by \$500 to cover special meetings as needed. She said that in Other Contractual Services, she'd noted that they had a huge jump in the cost of garbage collection because of gas prices, so she'd budgeted \$600.

Ms. Peterson asked why the city didn't pick up the trash. Ms. Harris said it had been outsourced, and she would ask, noting that she believed that all city agencies did that.

Ms. Harris said they were asking for an increase of \$1500 for office supplies because those prices had increased dramatically.

She said that to have books come in already catalogued and processed, they'd move that line item from the capital request.

Ms. Noor asked if they would take the library assistant position out of the next budget if they were hiring someone. Ms. Harris said it would come out of the request.

Ms. Banaante said that they needed to see the documents before the meetings to make informed decisions.

Ms. Williams stated that Ms. Harris had apologized previously.

Ms. Harris added that she had replied to both of Ms. Banaante's emails.

****MS. MANN MOVED TO APPROVE THE OPERATING BUDGET AS AMENDED.**

****MS. PETERSEN SECONDED**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

C. Staff Updates

Ms. Harris said that they had hired a part time custodian who would become full time on January 19th.

She said that they would post the Access Services Manager job description soon. She said the only change to the description the board had seen was they'd removed the line about collecting fines, since Norwalk didn't do that anymore.

D. SoNo Library repurposing project update

Ms. Harris said that purchasing was prepared to do a walkthrough bid on January 24th between 2-4pm. She said she'd send a link with all the information. She said the meeting of the Land Use Committee would be on February 1 at 7pm to update and answer questions on the project.

Ms. Noor asked if there was a timeline. Ms. Harris said work would likely be done in —April and May. Mr. Knopp said it was difficult to predict who would answer an RFP because there was a lot of infrastructure money available, so construction companies were busy, he noted that historic library renovation was a very specialized area. He said they should be cautious about predicting when work would happen. Ms. Brescia said they had to be flexible.

E. GNLV update

Ms. Harris said that Guardian was looking to develop an abatement plan and that she would send a timeline thereafter. She noted she'd included it in her Board report.

F. Vita tax season will kick-off at the Main Library on January 26th (EITC Awareness Day)

Ms. Harris said there would be a kickoff at the main library at 2pm, and dignitaries would be invited to attend, and that refreshments would be served.

Ms. Petersen commended the program, and Ms. Harris agreed. She said the people that ran the program were phenomenal. She said it was great to see low-income people treated with dignity.

G. GNLV: Ukrainian and Chinese New Year Programs

Ms. Harris said there was a report from the Ukrainian Christmas event and noted that it there had been 133 in attendance/ The said there had been singing, dancing, and learning about Ukrainian culture with culturally appropriate food.

She said the next event would be February 6th for Chinese New Year.

7. OLD BUSINESS

There was no action on this item.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There was no action on this item.

9. ADJOURNMENT

****MS. NOOR MOVED TO ADJOURN
**MR. KNOPP SECONDED
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting adjourned at 7:55pm

Respectfully submitted,
L. Grassilli
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Norwalk
Library Board of Directors
January 12, 2023
Via Teleconference
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