CITY OF NORWALK

PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 7:00 PM

ZOOM

1. Call to Order
2. Additions to Agenda
3. Public Comments
4. Approval of Minutes of September 10, 2020 meeting, attached
5. Presidents Report (Alex Knopp)
    A. Update on Norwalk BOE Learning Pods Program
    B. Update on NPL Re-opening plan
    C. Appointment of Interim Executive Director
    D. Board recognition and acknowledgement of achievements of Christine Bradley
6. Administration Report
    A. Approval of FY 2019 Annual Report, attached
    B. Library statistics, attached.
    C. Presentation on proposed NPL staff realignment
7. Old Business

6. Adjournment of Directors meeting

CITY OF NORWALK
NORWALK PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 8, 2020

ATTENDANCE: Alex Knopp, Chair; Patsy R. Brescia, Vice President; Sharon Baanante, Mary Mann, Moina Noor, Janie Williams; Ralph Bloom (7:02 p.m.)

OTHERS: Christine Bradley, Library Director; Sherelle Harris, Assistant Director

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Knapp called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Mr. Knopp stated he would like to add approval of the minutes of the September 29, 2020 Special Meeting to the agenda.

Mr. Bloom joined the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no one from the public who wished to comment at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2020 MEETING

**** MS. MANN MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2020 MEETING.**
**** MS. BAANANTE SECONDED**.
**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2020 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

A. Update on Norwalk BOE Learning Pods Program

Ms. Bradley said that this was a wonderful program and running smoothly. The parents have been wonderful and very cooperative. Breakfast and lunch is provided every day. The leftover food is then donated to the shelter. It would be wonderful if the program could expand.

Ms. Harris said that the School Health Department stopped by to insure that the parents and the students were following the safety guidelines along with the facility.

Mr. Knopp thanked Ms. Harris for all her hard work in this area. He asked if the BOE had plans to evaluate the program. Ms. Harris said that she believed that they were planning on an evaluation. Mr. Knopp asked to be updated regarding the effectiveness of the program.

Ms. Noor asked about the program timeline and the future plans. Ms. Harris said that the program is expected to run through the end of the school year.

B. Update on NPL Re-opening plan

Ms. Bradley spoke about the curb side pick up which occurs at the front door, while those who have appointments are admitted through the back door where they can wash their hands and have their temperatures checked. The guard escorts them to their appointment on the first floor. Most appointments were for computer use. Browsing the stacks is not permitted.

Mr. Knopp asked if they were fully booked. Ms. Bradley said that they were not quite fully booked. Ms. Harris said that patrons seems to prefer the curbside service and there has been an uptick in the Spanish service in South Norwalk.

Mr. Knopp asked how they saw the appointment system growing in the future. He wished to know what kind of reasonable rate of increase might be.

Ms. Harris said that those who were filling out job applications might not be able to complete it within the 45 minute window and they cannot save their applications.

Ms. Bradley said that she thought that they would need to work on issues such as when a counselor meeting with a client at the library. They will also have to consider browsing in the stacks. There has been an increasing number of requests for passports. It will be careful to balance the number of patrons in the building.

Ms. Brescia asked if they could set aside a portion of time for the people who may need extra time to complete job applications. Ms. Bradley said that they could set aside the study rooms for that.

Mr. Knopp asked about the next update for next level for reopening. Ms. Bradley said that they had not discussed that yet.

Ms. Noor asked if there was something they could do to show their appreciation to the guards and staff. Ms. Bradley said that the staff would appreciate just hearing from the Board. Mr. Knopp said that they should consider this for the next Board meeting.

C. Appointment of Interim Executive Director

Mr. Knopp said that he had consulted with Mayor Rilling along with Ms. Bradley about an Interim Executive Director. They have agreed to recommend Ms. Harris as Interim Executive Director. He listed her qualifications and excellent job positions.

**** MR. KNOPP MOVED TO NOMINATE MS. SHERELLE HARRIS AS INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR THE NORWALK PUBLIC LIBRARY. ** MS. BRESCIA SECONDED**.

Ms. Mann said that she was thankful for Ms. Harris as the Library was losing a number of experienced staff.

Ms. Noor concurred with Ms. Mann. She spoke about the James Baldwin event, which was excellent.

Ms. Williams also agreed, as did Ms. Bradley.

Ms. Bradley said that she had been pleased to work with Ms. Harris for the last 10 years. Ms. Bradley listed a number of tasks that Ms. Harris performed behind the scenes. Ms. Bradley commended Ms. Harris for all her hard work.

Ms. Baanante congratulated Ms. Harris.

Mr. Bloom thanked Ms. Harris and commented that he was present when Ms. Harris was hired.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Ms. Harris said that she was honored by their confidence in her. She was looking forward to filling the positions as soon as possible.

Mr. Knopp said that due to the hybrid governance of the library regarding the budget and personnel matters, he consulted with Mayor Rilling about Ms. Harris' appointment.

Mr. Knopp said that they would be setting up a Selection Committee. An area librarian will be invited to join that Committee. Mr. Knopp encouraged the Board Members to consider whether they would like to serve on the Committee. He said that it would most likely take several months to complete the process.

D. **Board recognition and acknowledgement of achievements of Christine Bradley.**

Mr. Knopp said he hoped eventually to be able to get together in person, but wished to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Bradley for being such a wonderful representative for the Library. Her enthusiasm has been wonderful. The Library has never been so utilized or popular because of Ms. Bradley.

Ms. Brescia said it was sad that Ms. Bradley would not be present when they get the new, beautiful library. Ms. Bradley said that she would come to the opening.

Ms. Mann said that even she didn't get her display board, she wished Ms. Bradley the best as she starts the next chapter of her life. Ms. Mann has been a Board Member for 17 years and simply wants a display case.

Ms. Williams thanked Ms. Bradley for her service and wished Ms. Bradley the best.

Ms. Noor said that Ms. Bradley would be missed. Ms. Noor admires Ms. Bradley's creativity and ability to follow through. Ms. Bradley created a culture in the staff, along with her professionalism. It has been a pleasure being a member of the Board and working with Ms. Bradley.

Ms. Baanante said that Ms. Bradley had been very welcoming and kind. Ms. Bradley will be greatly missed.

Mr. Bloom said that retirement is good and she should enjoy every minute of it.

Mr. Knopp asked if he could have a moment of personal privilege. He said that his wife and daughter were thoroughly against Ms. Bradley leaving. Mr. Knopp's wife and daughter joined him briefly on the video call to say good-bye to Ms. Bradley.

Ms. Harris then read a poem, "10 Haikus for 10 Years of Service", for Ms. Bradley.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

A. Approval of PY 2019 Annual Report

2019 Annual Report had several holes that needed to be filled. The Library was doing well until March 13, 2020.

**** MS. MANN MOVED TO APPROVE THE DRAFT OF THE PY 2019 ANNUAL REPORT.**
**** MS. BRESCIA SECONDED**.
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

B. Library Statistics

Ms. Bradley said that Ms. Harris had been working on increasing the number of library cards. Every Norwalk student has a library card now and the Library has a total over 65,000 cards.

The patrons have been utilizing the online resources. Ms. Bradley said that Mr. Clark would be having a series of three concerts. Ms. LeMieux will also be offering a jazz concert. 165 people signed up for a seminar on invasive weeds. The Pop Up program is underway and has been well received.

C. Presentation on proposed NPL Staff realignment

Ms. Bradley said that there were eight full time vacancies. Each department can hire part-time workers as they see fit. The full time budget has 27 positions with 8 vacancies. There were four vacancies before the early retirement program. Ms. Harris will be handling two jobs. Ms. Harris said that filling the librarian positions would be very helpful.

Mr. Knopp said that he felt that having an update at the next meeting would be helpful. Ms. Noor asked what process would be involved in hiring a librarian for the open positions. Mr. Knopp said that customarily, this would be handled by Personnel. It is a City budget decision. Discussion followed.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to consider at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Telesco Secretarial Services