

CITY OF NORWALK
LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SPECIAL MEETING
BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE
September 29, 2020

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Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via e-mail in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Christine Bradley at cbradley@norwalkct.org to provide written comment prior to the meeting.

ATTENDANCE: Alex Knopp, Chairman; Mary Mann; Moina Noor; Sharon Baanante;
Jannie Williams; Ralph Bloom

ABSENT: Thomas Cullen; Taber Hamilton; Patsy Brescia

STAFF: Christine Bradley, Director; Sherelle Harris, Asst. Library Director

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Knopp called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

Mr. Knopp asked for a moment of silence in respect of the sudden passing of Ms. Williams's sister.

2. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON NPL AGREEMENT WITH NORWALK BOE REGARDING LEARNING PODS PROGRAM

Mr. Knopp said were in discussions with the Board of Education last week regarding some of the procedures so that library staff would know how to respond in the event of certain contingencies. The Board of Education wanted to begin the program this morning so on Friday he had signed the letter of agreement, but asked the Library Board to ratify his execution of the letter of agreement that he had circulated yesterday.

Ms. Harris provided an overview of how the program will work and said when the kids come into the building their temperatures are checked and they sanitize their hands, and the library staff will have very limited contact with the kids unless they need something. She said the program is intended to serve the children who do not have WI-FI at home and have opted not to attend in school in person.

Mr. Knopp said there is no educational role by library staff and accompanying the letter is a copy of the agreement for the parents of children that are enrolled that will need to be signed. He said he has made it very clear that one of the para professionals will need to stay until every student is picked up. He also said if a student begins to show symptoms of illness the parent agrees when signing the consent form to attempt to come within 60 minutes to pick up the child and we would provide an isolation room. He said the Board of Education has agreed if needed to assist the library custodial staff to clean the isolation room.

Ms. Baanante said she does not see the waivers that the kids sign for high school and middle school. Ms. Harris said she will contact Dr. Estrella to see how they are doing that on their end. Ms. Baanante asked if the East Norwalk Library was ever considered to be used. Ms. Harris said that they are using that as well as the Carver Center and the Rowayton Community Center.

Ms. Noor asked if the schedule will be rotated. Ms. Harris said "yes"

Mr. Knopp said this program is important and is a model for the State of Connecticut and it is great to have a program that is accessible to students in the public schools who need it based on need and not on the ability to pay.

**** MS. WILLIAMS MOVED TO APPROVE TO RATIFY THE LETTER INDICATING THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE NORWALK PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.**

**** MS. MANN SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON “NPL REOPENING PLAN DATED SEPTEMBER 29, 2020”.

Ms. Bradley provided an overview of the reopening plan and said they are hoping that on Monday, October 5, 2020, by appointment only and will allow one person per hour in each building. She said that staff is comfortable with this and after 45 minutes the security guard will ask that the person exit the building so that cleaning can be done prior to the next appointment. She said people will not be permitted to go into the stacks but if they want something they can ask a staff member to retrieve it. She said they will only be allowed on the main floor of each building.

Ms. Bradley said in partnership with the Senior Center that be appointment only there will be an open enrollment for Medicare Counseling on October 15, 2020. Ms. Harris said at the Main Library they will be holding the enrollment in person and at the South Norwalk Library it will be virtual so that there is an option.

Ms. Bradley said the Family Navigators program that Mr. Daniels is trying to launch as part of community services will be scheduling small meeting rooms at either of the branches, and will be reserved through the booking plans. Ms. Bradley said the program is to help families with students to help them navigate through the system and it involves a one on one meeting with navigator and the family.

Ms. Bradley said the owner of the Blue Teapot is still paying rent on the kitchen in South Norwalk so she will be putting together a flyer with a list of baked goods and she can arrange the pickup of the baked goods.

Ms. Bradley said that they will also be trying and get the passport service going at the main Library.

Ms. Harris said there will be a pre-election talk at the South Norwalk Library called “A Tale of Two Conferences”

Mr. Knopp requested that on page 2 of the reopening plan to include the language that was adopted regarding the air filtration system.

Ms. Noor asked what the plan will be for the sidewalk service once the weather gets cold. Ms. Harris said she thinks they can still have some type of operation just inside of the entrance to the library.

Mr. Knopp said that he is very pleased that the library and the City of Norwalk are taking a very cautious approach to opening.

**** MS. NOOR MOVED TO APPROVE THE NORWALK PUBLIC LIBRARY REOPENING PLAN DATED SEPTEMBER 29, 2020 FOR THE NEXT PHASE OF ACTIVITIES.**

**** MS. MANN SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. NOTICE REMINDER OF SONO BRANCH “ONE BOOK ONE COMMUNITY”

Mr. Knopp said tomorrow evening at 7:00PM there will be a program called “One Book One Community” and there will be a panel discussing James Baldwin’s book tomorrow evening at 7:00PM. and he hopes that the members of the library board will register for the event. Mr. Knopp asked how many have registered for the event to date. Ms. Harris said there have been 60 the last time she checked. She also said that the James Baldwin Foundation had contacted her and they also want to be a part of it and will be introducing their own program

Mr. Knopp said that the Board will be expressing their congratulations on her retirement and gratitude to Ms. Bradley at the regularly scheduled Library Board meeting.

5. NOTICE OF OCTOBER 8, 2020 REGULAR NPL BOARD MEETING

Mr. Knopp said the regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held on Thursday, October 8, 2020.

6. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. MANN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

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

**** THE MOTION ADJOURNED AT 8:10PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd
Telesco Secretarial Services

**CITY OF NORWALK
NORWALK PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 29, 2020**

ATTENDANCE: Alex Knopp, Chair; Sharon Baanante, Mary Mann, Jannie Williams, Ralph Bloom

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

CALL TO ORDER

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

Mr. Knopp requested a moment of silence in memory of Ms. William's sister, who passed away unexpectedly.

Mr. Knopp said that this was a special meeting and was limited to the agenda and no new items could be addressed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2020 MEETING

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

a. UPDATE ON NORWALK BOE LEARNING PODS PROGRAM

Mr. Knopp said that the first item on the agenda was the discussion of the agreement with the Norwalk BOE about the Learning Pods Programs. He said that there had been discussions with the BOE last week regarding the details. The BOE wanted to begin the program on the 8th. In order to do this, Mr. Knopp signed the letter of agreement. He asked the Board to ratify his execution of the Letter of Agreement.

Ms. Harris gave an overview of how the program worked, including temperature checks. She said that the program had worked out very well. This program is for those children who do not have WiFi at home and have opted not to return to the classroom. She gave an overview the details of the scheduling.

Discussion followed about the parental consent forms, having paraprofessionals supervising students until they are picked up and potential cleaning if a student becomes ill.

Ms. Baanante asked for a copy of the waiver consent form. Ms. Harris said that the library staff did not put the packet together. Ms. Baanante was asking about the sign in process. Ms. Bradley said that she would check with Dr. Estrella.

Ms. Baanante asked if East Norwalk was involved. She was told that they were and listed the Carver Building, the two Norwalk Libraries, East Norwalk Library and the Rowayton Community Center.

Ms. Noor asked about the number of students at the sites. Ms. Harris reviewed those attendance numbers and the schedule with the Board.

Mr. Knopp spoke about the learning pods and his support for this program. One of the strategic goals was to strengthen the relationship with the BOE.

Mr. Bloom joined the meeting.

**** MS. WILLIAMS MOVED TO RATIFY THE EXECUTION OF THE OCTOBER 2ND LETTER REGARDING AN AGREEMENT WITH THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.**

**** MS. MANN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

B. UPDATE ON NPL RE-OPENING PLAN

Mr. Knopp said that the Library was scheduled to re-open on October 5th for appointment only library with one person per hour in each building. Ms. Bradley said that they would be able to do this for a few weeks and eventually increase the numbers. Patrons will be on the main floor of each building and not able to enter the stacks. After they leave, the staff will clean the area.

October 15th there will be a partnership with the Senior Center for Open Enrollment for Medicare. CHOICES is a program they have sponsored for years.

Ms. Bradley then spoke about the Navigator's program that Governor Lamont was trying to launch and having a meeting room available for that program.

The Blue Tea Pot owner is still paying rent at her kitchen location in South Norwalk. There is a possibility of ordering baked goods for the holidays.

She also updated the Board on the Passport Service.

Mr. Bloom has been providing discarded books on a cart outside the building for those passing by to take.

Ms. Harris gave a brief overview of the upcoming events. Sidewalk service is increasing.

Mr. Knopp asked about the update the language regarding the air filtration system in the plan. Discussion followed about whether the filters had been replaced.

Ms. Noor asked for the details regarding providing services once the weather becomes colder. Ms. Harris said that they were considering using part of the lobby in the main library while South Norwalk patrons can drive up close to the door.

Mr. Knopp asked for more details regarding the Navigator's program that the Governor wanted to launch. Ms. Bradley said that it was part of the Governor's plan to improve human services in the City.

Mr. Knopp asked about having multiple people in the building for the various services. Ms. Bradley said that all the services were by appointment and will be directed to a specific location for the service. The guards will help keep track of the patrons.

Mr. Knopp said that he was pleased that the library and the City was taking a cautious approach to this.

**** MS. NOOR MOVED TO APPROVE THE NORWALK PUBLIC LIBRARY RE-OPENING PLAN DATED SEPTEMBER 29TH FOR THE NEXT PHASE OF ACTIVITIES.**

**** MS. MANN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

C. APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Knopp said that Ms. Bradley would be retiring in the middle of October. He said that it seems appropriate to create a search committee for a permanent Director.

Ms. Williams said that she would be willing to serve on the Committee. She then gave an overview of the process. Discussion followed about the State Statute and the role of the City administration.

D. BOARD RECOGNITION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CHRISTINE BRADLEY

Mr. Knopp said that Ms. Bradley had requested that they not hold a special event about her departure. He did say that they would have one more meeting when they could discuss her enormous contributions to the NPL.

Mr. Knopp reminded everyone about the upcoming event, One Book, One Community,

which was scheduled for October 9th at 7:00 p.m.. There are 60 individuals registered for the event. The James Baldwin Foundation will also be participating.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

A. APPROVAL OF FY 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

B. LIBRARY STATISTICS

C. PRESENTATION ON PROPOSED NPL STAFF REALIGNMENT

There was no report at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss at this time.

The next regularly meeting is scheduled for on October 8th. Ms. Bradley will be retiring on the 9th.

ADJOURNMENT OF DIRECTORS MEETING.

**** MS. MANN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MS. BAANANTE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services