CITY OF NORWALK
LIBRARY BOARD
VIA TELECONFERENCE
JUNE 8, 2023

ATTENDANCE: Moina Noor, Chair; Ralph Bloom; Thomas Cullen; Alex Knopp; Mary Mann; Laurel Peterson; Jannie Williams; Haroldo Williams

STAFF: Sherelle Harris, Library Director

OTHERS: Amanda Cleveland, Silver Petrucelli; Dawn LaValle, Director of Library Development, CT State Library

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Noor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and called the Roll.

2. APPROVAL OF MAY 11, 2023 MEETING AND JUNE 1, 2023 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

**** MS. MANN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 11, 2023 MINUTES AS PRESENTED**
**** MOTION PASSED WITH TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (MR. CULLEN AND MR. KNOPP)**

**** MS. NOOR MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 1, 2023**

The following corrections were made to the minutes:

Add Ms. Williams to the Facility Committee roster.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS (MR. CULLEN AND MS. PETERSON)**

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no members of the public who wished to comment this evening.

4. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

There were no items added to the agenda.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

There was no report presented this evening.

9. SONO RENOVATION TIMELINE

Ms. Cleveland provided an updated renovation timeline. She explained that it looks like the renovation from start to finish will take two to three months.

Once the contract is signed, Ms. Noor requested a project timeline to see the progress of the project. Ms. Cleveland said that once the project begins, there will be a lot of information to share.

1. BOARD TRAINING WITH DAWN LA VALLE, DIRECTOR OF LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT, CT STATE LIBRARY

Ms. Noor introduced Ms. LaValle. Ms. LaValle reviewed her background.

Ms. LaValle shared her screen and reviewed the following topics:

- Board Governance
- Advocacy and Fundraising
- Effective Board Practices
- Resources

Ms. LaValle shared her contact information.

Ms. LaValle fielded questions from the Board.

Ms. Noor explained that the City is in the process of negotiating property for the Library's expansion. She asked for recommendation on how the Board members could advocate during this process. Ms. LaValle said the Board should be kept informed by the City as to the progress, but they can't be involved; however, they are within their rights to ask for updates. An important part of the Board is to maintain open communication with the City. She noted that the role of the Board is laid out in the Statute.

Mr. Williams asked if the role of the Board during negotiations would be contributory. Ms. LaValle said it would be because they you are an impacted organization. She encouraged open lines of communications because the organization is going to develop the building plan.

Ms. LaValle said she would share the slides to the Board members.

Ms. Peterson left the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

2. 3 BELDEN AVE. APPROVAL PROCESS

Ms. Noor said this is very exciting and is coming to pass at a fantastic time. The building acquisition went before the Land Use and Building Management Committee. Ms. Harris added that the Land Use committee passed the item unanimously. Ms. Noor said they will go before the

Common Council on June 7th for approval. She asked members to attend in person or on Zoom and added that she will speak in support of the item.

3. **GOVERNANCE MEMO**

Ms. Noor asked if there were any comments on the memo. Mr. Knopp made recommendations to the language in the memo. He noted that the group who conducted the efficiency study did not interview anyone on this Board. He said he would be happy to work on the memo.

Ms. Noor asked for clarification from Mr. Knopp. He said that he understands that they are not a governing board, but it is in their purview to let the Board of Estimate and Taxation know about the financial needs for the Library. Ms. Williams said that in Ms. LaValle's presentation, she said they are an advisory board and as an advisory board do not have total access to the budget. Mr. Knopp said that under the Ordinance, they have the opportunity to share their opinion to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for the needs of the Library. He said he disputes that the Library Board's view should not be presented to the City's Finance authority.

Mr. Knopp said the governance memo should be clear that under the Ordinance, the Board has the right to present their budget to the Board of Estimate and Taxation and that point ought to be made. Ms. Williams said it is important that they work with Mr. Daniels and that Mr. Daniels should be invited to the meetings when the Board discusses their budget.

Mr. Knopp suggested scheduling a meeting of the Governance Committee to review the draft and then they could make a recommendation to the Board. Ms. Noor said she circulated the draft memo for a month and received no comments. She said she will set up a meeting of the Governance Committee and they will hopefully be able to vote on the memo at next month's meeting.

Ms. LavValle stated that charter revision that the City of Norwalk is undertaking is another good way to clarify the Board's role.

** **MR. KNOPP MOVED TO REFER THE GOVERNANCE MEMO TO THE GOVERNANCE SUB COMMITTEE**
** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. **LIBRARY CAFÉ**

Mr. Williams reported that he needs clarity on the RFP process. He said he would like to promote the RFP to the businesses in the Wall Street area. He added that he wants to be sure that whatever he proposes is consistent with the City.

Mr. Knopp urged Mr. Williams to work with the City's Purchasing Department. He said it may not be proper to limit it to local venders; typically it has to go out to the general public. Mr. Williams said he was not limiting it to the local venders, but would urge local businesses to respond to the RFP. Ms. Noor said that whoever comes in should understand there is a renovation on the horizon.

5. FURNITURE COMMITTEE

This item was tabled to next month's meeting.

ACTION ITEM

6. ELECTRIC CAR CHARGING STATION AT SONO LIBRARY

**** MR. KNOPP MOVED TO APPROVE THE ELECTRIC CAR CHARGING STATION AT THE SONO LIBRARY**

The Board members discussed the item. Mr. Williams asked if this would be a revenue generator. Ms. Noor said it would be a revenue producer for the vendor. Mr. Williams noted there is not enough parking. He said he did not see how they could give up parking spaces and suggested placing the charging station in the front of the Library and not in the back. Ms. Noor noted that one of the reasons a front parking space may be a problem is because it takes three hours to charge a car. Ms. Harris said the parking spaces in front of the Library are often used.

Ms. Mann said she is a proponent of having at least one charging station in the Library's parking lot in back of the Library, because it is a community service. Ms. Noor suggested putting this matter on next month's agenda.

Mr. Williams suggested putting those spaces in front of the Library. Mr. Knopp said that it is hard to coordinate the charging time with the City's parking time units. Ms. Harris said she would love to see charging stations at both libraries. The Board discussed charging stations.

Mr. Williams asked Ms. Harris how many times the South Norwalk Library runs out of parking spaces. She said it happens whenever they have a program at the Library.

**** MS. MANN SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED WITH TWO (2) VOTES IN OPPOSITION (MR. CULLEN AND MR. WILLIAMS)**

Mr. Williams said he supports having the charging stations but does not want to take away parking spaces.

7. GOVERNANCE MEMO

This item was discussed earlier.

6. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Harris' report will be discussed in the Foundation meeting.

There was no further business discussed this evening.

8. **COMPANIES RESPONSIBLE FOR RENOVATING FAIRFIELD COUNTY LIBRARIES**

8. **OLD BUSINESS**

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services