

**CITY OF NORWALK
LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OCTOBER 9, 2025
REGULAR MEETING**

ATTENDANCE: Mary Mann, Patsy Brescia, Laurel Peterson, Jannie Williams, Haroldo Williams, Alex Knopp, Moina Noor (Chair)

STAFF: Sherelle Harris (Library Director)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

II. ROLL CALL

A roll call of those present was performed. Haroldo Williams joined at approximately 7:07 p.m., and Alex Knopp joined at 7:05 p.m.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. July 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes – Motion to accept by Patsy Brescia; second by Laurel Peterson. All in favor.

B. September 11, 2025 Meeting Minutes – Motion to accept by Mary Mann; second by Jannie Williams. All in favor.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present at this time.

V. REPORTS

A. PRESIDENT (MOINA NOOR)

1. NAMING OF THE HISTROY ROOM

The Board discussed naming the History Room after Ralph Bloom, a designated Norwalk historian who was instrumental in the creation of Norwalk's history room and handled the transfer of the city's archives to the library. A resolution to approve was passed unanimously. The proposal will proceed to the Land Use Committee on November 5th and the full Common Council on November 11th. The Board will work with Sherelle on planning a ceremony and plaque.

2. UPDATE ON SENATE LAW: SENATE BILL 271

An update was provided regarding Senate Bill 271, an act concerning school and public libraries. The bill mandates development of collection, program, and reconsideration policies. Cindy and Lori are revising library policies to align with state requirements, which will be reviewed by the state before Board approval. The law's intent supports free speech protections.

B. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT (SHERELLE HARRIS)

1. THE BERNIE LIBRARY

John DiDomizio, a benefactor of the Norwalk Public Library, is researching the Burndy Library, a now defunct science and technology library formerly located at 51 Richard Avenue in Norwalk. Mr. DiDomizio will present two lectures, one in December and one in January. An exhibit replicating the Bernie Library's science and technology themes is planned for the Studio One area, possibly including miniatures by Vance Alexander, thereafter.

2. LIBRARY MUSEUM PASS NEWSLETTER UPDATE

The library piloted a newsletter designed by Raeven promoting the perks, programs and exhibits of the different museum. Feedback via email was positive. Top circulating passes include the Beardsley Zoo, Stepping Stones Museum for Children, the newly added Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Stamford Museum & Nature Center. The newsletter will be distributed monthly.

3. MANRESA ISLAND DOCUMENT REPOSITORY

Working with Mark Jefferson, the Main Library is now a document repository for Manreesa Island's CT DEEP draft stewardship permit for proposed development in regard to environmental requirements for the site. Mr. Jefferson provided a flashdrive with the content in the event anyone wants to view digitally.

4. PROPERTY UPDATES

Graffiti was removed from the building exterior, though remnants remain and need to be scraped or painted. All graffiti on the container in the parking lot remain. Director Harris provided Norwalk police with video footage of the perpetrators.

The fence between parcels at 1 Belden and 3 Belden was removed and a new sidewalk was installed, but was a parking space that blocked access to the sidewalk when cars parked there. The parking space was removed.

5. CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE

Matt Halverson, the City's fleet manager said the estimated delivery of the electric van is the end of November.

The cost for the SoNo parking lot for the EV chargers has gone up. Director Harris said she is looking into what can be done with CapBUD amount approved for the project which needs to be completed before winter.

Director Harris also stated that she followed up with Neil (Rennie) and Bill (Hnatuk) about the ADA-compliant doorknobs for main library and that she is waiting for a response. She noted that Bill is out of office until next week.

6. PART TIME HOURLY RATE INCREASE UPDATE

Director Harris said that she met with Lamond and the Finance Director Jared and his team to discuss raises for part-time staff again. She said that Jared supports increases and is reviewing her request, but nothing was firmed up. She mentioned that he discussed percentage raises 3–4% adjustments. The board raised concerns that the low percentage would be miniscule. Director Harris agreed and particularly because of the length of time staff had gone without raises. She said she followed up with an email about percentage raises and cost of living increases, but had not found anything to address percentage raises for staff who hadn't had raises in over 10 years. She said she mentioned Moina's discussion with Tom Livingston during which a special appropriation was mentioned and that the response to the appropriation mention was no, and that the finance team is looking to FY2026-27 to provide raises.

Ms. Brescia stated that if they are waiting until next year, that the percentage raises will not make any significant difference.

7. BUDGET ADVOCACY AND EXPANSION RENOVATION

Discussion then focused on the importance of board advocacy during budget season. Ms. Brescia stressed the need for Board presence at hearings. She further emphasized the plans for West Rocks Middle School and that the Board should not miss opportunities to make the library's needs known. Director Harris stressed that the library is open seven days a week, often 10 hours a day and staff are always public facing and that she doesn't want that taken for granted.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Patsy Brescia, seconded by Laurel Peterson, and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:32pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jada Caballero