

**CITY OF NORWALK
LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SPECIAL MEETING**

ATTENDANCE: Moina Noor, Chair; Patsy Brescia, Vice-Chair; Mary Mann; Jannie Williams; Alex Knopp

OTHER: Sherrell Harris, Director of the Norwalk Public Libraries

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Noor called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. There was a quorum present.

ROLL CALL

A roll call of those present was performed.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no Public Comments at this time.

REPORTS

PRESIDENT

CHARTER REVISION UPDATE

Mr. Knopp said that he had not seen anything sent so he sent out a draft of the revision just before the meeting. The draft was provided for review.

- The mayor shall appoint the library director in consultation with the Library Board of Directors from a list of not less than three candidates nominated by the Board.
- The City Library Director shall report to and have such duties as are defined by the Library Board of Trustees on matters of library policy and by the city mayor on matters of administration.
- A revision to the current opportunity for the Board to submit its budget to the Board of Estimate and including the director of Community Services.

Discussion followed regarding all three points of revision. It was suggested to change the first point as it is important for the Board to be involved in the process and the third point to include “in collaboration with the Library Director”.

**** MR. KNOPP MOVED TO APPROVE THE CHARTER REVISION UPDATE AS REVISED.**

**** MS. WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR (4) IN FAVOR (NOOR, MANN, WILLIAMS, KNOPP) AND ONE (1) ABSTENTION (BRESCHIA)**
WALKTHROUGH RESCHEDULE

The walkthrough will be rescheduled to the Saturday the 12th of April. An email will be sent out regarding the reschedule.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR
APPROVE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Ms. Harris noted that the library continues to follow state statute, but added protections such as not keeping driver’s license and passport numbers in the records system.

- ** MR. KNOPP MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY.**
- ** MS. WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PART-TIME STAFF RAISES

It was noted that there have not been pay raises in over 10 years, since 2012. Ms. Harris went into detail about the current pay/wage situation in the libraries. She said in addition to staff not receiving raises, that the librarians in particular are not being paid at market rate for region four (4), in which Norwalk falls for Connecticut libraries. Additionally, she added that the library’s budget is stretched over 7 days instead of 5 and that the library is open 7.5 – 10 hours per day. She discussed the minimum wage rate that went up to \$16.35 in January of 2025 and that our library clerks are now making only 65 cents more than the shelvers who put away books. She provided a spreadsheet breaking down the current salaries in the library and the current market rate. She also provided an update on the number of digital vs. physical books being used at the library over the past as well as their cost, stating that the cost of a physical book on average can be \$15, while the cost for the same book in digital format can cost \$50, 3x as much.

Percentage of digital books borrowed vs. Physical books borrowed

Year	Digital	Print
2020 - 2021	72%	28%
2021 - 2022	68%	32%
2022 - 2023	66%	34%
2023 - 2024	57%	43%
7/2024 - 3/2025	37%	63%

Discussion followed regarding pay rates. Ms. Harris suggested beginning with the Librarians for the next fiscal year 2025-2026 since they have gone the longest without raises. Ms. Noor thank Ms. Harris for doing a good job in making the case. Mr. Knopp suggested adding the custodians so that they can attract and keep good ones.

- ** MS. BRESCHIA MOVED TO APPROVE THE PART-TIME STAFF RAISES AS RECOMMENDED.**

**** MS. WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Discussion followed regarding the salaries of the other positions such as Shelves, Custodians, Library Clerks, and Library Assistants. The public hearing for the operating budget will be on March 26th.

During that meeting the discussion will take place regarding Ms. Harris' appeal to reinstate the \$50,000 taken from the library's part-time budget.

LIBRARY PARKING

Ms. Harris stated that she and Ms. Noor met with the Norwalk Parking Authority and that Mr. Knopps concerns about the library as a city agency having to pay for the things the Parking Authority should pay for, were mentioned. She stated that the library is still waiting for striping signage and the fence removal discussed during the initial meeting with the parking authority to take place.

Chair Noor said they needed to work with getting the Parking Authority back on board to manage their parking lots. Further discussion followed regarding the budget. Ms. Harris stated that there is roll-over money for the removal of the fence.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Knopp said that there had been a complaint about the flag at the South Norwalk Library and the need for it to be replaced. He said someone wrote on social media that they had mentioned it while there, nothing happened, so the person decided to post on social media. Ms. Harris stated that the branch manager had mentioned it to her the day before and that the custodian planned to replace it the following day.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** MS. WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:42 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted

Ian A. Soltes

Telesco Secretarial Services