

New Haven Free Public Library
Library Board of Directors
Minutes of Meeting
November 26, 2019

Members Present: Ms. Schneider, Dr. Anderson, Dr. Garcia-Blocker, Mr. Giering, Dr. Jewell, Ms. Merson, Alder Morrison, Mr. Sulpasso

Staff Present: John Jessen

Guest: Lauren Bisio (minutes)

Welcome

Ms. Schneider called the meeting to order at 5:40pm. A quorum was present.

Approval of Consent Agenda and Minutes

Ms. Schneider asked for a motion to approve the Agenda and Minutes. Dr. Anderson moved to approve the Minutes of the October 22, 2019 meeting, Ms. Merson seconded, and the Board voted to approve the Minutes. Ms. Merson moved to approve the Agenda, Dr. Garcia-Blocker seconded, and the Board voted to approve the Agenda.

Department Transition Plan

Mr. Jessen gave an update on the transition plan for the incoming mayoral administration, which was submitted to Sean Matteson, Chief Administrative Officer. The plan includes a budget summary, organizational chart, key issues for the new administration's first 90 days, and summary of system processes, deficiencies, contacts and open items. The plan will be distributed to the Mayor-Elect's transition team, and Mr. Jessen is awaiting any feedback.

The Board discussed aspects of the Transition Plan, including suggested future modifications to the Organizational Chart. Ms. Schneider has met with Mayor-Elect Elicker, and members of the Library Board and staff are in communication with the Transition Team.

ACLB Conference Recap

Dr. Anderson attended the 2019 Association of CT Library Boards Conference. Dr. Anderson summarized a breakout discussion with CT Data Collaborative on using data to tell stories as well as the keynote speech from Hugo Balta, Publisher and Executive Editor of CTLatinoNews.com, on outreach to the state's Latino community. The conference was a valuable opportunity to meet and network with other Library Board members across the state, and Ms. Schneider thanked Dr. Anderson for representing the New Haven Free Public Library Board of Directors.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Sulpasso delivered the Treasurer's Report, first providing a framework to analyze the October 2019 financial reports and the highlights at or above tolerance. Of note in the Board Budget, copier and printer revenues were higher than average, as were meeting room rentals. Notable expenses included collections and AV expenses, which are within budget. The library continues to make progress drawing down restricted funds. Ms. Schneider asked when and how the Staff Development and Training lines

will be spent down, and Mr. Jessen explained that funds are spent on webinars throughout the year as well as the spring staff training day. The Executive Search Firm will also be paid from this budget line.

The Foundation Budget recorded no income in the month and expenses from the Girls Who Code program as well as Ives Squared programming and supplies.

The Endowment funds have rebounded from recent market fluctuations.

Ms. Schneider asked for a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Giering moved, Dr. Jewell seconded, and the motion passed.

Two transfers were presented to the Board from the Foundation Board: \$273.30 from Give Change to Make Change in support of NHFPL's services for people experiencing homelessness and \$31,600 from CTNext for Ives Squared. Ms. Merson moved to accept the transfer from Give Change to Make Change and CTNext, Dr. Jewell seconded, and the motion passed.

Director's Report

Staffing

There were seven recent hires, including three part time librarians and four part-time aides in IT, Young Minds, and Circulation, as well as a part-time Bookmobile driver. A new Library Technology Supervisor started yesterday after a long search. Brad Bullis, Library Business and Infrastructure Administrator, is leaving after 20 years of service for a position with the State Library. Mr. Jessen hopes to post the position quickly; responsibilities include budget management and supervising the Facilities and IT departments.

Orchid Café

Mr. Jessen and a team of library staff met with Gideon Gebreyesus and Paul McCraven of ConnCORP to establish communication channels after changes in management. Mr. Gebreyesus brought café data and financials to illustrate the café's successes and challenges to date. While the café has seen increasing lunch sales, the evening hours are slow and Mr. Gebreyesus requested a trial period of early closing hours in the winter. Ms. Schneider asked for more information and data to support the request, and directed Mr. Jessen to continue meeting with Mr. Gebreyesus and Mr. McCraven to continue the discussion before reaching a decision.

Annual Report

The Annual Report has arrived and is being distributed to community partners, donors and key stakeholders. The report is also on the Library's website.

Project Outcome

Project Outcome is the ALA's evaluation tool and survey-sharing process used by libraries nation-wide. NHFPL is one of the top-ten users in North America, and Celeste Tapia was selected to participate in an ALA Project Outcome webinar to share best practices and tips with other users.

Girls Who Code

The first system-wide cohort of *Tech Titans: Girls Who Code* clubs is wrapping up. The weekly clubs teach STEAM skills and leadership skills to girls in grades 3-5 and 6-12, supported by a grant from the Community Fund for Women and Girls as well as ECIC funding. The national Girls Who Code organization invited Stetson LTA Rory Martorana to present NHFPL's success with the program in a webinar; Ms. Martorana and Wilson LTA Karina Gonzalez will be guests on a local radio show to promote the program.

NBF Presents

Mr. Jessen thanked the Board members that attended the *NBF Presents* author talk and community celebration on November 6th. The program, featuring Greg Grandin and Carmen Gimenez Smith, was well-received and the community celebration was a fitting tribute to retired City Librarian Martha Brogan.

CT Urban Library Roundtable

Mr. Jessen recently participated in the CT Urban Library Roundtable, meeting with eight participating library systems across the state. It is an excellent forum for collaboration between systems, including potential professional development and funding opportunities. Mr. Jessen also learned of a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding opportunity through the State Library, and NHFPL will submit an application.

Policy Review

The Board reviewed a draft of the Collection Development Policy, which was last approved in 2004. The Board discussed the organization of the document, and Dr. Garcia-Blocker commented that the policy is a much different format than other Library policies. Given its length, it could be part of a comprehensive policy manual. Ms. Schneider recommended streamlining the policy to be more user-friendly. The Board also discussed the addition of demographic information to the document, including the visual presentation of the information and the demographic categories. Dr. Anderson questioned if demographic information should be included in the text of the policy or referenced as an attachment that can be updated more frequently than the policy will be revised. Mr. Giering asked what the Federal Depository Library Program is, and why NHFPL is no longer part of it. Mr. Jessen will follow up.

The Board directed Mr. Jessen to revisit the document's overall structure, updating the table of contents and referenced attachments as needed.

Executive Search Update

Ms. Schneider gave an update on the search for the new City Librarian. The Executive Search Firm selected seven semi-finalists and the Search Committee conducted Zoom interviews with each of the semi-finalists. The Committee then selected three finalists. The finalists will visit New Haven in early December to tour the Library system, meet Library staff, and sit for final interviews with the Committee and Board. All staff and stakeholders who meet with the candidates will be invited to provide feedback. The Board discussed the schedule for the finalists' two-day visit to New Haven, and Ms. Schneider will compose an update to Library staff for Mr. Jessen to distribute.

Nominations

Ms. Schneider gave an overview of the Board roster: Mr. Sulpasso's term is up for renewal, and Dr. Jewell will be stepping down from the Board when her term expires at the end of the calendar year. Ms. Schneider thanked Dr. Jewell for her years of service and dedication to the New Haven Free Public Library, and the Board offered their appreciation.

Two Board seats will be open in the new year. Mr. Giering and Ms. Schneider spoke with Lee Cruz about joining the Board, and he was excited and willing to serve. Ms. Schneider asked for a motion to nominate Lee Cruz to the Library Board. Alder Morrison moved, Mr. Giering seconded, and the Board voted to approve the nomination.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Executive Session

Ms. Schneider adjourned the meeting at 7:16pm and the Board went into Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Bisio
Director of Advancement, NHFPL Foundation