

New Haven Free Public Library
Library Board of Directors
Minutes of Meeting
May 25, 2021

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

Members Absent: Mr. Cruz, Dr. Garcia-Blocker

Staff Present: John Jessen, Luis Chavez-Brumell

Guests: Mr. Andrew Alden

Welcome

Dr. Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm. A quorum was present.

Approval of Consent Agenda and Minutes

Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, including the April 2021 Minutes. Ms. Schneider moved to approve the Consent Agenda and Minutes, Ms. Logan seconded, and with no questions or comments, the Board voted to approve the Consent Agenda and Minutes.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Lamar reviewed the April 2021 financials, summarizing both the Board and the Foundation accounts. At 10 months into the year, overall revenues and expenses are as expected once to COVID-19 grant fund revenues are deducted. The Library continues to track fixed expenses versus variable costs to assist with budget planning.

Endowment

The Endowment continued to trend upward this month. The total value of the endowment is now \$3.3 million.

Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to approve the April 2021 financials, Ms. Schneider moved, Ms. Logan seconded, and with no questions or comments the Board voted to approve the April 2021 financials.

Mr. Jessen presented three transfers from the NHFPL Foundation: \$105,000 from the restricted Stetson Capital Campaign funds, \$100,000 from unrestricted Foundation funds and \$16,500 from the New Alliance Foundation for READY for the Grade. Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to approve the transfer, Ms. Lamar moved, Ms. Merson seconded, and the Board voted to accept the funds from the NHFPL Foundation.

Alder Morrison entered the meeting at 5:40 pm.

Policy Review: Code of Conduct

The Board discussed the Code of Conduct after Mr. Giering made a few more revisions to the Library's current Code of Conduct. One revision is a change in the language regarding where patrons can consume food or beverages inside of the Library. The new wording leaves this at the discretion of the manager, who can choose which spaces would be best for patrons to eat or drink. Another change will be to remove the word "loitering", since many people choose to use the Library as a safe place to spend time for the day.

The Board will take a further look at the policy to discuss further at the next Board meeting.

Community Foundation Endowment Report and FY21 Income Distribution Vote

Mr. Andrew Alden, the Community Foundation's Senior Vice President and Chief Investment Officer provided the Community Foundation's Endowment report. Mr. Alden provided a summary of the Library Board funds as managed by The Community Foundation. Mr. Alden also presented regarding the plan for Community Foundation investments for the future. After general discussion with the Board about the funds, Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to approve the FY21 spending rate of 5.5%, Ms. Schneider moved, Alder Morrison seconded, and the Board voted to approve the FY21 spending rate of 5.5%.

Ms. Schneider asked Mr. Alden to share the Community Foundation's work to diversity its portfolio managers which he did. Ms. Merson asked him to share the work of the Community Foundation in socially responsible investing. Mr. Alden said the Community Foundation will soon be meeting to discuss ways they can improve their Environmental Social Governance strategies.

Mr. Alden left the meeting at 6:25 pm.

COVID-19 related service updates

The Wilson branch has continued to host vaccination clinics by the Cornell-Hill Health Center. Between Wilson and other clinics being held periodically at other branch location, the Library has helped vaccinate over 12,000 residents.

Mr. Jessen believes the Library will have access to some monies from the Emergency Connectivity Fund, which supports broadband internet service to support remote learning during the pandemic.

The Library will also be receiving \$3,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act, which will be put towards a Book Bike.

Director's Report

Staffing

The Library has hired a new Branch Manager for Wilson and the City has approved the Supervising Librarian III position.

The Library Administration's responsibilities have shifted to address changing needs. New responsibilities also include consolidating the Ives Squared team into Adult Services without losing the strong Ives Squared brand.

Programs

The Wilson branch will be giving away sunflower plants and seeds for a project with customers and Common Ground School to plant sunflowers to cover the Hill neighborhood.

The mural project that the Wilson Library is partnering with CT Murals has now reached 90% of their fund-raising goals. A mural making program is planned to coincide with Juneteenth. New Haven natives Isaac Bloodworth and Kyle Kearson are local artists in charge of designing and leading the painting event.

Design Brigade, a group of Yale undergraduate and graduate design students has created a project called Diary Disks in which the community to write their thoughts and hopes for the future. These diary disks installations will be distributed to all library branches. A press event is planned with the Mayor to celebrate this initiative.

The teachers in charge of this year's READy for the Grade summer reading camp shared that there is widespread interest from families across the city and they are confident that another successful summertime program will soon be underway.

The Readmobile attended the Westville Artwalk and was extremely popular with the community. The Bookmobile will drop by various sites in New Haven such as Lighthouse Point Park.

The Great Give was a success for the Library once again! The initiative raised about \$12,000.

Russell Fund

The Russell Fund Committee had their initial meeting and members are doing visioning work. They see great prospects for joining forces with local colleges.

Stetson in the Q House

Everything is coming along for the new Stetson location at the Q House! Books and furniture and IT orders are being placed.

The Co-captains of the Stetson Capital Campaign have been finalizing room and space naming rights with select donors. It is possible that the board will be able to vote on these actions at the June meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Lamar moved, Alder Morrison seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 6:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

John Jessen
City Librarian