

New Haven Free Public Library  
Library Board of Directors  
Minutes of Meeting  
August 24, 2021

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

**Members Absent:** Mr. Cruz, Ms. Lamar

**Staff Present:** John Jessen, Luis Chavez-Brumell

### **Welcome**

Dr. Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m.

Since a quorum was not present at 5:41, those present began discussion of the Stetson Library Update. Later-arriving Board Members could watch the recording and read the minutes for substantive updates on that agenda item, which was report-out and a non-voting item.

### **Approval of Consent Agenda and Minutes**

Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, including the July 2021 Minutes. A quorum was present at 6:07pm. Ms. Schneider motioned 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**

Mr. Jessen shared the monthly financials, which includes the board budget summary, board budget, foundation budget, and endowment. He reviewed the FY 21-22 board budget. The board asked if there were changes in the City budget from last year, Mr. Jessen informed the board that the Forward Together budget is the approved City budget. This budget is status quo for the Library from the previous year.

Returning the discussion to the Library board budget, Mr. Jessen reported in response to questions from the Board that the cost for professional dues, which signify professional associations the NHFPL belongs to such as the Urban Libraries Council and American Library Association, will also be kept around the same from last year. Another questioned expense was copier rentals. Mr. Jessen explained that, while expensive, renting is cheaper than actually owning the copy machines across the city. NHFPL copiers make slightly more than their cost. Revenue anticipated from room rentals is about \$3,000.

Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to approve the FY 21-22 budget. Ms. Schneider motioned to approve the FY 21-22 budget, Ms. Merson seconded, and without further questions or comments, the Board voted the approve the budget.

### **Director's Report**

#### Staffing

The library staff celebrated retirements of Rhonda Taylor and Sharon Lovett-Graff who have both served the library for many years. The Board discussed procedures for celebrating staff retirements. Mr. Jessen reminded the board that the NHFPL has a Staff Engagement Committee where there is an opportunity to share accomplishments. The Board suggested asking for a citation from the Alder on the board for the recognition of service for library employees.

#### Programs

Mr. Jessen shared that he anticipates the NHFPL will receive \$50,000 from the city for arts programming.

### **Stetson Library Update: Naming Rights**

Mr. Jessen provided an update on the Stetson Branch Library Q-House process for naming rights to spaces. The City's attorney, Mike Pinto, is working on creating a finalized contract. Once approved, the contract will be signed by the City Librarian who acts as the Secretary of the NHFPL Board. Mr. Pinto has suggested setting up deeper procedures for naming rights at the library moving forward. Mr. Jessen and co-chairs of the Stetson campaign have been meeting with donors to finalize conversations on which donors have spaces named. Mr. Jessen hopes to have a list of donor names and plans for the Board by the September meeting.

City Engineer Zinn stated at a Q-House meeting on 08.23.21 that they will have a certificate of occupancy soon. Furniture backlog worldwide is affecting the opening of the new Stetson Library and the Q House as a whole.

On October 30<sup>th</sup> at 11 am., a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Q House will take place. Starting next month, the outfit for the Cornell Scott Hill Health Center will begin. A target opening for Stetson is December 2021 to coincide with the annual Stetson holiday party with Chris "Big Dog" Davis.

Although the accident at Stetson's current location destroyed the internet setup, there continues to be outdoor programs like "Stetson on the Street." Outdoor programming at Stetson's current location will continue for as long as possible but the branch will have to close for 4-6 weeks to move to the Q-House. Mr. Jessen communicates with Stetson Branch Manager, Diane Brown, daily on various issues.

Alder Morrison confirmed that the Dixwell community is aware of the Q-House delays and understands the current situation. The community is excited to visit the new Q-House and Stetson Library when it does open!

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Jessen comments on October 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm. the Black and Hispanic Caucus of the New Haven Board of Alders will honor Stetson Branch Manager Diane Brown.

Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting for Executive Session. Ms. Schneider motioned, Alder Morrison seconded, and the meeting adjourned for Executive Session at 6:39 pm. Ms. Merson motioned, Dr. Garcia-Blocker seconded, and the board voted to leave Executive Session at 7:08 pm. Ms. Schneider motioned for adjournment of the meeting at 7:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

John Jessen  
City Librarian