

New Haven Free Public Library
Library Board of Directors
Minutes of Meeting
June 28, 2022

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

Staff Present: Maureen Sullivan, Luis Chavez-Brumell

Guests: Drew Alden from the Community Foundation Greater of New Haven, Jeannette Sykes

Welcome

Dr. Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:35pm.

Approval of Consent Agenda and Minutes

Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to approve the May 2022 Minutes, Special Meeting Minutes, and the Consent Agenda. Dr. Anderson moved to amend the Agenda to strike "transfers?". Ms. Merson moved, Mr. Cruz seconded, and without any further questions or comments, the Board voted to approve the Minutes and Consent Agenda with the corrections.

Community Foundation Endowment Report

Mr. Alden presented the Endowment report. He gave a summary of the finances and noted that the Community Foundation has been serving the Library for 9 years. Mr. Alden explained the fluctuations in the market since 2021 and how it will affect funds going forward. Mr. Alden discussed with the Board the recommendation for the spending rate, which would be the same as last Fiscal Year at 5.5%. Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to approve the spending rate of 5.5% for FY22/23, Ms. Lamar moved, Ms. Merson seconded, and the Board voted to approve the spending rate.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Lamar delivered the Treasurer's report. She gave a summary of financials for both April and May. Revenue and expenses are where they should be. She will update the endowment income to show the incoming monies for June.

The endowment has taken a slight dive due to the market.

Mr. Giering moved to approve the April and May financials, Ms. Lamar seconded, and the Board voted to approve the financials.

Mr. Chavez-Brumell presented four transfers from the NHFPL Foundation: \$12,650 from Scripps Family Fund for READY for the Grade; \$22,000.00 New Alliance Foundation for READY for the Grade; \$2,000 from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine for reimbursement of already purchased health books; and \$15,907.29 from Economic Development Corporation from CT Next to support Ives Squared in Quarter 3.

Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to approve the transfers, Ms. Lamar moved, Mr. Giering seconded, and the Board voted to accept the funds from the NHFPL Foundation.

Ms. Merson discussed with the Board reimbursement for when she used her credit card to cover the cost when the Board sent Library staff both breakfast and lunch during their time of grieving for former City Librarian, John Jessen. The Board will allocate a total of \$467.97 from the Director's fund.

Director's Report

Ms. Sullivan and Mr. Chavez-Brumell delivered the Director's Report.

First, Mr. Chavez-Brumell thanked the Board for their support during this difficult time.

Covid-19 Update

The mask mandate is still in place for City buildings.

The Library has continued working with Griffin Health to host their clinics in Library space when there is inclement weather. There is also a possibility of moving their site to Fair Haven.

Staff

Mr. Chavez-Brumell explained that there are usually fluctuations with staffing towards the end of the fiscal year. This year there are some critical staffing changes. Public Services Administrator for Communications and Marketing, Gina Bingham, will be leaving at the end of the summer as her husband has accepted a job out of state. This will leave open a Librarian IV position. Ms. Sullivan will be working with Ms. Bingham to ensure a smooth transition. Young Minds and Family Learning Manager, Margaret Girgis, will be departing from the Library in July. A huge win for the Library is the new Director of Development for the Foundation, Manmita Dutta, who started in June. Manmita has been a New Haven resident for about 20 years. She has worked previously at Sandy Hook Promise and Gather New Haven and will be a great asset to the Library.

Programming

READY for the Grade has kicked off and will be expanding to the Stetson branch next week. It is being led by a group of fantastic educators.

City Librarian John Jessen

There have been discussions with the Jessen family about the possibility of a portrait being made of Mr. Jessen. The Library is thinking of ways to celebrate John, as he was a well-loved figure in the community, while being respectful of the Jessen family's concerns and timeline.

Ms. Sullivan commented that the members of the Library Administrative Group have made it very easy for her to transition into the Interim City Librarian position and that it is a pleasure to work with them. She's also looking forward to working with the Chief Administrative Office and the staff in Human Resources. Given the number of current and anticipated staff vacancies, Ms. Sullivan and members of the Administrative Group communicated to the CAO's office the Library's decision to delay opening Sunday hours until there can be adequate staffing to ensure a sustainable plan. It is hoped that this can happen by August.

Dr. Garcia-Blocker asked if the Library will have Summer Youth Employment. There will be Youth at Work, through the City; participating youth will be working in the Young Minds department.

Acting Executive Director of Foundation Appointment

Dr. Anderson spoke with Michael Morand, and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Library Board and Foundation Board, states that the City Librarian is the Executive Director of the Foundation. However, since Mr. Chavez-Brumell has already been working with the Foundation, Dr. Anderson proposed to the Board that, for this time, the Deputy Director will be the Executive Director of the Foundation in consultation with the Interim City Librarian. Dr. Anderson motioned to approve the Deputy Director to serve as the Executive Director of the Foundation during this time, in consultation with the Interim City Librarian. This was seconded by Mr. Cruz, and the Board voted to approve the motion.

Officer Election

Mr. Cruz proposed a nomination a single slate. Dr. Anderson for Chair, Mr. Giering for Vice Chair, and Ms. Lamar for Treasurer. All nominated agreed to serve. Mr. Cruz called for a secret ballot. Mr. Cruz asked all Board members to send him a direct e-mail with their votes.

Mr. Cruz shared that it was a unanimous vote from Board members to approve the slate. Dr. Anderson thanked Ms. Schneider for previously being a tremendous Officer of the Board.

Mr. Chavez-Brumell will continue to be Secretary.

Dr. Anderson also thanked Dr. Garcia-Blocker for her time with the Board and informed the Board that the appointment of Ms. Sykes, due to city delays, was moved from the June agenda for aldermanic affairs to July. There is an August or September expected start date.

Policy Review

The Board discussed the Display Policy last approved by the Board in 2019. Mr. Chavez-Brumell said no changes were added to the policy after review, but encouraged the Board to talk about potential changes.

Dr. Garcia Blocker shared the importance of not having hate speech and or inappropriate materials that lure teens into trafficking listed on the library display boards. The policy will be reviewed at the July meeting and Board members will share feedback with Mr. Chavez-Brumell at that time.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Garcia-Blocker so moved, Mr. Cruz seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 7:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Luis Chavez-Brumell
Deputy Director