

New Haven Free Public Library  
Library Board of Directors  
Minutes of Meeting  
May 23, 2023

**Board Members Present:** Dr. Anderson, Alder Morrison, Ms. Sykes, Ms. Merson, Ms. Schneider, Mr. Giering

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

**Staff Present:** Maureen Sullivan, Luis Chavez-Brumell, and Maria Bernhey

**Guests:** Drew Alden and Regina Rush-Kittle

### **Welcome**

Dr. Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:34pm.

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

Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and the April 2023 Minutes with an amendment to include that Ms. Schneider had attended but was listed as absent. Ms. Merson moved, Mr. Giering seconded, and without any questions or comments, the Board voted to approve the Minutes and Consent Agenda.

### **Treasurer's Report**

#### Community Foundation Greater New Haven Endowment

Drew Alden of the Community Foundation Greater New Haven (CFGNH) Endowment gave the report. He explained how the CFGNH provides returns to non-profits that create funds with the CFGNH. The NHFPL's endowment performance over time was reviewed and the spending rate of 5.5% was suggested. Dr. Anderson will follow-up with Mr. Alden via email on the Board approved spend rate. Dr. Anderson asked for a motion to approve the endowment spend rate at 5.5%. Mr. Giering moved, and Ms. Sykes seconded the motion.

#### Library Board Financials and Budget

Mr. Chavez-Brumell provided an overview of the Library financials and shared the Board proposed budget which includes decreased revenue from the passport office. This decrease is the result of hours being reduced due to staffing availability. Mr. Chavez-Brumell will work on ways to increase staffing for passport services and investigate other revenue generating services that the Library could provide.

#### Russell Fund

Dr. Anderson provided an overview of the Florence Russell Fund which is designed for staff to pursue higher education with a special emphasis on library staff of color to pursue Associate's, Bachelors, and Master's (including Library/Information Science, Business Administration, and Computer science among others). The fund had not been activated as the protocol for distribution of funds was never finalized. Ms. Bernhey shared how the Library's DEI taskforce

had discussed the issue. Ms. Sullivan shared that library leadership will work to develop a proposal to share with the Board at the next meeting.

### **Director's Report**

Ms. Sullivan and Ms. Bernhey delivered the Director's Report.

### Move to Community Services Administration and City De-escalation Training

Ms. Sullivan shared that she invited Community Services Administrator Dr. Dalal to attend a meeting with the Library Administration team.

City De-escalation Training with the City Emergency Operations Director Rick Fontana took place at the Wilson Library as part of the city's initiatives.

### Summer Learning

Ms. Bernhey shared the new summer learning booklets which fit the theme of "find your voice" which are in English and Spanish. The goal is to encourage children to read 1200 over the summer and fill out their reading logs to receive prizes.

### City Human Resources Director

Ms. Sullivan shared that she has been in communication with City Human Resources Director Marcela Garcia about public computer availability for job seekers and that Director Garcia attended a meeting with the Library managers on May 4 that went well.

### **Meeting Room/Tutor Room Policy Review**

The meeting room policy was discussed, and several editorial changes were suggested. Ms. Schneider moved approval and Mr. Giering seconded the motion. Discussion included consideration of the fee structure for the use of meetings. The Board agreed not to make any changes now. The Board then voted to approve the policy and directed Maureen Sullivan to make the editorial changes.

### **Privacy Policy Proposal**

Ms. Sullivan gave a brief overview of the privacy policy proposal and suggested that the Board review and approval at the June meeting. Dr. Anderson asked Board members to review the document in advance of the meeting and to send any suggested changes to Ms. Sullivan in advance of the meeting. Ms. Sullivan will send this request and the proposed policy to Board members.

### **City Librarian Search Update**

City Librarian finalists were interviewed on May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> and the Board selected Maria Bernhey as the next City Librarian. Official communications for announcing Ms. Bernhey's appointment are forthcoming.

### **Board Member Terms and Nominations**

Ms. Schneider shared that she and Mr. Giering sent a list of interested potential Board members to the Library Board. Ms. Schneider stated that she hopes to present a slate at the June meeting.

**City Librarian Portrait**

Dr. Anderson reported that local artist Frank Bruckmann has completed the portrait of late City Librarian John Jessen. There is a plan to have a portrait unveiling celebration on June 30th and the possibility of having the portrait travel to the different library branches during the summer.

**Public Comment**

Alder Morrison shared that the Freddie Fixer Parade will take place on June 4<sup>th</sup> at 1:30pm.

A motion to adjourn was made by Alder Morrison and seconded by Ms. Schneider.

Respectfully submitted,

Luis Chavez-Brumell  
Deputy Director