

New Haven Free Public Library
Library Board of Directors
July 23, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Directors Present: Lauren Anderson, Lee Cruz, Giulia Gambale, Andrew Giering, Susan Lamar, Alder Jeannette Morrison, Claudia Merson, Jeanette Sykes

Directors Absent: (vacancy waiting for appointment)

Staff Present: Maria Bernhey, Luis Chavez-Brumell

Guests: Andrew Alden, Dijonée Talley

Welcome

President Andrew Giering called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

Approval of Consent Agenda and Minutes

Treasurer Susan Lamar moved to approve the June minutes and the July agenda with an amendment to the order of items under the Treasurer's report. Lauren Anderson seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Guest Speaker Presentation

Andrew Alden presented an update on the Library's endowment portfolio. A discussion followed.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Lamar presented the Treasurer's Report. A discussion followed. Ms. Lamar moved to approve the annual rate for the spending policy. Mr. Giering seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Director's Report

City Librarian Maria Bernhey presented the Director's Report.

Staffing

Ms. Bernhey shared that full-time positions are filled and noted there are nine part-time positions which remain open.

Staff Development

New guidelines for service and facilities standards published by the Connecticut State Library recommend 14 hours of professional development training for full-time staff each year. The administration team is reviewing all service and facilities suggestions shared in the new guidelines.

Ms. Bernhey shared that a staff innovation project is currently under development to support staff ideas for new and innovative services and programs.

Ives Squared Manager Jennifer Gargiulo and Business Librarian Alexandria Robison have been invited to the New England Library Association Conference to present on the topic of Small Business Support.

Staff Recognition

The Library Staff Engagement committee organized a staff and family picnic in August.

The administration team is exploring service pins to honor NHFPL service longevity at the 5-, 10- and 20-year marks.

Facilities and Infrastructure

A vote for the new phone contract is expected to be on the Board of Alders agenda for the August 5 meeting.

CITYarts is donating a peace mural to the Fair Haven Branch to be included in their “50 States of Peace” art project. A request for approval to accept this donor funded art project is expected to be on the Board of Alders agenda for the August 5 meeting.

Community Impact

The Young Minds department is hosting a “Great Playdate” to engage families and express appreciation for the new donor-funded learning materials in the Ives children’s room.

Kulturally Lit art programming is coming to NHFPL branches August to October to honor James Baldwin leading up to LitFest.

The Digital Navigator program had a soft launch this July, with a press conference and larger kick-off planned for October.

All branches will be hosting civic and voter programming this coming fall leading up to the general election.

Strategic Planning Update

Ms. Bernhey shared that Maureen Sullivan will be facilitating the staff Strategic Planning workshops on July 30 and August 5.

The Strategic Planning committee is in the process of finalizing the community feedback sessions for September and October. The team is scheduling twelve sessions total, including two in Spanish and one in Mandarin.

Ms. Bernhey will email the Board of Directors to coordinate a date for a Library Board feedback workshop.

Naming Rights Committee Update

The Naming Rights Committee will meet on July 26. An updated draft of revisions to the naming policy will likely be submitted for the Board's review in September.

Board Member Terms and Nomination Updates

Proposed Board Members

Mr. Giering shared that the Mayor's nomination of Dijonée Talley to the Library Board will be a voting item on the Board of Alders agenda for the August 5 meeting.

Public Comment

The Board welcomed Ms. Talley to Board of Directors.

Adjournment

Ms. Merson moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Lamar seconded. The meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Luis Chavez-Brumell
Deputy Director