

New Haven Free Public Library  
Library Board of Directors  
Minutes of Meeting  
October 28, 2020

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

**Staff Present:** John Jessen

**Welcome**

Ms. Schneider called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm. A quorum was present.

The Board extended a warm welcome to new Board Director Irene Logan. Ms. Logan introduced herself as a teacher in the New Haven school system who's had the pleasure of serving a diverse community of students. She is originally from Guatemala and has lived in New Haven for 24 years. Ms. Schneider asked that Board members individually introduce themselves and include the title of a book they are reading now.

**Approval of Consent Agenda and Minutes**

Ms. Schneider asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, including the September 2020 Minutes. Dr. Garcia-Blocker moved to approve the Consent Agenda and Minutes, Dr. Anderson seconded, and with no questions or comments the Board voted to approve the Consent Agenda and Minutes.

**Treasurer's Report**

Mr. Jessen delivered the Treasurer's Report, reviewing the September 2020 financial reports.

Board Budget

Mr. Jessen began by offering compliments to Ms. Lamar for her assistance with QuickBooks. Most recently Ms. Lamar reconciled the Library's accounts in QuickBooks with the NHFPL bank account. She corrected journal entries and now both positions align. Mr. Jessen pointed out that there was little out of the ordinary for the September financials as he walked the Board through the month's revenues and expenditures.

Foundation

Mr. Jessen reported nothing out of the ordinary for the Foundation board budget in September. \$37,000 grant from the Yale Community Fund as well as money for READY for the Grade and the grant sponsored by Girls Who Code was received as restricted income.

Ms. Lamar entered the meeting.

Endowment

The Endowment funds are trending once again in an overall positive direction.

Mr. Jessen presented a transfer request from the Foundation for \$79, 826 from the CTNext Grant money. The CTNext grant revenue is spent on the Library's Creative-in-Residence, Entrepreneur-in-Residence and Tech-in-Residence programs as well as job and career related databases such as Lynda.com.

Ms. Schneider asked for a motion to accept the transfer request and to approve the September 2020 financials. Dr. Anderson moved, Mr. Cruz seconded. With no more questions, the Board voted to approve the Foundation's transfer request and the September 2020 financials.

### **Reopen Updates**

Mr. Jessen reported that the Library is moving forward with the preparations that will allow individual customers and families into the building. There would be no more than 40 people allowed inside Ives and no more than 10-15 at the branches; these numbers do not include staff. Plans are now in place to open all library buildings at the end of November or beginning of December. Staffing levels and finalizing building spaces and the new self-check system need to be in place before the NHFPL can open its spaces. Also under consideration are the infection levels of Covid in the City. All plans continue to be made in line with city and state Covid-19 guidelines.

### **Director's Report**

#### Staffing

The Library is in the process of finalizing the hiring of new staff. This includes: two Librarian IV's, two Librarian II's and four of the nine Part-Time staff positions, who will be able to start as soon as possible. One of the Librarian IV's will be starting in November. Mr. Jessen noted that this person's experience opening up a Library in Florida will be very helpful to the Stetson Branch. There are still more positions to fill. The Library is looking to get back to its Pre-COVID evening and Saturday hours of operation.

#### Community Learning Hubs

Planning for Community Learning Hubs at branches continues. At present there is no concrete timeline for when these Hubs will open, but this is a priority request from the Mayor's office.

#### Everybody Learns Grant

The NHFPL was one of 68 Libraries to receive the Everybody Learns state grant. The Library will receive \$146,790. This money is designed to help the Library facilitate opening its doors to the public more fully. All purchases need to be completed by the end of December of this year. Purchases will include many facilities updates such as touchless faucets, filters for the HVAC system, a new handicap door at the Wilson Library, and marketing materials to name a few areas.

#### Yale Grant

The Library has received and readied the Hot spots purchased with the Yale Community Fund for system wide circulation. Outdoor Wi-Fi is scheduled for completion at Ives Main Library and the Wilson Branch in early November.

Ms. Merson entered the meeting.

**Policy Review Approach**

Mr. Jessen discussed that the policies of the Library are being reviewed every 3 years. There is one policy, Unattended Children's Policy, that is coming due to review in November. Mr. Jessen asked the Board Members if they see a need to either include COVID precautions into previous policy or making a policy specifically regarding COVID. This would be in addition to the COVID Reopening Plan the Library already has in place. The Board discussed this topic and agreed that simply pointing to and following the rules and regulations outlined by the City will be more effective, at this point in time, than creating a new policy, but that the Board should continue reviewing the individual NHFPL policies as planned.

The Board briefly discussed the Library's Code of Conduct and other policies at the new Stetson Branch located at the Q House. Ms. Morrison explained that policies in place at the Stetson Branch may differ from policies in other areas of the Q House, which will allow for policy consistency across NHFPL branches.

**Public Comment**

Mr. Jessen commented that there is a Democracy in America zoom series, which occurs every other Tuesday night and can be found on the NHFPL website. The Library is also revitalizing the Books Sandwiched Author Talks, which will consist of authors talking about their books on zoom.

The Board entered Executive Session at 6:42 pm and came out of Executive Session at 6:46pm.

Ms. Schneider asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Cruz moved, Dr. Anderson seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 6:46pm.

Respectfully submitted,

John Jessen  
City Librarian