

MINUTES
WAR MEMORIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Thursday, September 10, 2020

The Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met remotely in regular session on Thursday, September 10, 2020, at 2:15 p.m., immediately following the conclusion of the Building Committee meeting, President Horn presiding.

ROLL CALL

Present: President Horn, Vice President Shultz, Trustee Bechtle, Trustee Gatti, Trustee Levin, Trustee Lui, Trustee Moscone, Trustee Myatt, Trustee Pelosi, Trustee Wilsey and Trustee Wright

Staff Present: John Caldon, Managing Director, and Jennifer Norris, Assistant Managing Director

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Resident Company Update:

President Horn stated that War Memorial resident companies continue to be impacted by COVID-19 closures, and invited their leadership to update the Board on the status of the organizations.

Mark Hanson, Chief Executive Officer of the San Francisco Symphony, thanked the War Memorial Board for their ongoing support. He stated that since he last presented to the Board, the Symphony successfully concluded its 2019-20 season fiscal year on August 31. This was made possible in large part because of the paycheck protection program loan it received from the federal government, but also because of the continued generosity of its board and the broader donor community. Mr. Hanson further stated that the Symphony has come to realize the first six months of the pandemic period were difficult, but manageable. The longer-term impact they expect to feel throughout the 2020-21 season fiscal year will be more challenging. The Symphony's board-approved budget for the 2020-21 season has been reduced by 50% compared to previous years. This fiscal reality is requiring ongoing negotiations with their union partners.

Mr. Hanson stated the SF Symphony is doing small scale in-person one-on-one performances, as well as creating digital content with a new series called "Currents" that explores the intersection of various cultures and music. He stated the Symphony would be launching a new digital streaming service in October. The cost will be \$15 per month with a goal of finding new audiences and monetizing some of these new digital services.

President Horn then invited Debra Bernard, General Manager of the San Francisco Ballet, to provide an update. Ms. Bernard thanked the War Memorial Board and staff for their partnership and efforts. She reported that the Ballet's dancers have recently returned to the studio. They have been in company classes for approximately four weeks in small pods of six dancers, socially distanced by 12 feet, and wearing masks at all times. The Ballet is now working on the next phase, which is to receive permission from the Health Officer for dancers to begin rehearsing to begin the creation of new work and additional digital content. Three choreographers have been engaged for this upcoming season: company soloist Myles Thatcher, local choreographer Danielle Rowe, and British choreographer Cathy Martston, with hopes to present her "Mrs. Robinson" either digitally or live.

Ms. Bernard reported that the Ballet has been working very hard to return to San Francisco all of the Ballet's foreign artists, many of whom returned to their home countries to shelter-in-place with their families. She also stated that the Ballet is working to get its upper level students back to class in the studio and housed in the new Bowes Center dormitory. The Ballet has rented one floor of that dormitory from the Conservatory of Music and the anticipated occupation date is in October.

President Horn stated that Matthew Shilvock, General Director of the San Francisco Opera, could not attend this meeting due to a prior commitment.

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Approval of Consent Agenda: Director Caldon stated that items submitted on the Consent Agenda include: the minutes of the August 13, 2020 regular meeting of the Board; Rental Requests and Rental Refund Requests for September 10, 2020; and Revenue, Appropriations and Housekeeping Expenditures Reports for August 30, 2020. Mr. Caldon requested their approval. On motion of Trustee Moscone, seconded by Trustee Pelosi, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 20-34

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that the minutes of the August 13, 2020 regular meeting of the Board; Rental Requests and Rental Refund Requests for September 10, 2020; and Revenue, Appropriations and Housekeeping Expenditures Reports for August 30, 2020 are hereby approved.

Summary of War Memorial's Pandemic Support: Director Caldon stated that the War Memorial continues to support the City's COVID-19 response efforts in several ways. He shared the following highlights:

- Logistical support in the form of parking for the City's Homeless Outreach Team.
- Four War Memorial employees deployed as Disaster Service Workers at the City's COVID Command Center through the remainder of the calendar year.
- Emergency Medical Services Agency Ambulance and Paratransit Dispatch Center located on second floor of the Veterans Building, with parking provided for vehicles in the horseshoe driveway and adjacent lot.
- Continued hosting of blood drives in partnership with the American Red Cross.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Political Activity by City Officers and Employees: Jennifer Norris followed up on her email to Trustees that included a memorandum from the City's Attorney's Office regarding political activity by City officers and employees. The reminder, which is typically sent during election years, included important information about restricted activities, including: Use of City Resources; Off-duty Political Activity; Campaign Contributions; and other Restricted Political Activities.

Update on Opera House Seat Replacement Project: Jennifer Norris, project lead for the Opera House Seating Replacement Project, provided an update on the project, which is now proceeding. She reported on the challenges of fast-tracking a project by eight months. While the project was to have begun in May 2021, staff is working toward having the new seats in place for a possible January 19, 2021 opening night performance of the San Francisco Ballet. She reported that schedule alternates with the contractors include contingencies to allow the Ballet to use the stage in December to make video recordings of original new work.

Ms. Norris reported that Department of Public Works Architects, and theatrical consultants from The Shalleck Collaborative, have been working as quickly as possible to design new railings and wheelchair platforms, and to draft the necessary architectural drawings. Director Caldon and Ms. Norris will meet with the consultants to review the contractors pricing prior to presenting those costs to the Seat Replacement Planning Group for the San Francisco Ballet and the San Francisco Opera. The goal is to contract soon to allow for facility protection and seat demolition to begin no later than September 14. DuCharme, the French-Canadian seat manufacturer, is scheduled to deliver 2,000 new seats to the War Memorial on November 23.

Ms. Norris stated that she and Director Caldon appreciate the focus and flexibility of Ballet and Opera leadership and staff, as well as that of the War Memorial Trustees, as staff works to deliver a first-class custom

seat, and ensure a greatly improved patron experience, when we can once again welcome guests into the War Memorial Opera House.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Building Committee:

San Francisco Symphony request to expend up to \$1.6 million of “Hall Improvement Fee” funds for the “Immersive Lobby Experience” project for Davies Symphony Hall:

Chair Pelosi stated that earlier today the Building Committee met to consider a request from the San Francisco Symphony for approval to expend up to \$1.6 million of “Hall Improvement Fee” funds for purchase and implementation of several components of the “Immersive Lobby Experience” project in Davies Symphony Hall

Chair Pelosi reported that in February 2017 the War Memorial Board of Trustees approved a Hall Improvement Fee for Symphony concerts in Davies Symphony Hall. Since that time, total fees collected to date amount to just over \$2 million, with approved expenditures of \$292,000 on lobby furnishings and \$85,000 for design services related to the Immersive Lobby Experience. The current balance as of May 31, 2020 is approximately \$1.7 million.

Chair Pelosi reminded Trustees that in September 2017 the Board approved in concept the Symphony’s proposed “Immersive Lobby Experience” to be funded from the “Hall Improvement Fee,” on the condition that the Symphony would return to the Board for final approval when plans were fully developed. In February 2020, Trustees approved a request from the Symphony to expend \$85,000 in design fees to be funded from “Hall Improvement Fee” funds. Today, the Symphony returned to the Committee to present its design concept to Trustees, and to request approval to spend up to \$1.6 million to realize the project.

Chair Pelosi reported that at the Building Committee meeting today, Trustees received a presentation from Symphony Chief Executive Officer Mark Hanson, Symphony Director of Operations Andrew Dubowski, and design consultants from AV Controls.

Following that presentation, the Committee voted to recommend to the full Board approval for the Symphony to use up to \$1.6 million in “Hall Improvement Fee” funds for design, general management, implementation, manufacture, and installation of two components of the Immersive Lobby Experience, specifically the Interior Façade Lighting and five Digital Posters, with the requirement that:

- The Symphony must receive approval of final designs, fixture selections, and installation methods from War Memorial staff; and
- Any equipment purchased with Hall Improvement Fee funds becomes the property of the War Memorial and made available for use by all licensees at no additional fee; and
- Maintenance and management of the façade lighting and digital content management systems remain the responsibility of the Symphony, and must be performed without further contributions from Hall Improvement Fee funds.

On motion of Trustee Myatt, seconded by Trustee Moscone, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 20-35

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that it hereby adopts the report and recommendation of its Building Committee and approves with the stipulated requirements outlined in the Committee’s recommendation the San Francisco Symphony’s request to expend up to \$1.6 million of “Hall Improvement Fee” funds for design, general management, implementation, manufacture, and installation of Interior Façade Lighting and five Digital Posters as part of its “Immersive Lobby Experience” project in Davies Symphony Hall.

REGULAR ITEMS

Approval of Pamela Rosenberg bas relief:

President Horn stated that at the regular meeting on March 12, 2020, Trustees were presented a request from the San Francisco Opera for approval of the final design of a bas relief of former Opera General Director Pamela Rosenberg to be installed in the Opera House main lobby.

At that meeting, Trustees noted the design appeared to depict Ms. Rosenberg with bare legs, and requested an alteration to the design so that the subject would not appear to have bare legs. Ellen Presley, San Francisco Opera Board Relations and Special Projects Manager, presented a revised design and requested approval from the full Board. Trustees expressed concern as to whether Pamela Rosenberg was in favor of the design as presented and asked that the Opera confirm that with her.

Following discussion, the War Memorial Board of Trustees decided to hold the item over to the October meeting to make a final decision.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Trustee Levin thanked the War Memorial Board of Trustees for its previously granted approval to fly the POW/MIA flag on the Veterans Building . Trustee Levin asked that today's board meeting be adjourned in honor of the 81,000 American soldiers missing in action.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment is an opportunity for members of the public to directly address the Trustees on items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board, but not on the agenda.

President Horn stated that during the COVID-19 health emergency while Trustees are meeting remotely, members of the public may address the Board by emailing their public comment to WarMemorialBoard@sfgov.org or by leaving public comment as a voicemail at 415-554-6308 in advance of Board meetings. President Horn also invited the public to leave additional public comment until 12:00 p.m. on War Memorial Board meeting day.

Trustees encourage the public to provide their comments and feedback by email or voicemail. It should be noted that no public comment was received either prior to the meeting or in the subsequent week.

Paul Cox of the American Legion War Memorial Commission stated the Commission is pleased they were able to permit Veterans Building Room 210 to be utilized to assist the City and County of San Francisco's Emergency Medical Services Agency as a dispatch office for the ambulances and paratransit vehicles being used to transport COVID-positive patients throughout San Francisco.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, President Horn adjourned the meeting in honor of the 81,000 American soldiers missing in action at 3:15 p.m.



Jennifer E. Norris
Executive Secretary