

MINUTES
WAR MEMORIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Thursday, July 8, 2021

The Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met remotely in regular session on Thursday, July 8, 2021, at 2:00 p.m., President Horn presiding.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Vice President Shultz and Trustee Wilsey

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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Horn reported that Kelly Tweeddale announced she was stepping down as Executive Director of the San Francisco Ballet. He noted that the last sixteen months had been a challenging time and that Ms. Tweeddale has done a marvelous job managing during the COVID-19 crisis. On behalf of the War Memorial Board of Trustees President Horn conveyed deep gratitude for her leadership and stated that Ms. Tweeddale had asked him to express her appreciation to War Memorial Trustees and staff.

President Horn introduced Danielle St. Germain-Gordon, San Francisco Ballet's Interim Executive Director. Ms. St. Germain-Gordon stated that several years ago she was recruited by the San Francisco Ballet to be Director of Development from her previous position at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis. Prior to that she worked at Arena Stage, American Association of Museums and Shakespeare Theater Company. Ms. St. Germain-Gordon stated she is looking forward to bringing "Nutcracker" to the stage of the War Memorial Opera House beginning December 10, 2021, and she thanked Trustees for welcoming her at the meeting today.

President Horn reported that The Green Room will host its first event on July 19, 2021, and that the War Memorial Opera House will reopen on August 21, 2021, with the San Francisco Opera's production of "Tosca." He thanked Trustees for the leadership and steadfastness that has made it possible for the War Memorial to be ready. He further thanked Managing Director John Caldon, Assistant Managing Director Jennifer Norris, and War Memorial staff for their work throughout the pandemic.

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Caldon noted that for the first time in sixteen months the consent agenda does not include any refund requests.

Approval of Consent Agenda: Director Caldon stated that items submitted on the Consent Agenda included minutes of the June 10, 2021, regular meeting of the Board, and Rental Requests for July 8, 2021. He requested their approval. On motion of Trustee Myatt, seconded by Trustee Moscone, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 21-18

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that the minutes of the June 8, 2021, regular meeting of the Board, and Rental Requests for July 8, 2021, are hereby approved.

American Legion War Memorial Commission Leadership Change: Director Caldon reported there has been a leadership change at the American Legion War Memorial Commission (ALWMC). He asked outgoing ALWMC Chair Helen Wong to provide an update. Chair Wong reported that she has been elected to the post of Commander of American Legion District 8 and announced that Mario Benfield, a former Marine, has been selected to serve as the new Chair of ALWMC.

Director Caldon thanked Commander Wong for her leadership and for her partnership in allowing the use of Veterans Meeting Rooms for COVID-19 response purposes during the pandemic.

Report on Reopening of War Memorial Offices: Director Caldon reported on the War Memorials return to work strategy. He stated that as Director he has been working alongside the Security and Engineering division employees onsite working throughout the pandemic and that now all staff members are working in the office multiple days each week.

Director Caldon stated that the City and County of San Francisco will be requiring all employees to be vaccinated as a condition of employment. After one of the vaccines currently being used under emergency authorization has received full approval by the Food and Drug Administration, all employees will have ten weeks to complete their vaccination regimen.

Director Caldon further reported that the Veterans Building will resume public hours beginning August 2, 2021.

Update on San Francisco Symphony's Immersive Lobby Display: Director Caldon asked Andrew Dubowski, Senior Director of Operations for the San Francisco Symphony, to provide an update on its Immersive Lobby Display project, which is nearing completion. He noted that the War Memorial department has assisted extensively with the project.

Mr. Dubowski reminded Trustees that the project was approved by the War Memorial Board at its regular meeting on September 10, 2020. He thanked James H. Jacobs, War Memorial Stage Electrician for Davies Symphony Hall, noting that he has been instrumental in the project's design and execution.

Mr. Dubowski stated that the project includes interior column washes and vertical LED strip-lights, which can be programmed to change color and to dim, creating dynamic movement that animates the hall on its interior and exterior. He shared photography and video of the newly installed lighting and announced that the system will first be used at the Symphony's Opening Gala on October 1, 2021.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Revenue, Appropriations, and Housekeeping Expenditures: Assistant Managing Director Jennifer Norris requested approval of the Revenue, Appropriations and Housekeeping Expenditures Reports for June 30, 2021. On motion of Trustee Moscone, seconded by Trustee Levin, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 21-19

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that the June 30, 2021, Revenue, Appropriations and Housekeeping Expenditures Reports are hereby approved.

Opera House Seating Update: Ms. Norris reported that the Opera House seating project has reached substantial completion. All seats are expected to be installed by Monday, July 12, 2021.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Presentors Liaison Committee: Trustee Bechtle, Chair of the Presentors Liaison Committee, reported that the Committee met prior to today's meeting with a single agenda item, which was to receive a report from the War Memorial's exclusive food and beverage service provider, Global Gourmet Catering. Chair Bechtle asked Garo Eldemir, Director of Concessions, and Melissa Gartner, General Manager, to provide Trustees a brief summary of their report.

Mr. Eldemir reported that Global Gourmet looks forward to resuming food and beverage service at the Opera House on August 21, 2021, and at Davies Symphony Hall on September 22, 2021, which will begin with bar service and grab-and-go food offerings. Mr. Eldemir stated that Global Gourmet plans to resume providing a full service experience as soon as is practical and that it will be flexible and responsive to what patrons want.

Chair Bechtle reported that Global Gourmet Catering will return to the Board with a proposed Operator's Investment Schedule detailing a capital investment plan and requests for revised menu items and pricing.

REGULAR ITEMS

Commercial Display Request: President Horn reported that in advance of today's meeting, Trustees received a presentation from the San Francisco Opera and Essential Oils regarding a proposed partnership in which Essential Oils would become the exclusive provider of hand sanitizing products for the Opera. This proposed partnership includes extensive branding opportunities for Essential Oils throughout the War Memorial Opera House, a request that is subject to the War Memorial's Commercial Display Policy, which includes approval by the War Memorial Board of Trustees and the payment of Commercial Display Fees.

Kyle Polite, Deputy Director of Development for the San Francisco Opera, stated that the Opera had formed a successful partnership with Essential Oils beginning at the drive-in opera at the Marin Center in spring 2021. He reported that Essential Oils is prepared to make an in-kind donation of hand-sanitizer lotion and individually wrapped sanitizing wipes for patron use. In response to a question, Director Caldon noted that hand-sanitizer is currently available from touchless dispensers positioned strategically throughout Opera House patron areas.

Mr. Polite introduced Maya May, Chief Marketing Officer for Essential Oils. Ms. May stated that Essential Oils is proud to partner with the Opera and has worked to identify which products would work best in the War Memorial Opera House at approximately thirty-five dispenser stands in lobby areas. Mr. Polite stated the Opera would like to have Essential Oils products available at all performances during the season.

While some Trustees expressed their approval of Essential Oils products in general, there was also concern expressed about the amount of branding this proposal would represent, which would be a large presence of commercial products throughout the venue. President Horn noted that having commercial branding for a whole season through the building would be a new endeavor for the War Memorial.

Director Caldon reiterated the request to Trustees, stating that it included whether or not to approve the request to allow the product to be placed throughout the building and whether to charge a Commercial Display Fee.

President Horn asked if this request included budget implications for the Opera. Mr. Polite responded there were no budget implications and the Opera was not receiving a financial donation.

Trustees requested an opportunity to see the proposed signage, dispenser stand and pump bottle in the Opera House before deciding. Director Caldon agreed to arrange a site visit with the Opera, Essential Oils and Board representatives in the coming weeks.

Staff Presentation on the War Memorial's Racial Equity Plan: President Horn asked War Memorial Staff Racial Equity Facilitator Sharon Walton to provide a report on the Staff Racial Equity Plan.

Ms. Walton reported that since January, the Staff Racial Equity Committee, which includes representation of all War Memorial employee divisions, as well as employees from diverse ethnic backgrounds, ages, genders, years of service, and sexuality, has worked on implementing many of the action items outlined in the Plan.

These include items on how to be more inclusive in recruiting new staff and how to attract more diverse groups of presenters and licensees. Items currently being executed focus on communication, transparency, and information sharing.

The items the Staff Committee has worked on thus far include:

- Feedback Form and Box which staff can use to anonymously share complaints, compliments, ideas, and suggestions with management.
- Quarterly All-Hands Meetings for management to report information back out to staff and where staff can ask questions.
- War Memorial Staff Newsletter to keep staff connected and to highlight holidays and cultural celebrations that are important to our diverse staff.
- Website redesign that will improve accessibility and highlight Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- Draft Staff Racial Equity Statement that states:

The San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center serves as a unique public gathering space to be used and enjoyed by all. The War Memorial is proud to employ a culturally and racially diverse staff. Cultural sensitivity and respect for others are core values of the department. We are committed to creating programs and policies to support each staff member in achieving their fullest potential.

Ms. Walton thanked Trustees for their commitment to racial equity work.

GOOD AND WELFARE

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

President Horn opened public comment by noting that public comment is an opportunity for members of the public to address 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.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, President Horn adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.



Jennifer E. Norris
Executive Secretary