

MINUTES
WAR MEMORIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Thursday, September 9, 2021

The Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met remotely in regular session on Thursday, September 9, 2021, at 2:00 p.m., President Horn presiding.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None

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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Horn reported on the passing of Trustee Wallace Levin, who had served two terms on the Board, first appointed by Mayor Edwin M. Lee and then reappointed by Mayor London N. Breed. Trustee Levin was a veteran of the Korean War, served for 17 years in the California National Guard and retired at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was a third generation San Franciscan and very proud that his family had been in San Francisco for over 100 years. Trustee Levin was a San Francisco Reserve Police Officer for 25 years and a California licensed private investigator; he served on the Veterans Affairs Commission for three decades; and took great pride in coordinating the annual Memorial Day ceremony and Veterans Day parade. He was recently a member of the Korean War Memorial Foundation.

President Horn introduced Trustee Levin's successor on the Board, former California State Senator, former San Francisco Supervisor and former Superior Court Judge, Quentin L. Kopp. Judge Kopp is a distinguished veteran of the Korean War, an attorney, and is well known for his public service both in San Francisco and the state of California. Trustee Kopp thanked President Horn for his warm welcome.

President Horn noted that with the resumption of live performances by the San Francisco Opera in the War Memorial Opera House all War Memorial venues are now open. He said the Opera opened with a production of "Tosca" just as it opened for the first time in 1932 and again when it reopened following a seismic retrofit in 1997. On behalf of the Trustees, he congratulated the San Francisco Opera on a successful opening.

President Horn reported on the retirement of Ian Robertson, Director of the San Francisco Opera Chorus for 35 years. Ian Robertson established the San Francisco Opera Chorus, one of San Francisco's finest vocal ensembles. Under Mr. Robertson's leadership, the San Francisco Opera Chorus has participated in 342 productions. President Horn reminded everyone of the 1991 Academy Award winning documentary "In the Shadow of the Stars," which focused on the Opera chorus.

President Horn reported on adjustments to Committee assignments. He stated that the newly appointed Trustee Kopp has been added to the Veterans Committee and the Budget and Finance Committee and that Trustee Wright has been added to the Veterans Committee.

President Horn reported on the retirement of George Lucas of the Performing Arts Center Tours program and expressed his gratitude to Mr. Lucas for managing the tour program since its inception 40 years ago. George has been a reliable and joyful presence at the War Memorial welcoming visitors and sharing with them the history of these landmark venues. He proposed to the Board a resolution to commemorate Mr. Lucas' retirement.

RESOLUTION NO. 21-20

- Whereas,* GEORGE F. LUCAS is retiring from managing the Performing Arts Center Tours program of the San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center after four decades of committed service; and
- Whereas,* George has been an ambassador to visitors from all over the world, sharing his unique perspective on the beauty and importance of the War Memorial Opera House, Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall, and the Veterans Building; and
- Whereas,* George scheduled and managed over ten-thousand tours in his career, welcoming with his characteristic charm and warmth no fewer than one hundred-thousand visitors to the facilities, and
- Whereas,* George is a tireless champion of the work of all War Memorial licensees, including its resident companies, the San Francisco Ballet, San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Symphony; and
- Whereas,* George recruited, trained, and nurtured sixty dedicated and talented tour volunteers over the course of forty years; and
- Whereas,* George has managed the collection of tour fees, generating more than one-hundred fifty thousand dollars in revenue to benefit the resident companies and the War Memorial; and
- Whereas,* George has imparted his passion for, and knowledge of, the history and architecture of the buildings to numerous new employees, thereby preserving the story of the War Memorial for generations to come; and
- Whereas,* George has been a constant source of knowledge, kindness and joy to visitors, licensees, patrons, and staff alike; now Therefore Be It
- Resolved,* By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco to hereby thank and commend GEORGE F. LUCAS for his outstanding and dedicated service to the San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center and to extend to him heartfelt best wishes in his new endeavors.

On invitation from President Horn, Mr. Lucas addressed Trustees, noting that operating the Performing Arts Center Tours program each week for the past 40 years was only possible due to the work of the many volunteers with whom he has had the pleasure of working. He spoke about his tailoring business in the City and said his time with the Symphony and Opera has been wonderful and that he feels at home at the War Memorial. He expressed his gratitude for the honor and thanked Trustees for the Resolution.

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Approval of Consent Agenda: Director Caldon stated that items submitted on the Consent Agenda included minutes of the July 8, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board, and Rental Requests and Rental Refund Requests for September 9, 2021. He requested their approval. On motion of Trustee Schulz, seconded by Trustee Moscone, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 21-21

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that the minutes of the July 8, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board, and Rental Requests and Rental Refund Requests for September 9, 2021, are hereby approved.

Review of Stipulated Injunction between the City and Recology:

Director Caldon reported that on March 3, 2021, the City and the San Francisco Recology companies, which provide waste removal services throughout the City including at the War Memorial, entered into a settlement agreement resolving claims related to the San Francisco Recology companies regarding the over-collection of fees assessed to San Francisco residents and businesses from July 2017 through March 2021.

Director Caldon further stated that under the stipulated injunction Recology must operate under ethics related restrictions, which means that for a period of four years ending on June 30, 2025, San Francisco Recology companies are not allowed to make a gift of any value to City employees or officers, nor to make a payment of any value at the behest of a City employee or officer. He noted that departmental compliance will not be a problem, but reminded Trustees that they are all City officers and therefore may not solicit donations from any of the San Francisco Recology companies from now until June 30, 2025.

Trustee Kopp asked if there is a reason why the War Memorial has not yet received any reimbursements from the stipulated injunction. Director Caldon thanked Trustee Kopp for his question and informed him that the matter was being investigated. He noted that Donna D’Cruz, Director of Finance & Administration, is pursuing the matter on behalf of the department. Trustee Kopp requested that Director Caldon report on this matter at the next regular meeting.

Shuttered Venue Operators Grant:

Director Caldon reported that the War Memorial applied for and received \$2.3 million from the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) fund of President Biden's American Rescue Plan. These funds may be used for the War Memorial to purchase equipment and to execute targeted facilities maintenance and repairs.

Director Caldon noted that the success of the application was a result of staff teamwork and acknowledged the contributions of all staff, and in particular, Dave Salem, War Memorial Accountant, for championing the effort and navigating the byzantine government web portal to submit the application.

Staffing Update:

Director Caldon noted that the War Memorial is extremely understaffed. Presently, the department is moving forward with hiring 12 positions, which represents nearly 20% of the overall full-time employees. He reported the focus of the next year will be rebuilding War Memorial staff and training newly hired employees.

Update on Pamela Rosenberg Bas Relief:

Director Caldon noted that the bas relief of former Opera General Director Pamela Rosenberg, which the Opera requested, and the Board discussed and approved over the course of several meetings, has been successfully installed in the Main Lobby of the War Memorial Opera House.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

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

RESOLUTION NO. 21-22

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

Opera House Seat Replacement Project Update: Ms. Norris reported that the Opera House seating project has reached substantial completion. There remain a few outstanding items to be addressed in the coming months, including completion of cupholder installation in the Grand Tier, adjusting accessible seating in Dress Circle, and providing lighting for the new wheelchair seat platforms on Orchestra Level.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Presentors Liaison Committee: President Horn reported that the Presentors Liaison Committee met with City Box Office earlier today and asked Trustee Bechtle, Chair of the Presentors Liaison Committee, to report.

Trustee Bechtle reported that the Committee heard from City Box Office regarding its request to renew its agreement. The previous agreement expired in August 2020 and was not renewed at the time due to uncertainty stemming from COVID related venue closures. The agreement grants City Box Office the exclusive right to provide box office and ticket sales services to licensees of the Herbst Theatre, with some limited exceptions.

Trustee Bechtle reported that following discussion, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the renewal of the Agreement with City Box Office for the provision of Herbst Theatre Box Office and Ticket Sales Services.

On motion of Trustee Bechtle, seconded by Trustee Wright, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 21-23

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that it hereby adopts the report and recommendation of its Presentors Liaison Committee and approves the renewal of the Agreement with City Box Office for the provision of Herbst Theatre Box Office and Ticket Sales Services for a three-year term from September 1, 2021 to August 31, 2024, with substantially the same terms and conditions as set forth in the Agreement.

Trustee Bechtle noted that the Presentors' Liaison Committee also reviewed City Box Office's proposed revision of per ticket service fees for patrons buying tickets for performances in the Herbst Theatre. The changes to the fee schedule apply only to the per ticket patron service fee. The proposed schedule creates additional fee tiers that preserve the per ticket fee at the lower price sale and increase the per ticket fee charged on higher priced tickets.

On motion of Trustee Bechtle, seconded by Trustee Lui, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 21-24

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that it hereby adopts the report and recommendation of its Presentors Liaison Committee and approves City Box Office's proposed fee schedule.

Trustee Bechtle reported the final item on the Presentors Liaison Committee's agenda was a proposal from Global Gourmet Catering to increase its pricing for concessions items. She noted that pricing increases were last approved by the Board in January 2020.

Trustee Kopp asked how the requested increase in pricing related to the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). President Horn asked Melissa Gartner, General Manager for Global Gourmet Catering, to respond. Ms. Gartner indicated there was a 10% increase across the board for concession items, which is in line with Global Gourmet Catering's expenses. Trustee Kopp responded that this was more than the increase in the CPI and asked if there were any other factors influencing the increase. Garo Eldemir, Director of Concessions for Global Gourmet Catering, responded there were increases in labor due to pandemic safety protocols and an increase in San Francisco's sales tax.

Director Caldon confirmed that the 5.4% increase in the CPI for 2020-21, combined with the increase in sales tax and increased labor expenses that are directly related to COVID, justifies the 10% increase. Following discussion, on motion of Trustee Lui and seconded by Trustee Pelosi, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 21-25

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that Global Gourmet Catering's updated pricing schedule is hereby approved.

REGULAR ITEMS

San Francisco Opera request: President Horn reported that in advance of today's meeting, Trustees received a request and presentation from the San Francisco Opera's Diversity, Equity and Community department to install artwork in the Main Lobby of the War Memorial Opera House in association with the Opera's performances of "Fidelio." President Horn invited Charles "Chip" McNeal and Ryan Marchand from the San Francisco Opera's Diversity, Equity and Community Department to present their request.

Mr. McNeal, Director of Diversity, Equity and Community, thanked Director Caldon and Assistant Managing Director Norris for working collaboratively with him. Mr. McNeal explained that to support the theme of "Fidelio," the Opera proposes to cultivate a special art exhibit with art made by people incarcerated in San Quentin State Prison. Ryan Marchand, Community Engagement Manager, explained that the Opera proposes to construct and install a three-sided wall to surround the marble table in the Main Lobby on which to display the art.

Trustee Lui stated it was a fantastic idea and proposed trying to bring this project to additional districts like the Mission and Chinatown. Trustee Wright noted she thought it was a brilliant idea and a way to connect art to reality and our past to today. Trustee Gatti said that on an artistic level the proposal is wonderful because the new production is contemporary and the idea that we are adding to that is terrific.

Following discussion, on motion of Trustee Wright and seconded by Trustee Lui, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 21-26

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that San Francisco Opera's request to install a temporary exhibit in the Opera House Main Lobby featuring artwork created by persons incarcerated at San Quentin State Prison during performances of "Fidelio," with precise placement to be approved by War Memorial staff, is hereby approved.

San Francisco Ballet request: President Horn stated Trustees received a letter of request from the San Francisco Ballet to install an exhibit to honor Artistic Director and Principal Choreographer Helgi Tomasson, who will be concluding his 37-year tenure with the Ballet, in the Grand Tier and Dress Circle lobbies of the War Memorial Opera House. The exhibit, to be curated in collaboration with the Museum of Performance and Design, will remain in place throughout the Ballet's 2021-22 season.

Following discussion, on motion of Trustee Pelosi and seconded by Trustee Moscone, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 21-26

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that it approves in concept an exhibit of photography and ephemera from the career of the San Francisco Ballet's Artistic Director and Principal Choreographer Helgi Tomasson to be developed by the Museum of Performance and Design with the stipulation that the curators return to the Trustees for final approval of exhibit details and placement.

San Francisco Fleet Week request: President Horn reported that Trustees received a letter of request from the San Francisco Fleet Week Committee requesting a waiver of rental fees for its "Honor the Fallen Concert" at the Herbst Theatre on October 6, 2021. President Horn noted that the concert is typically held at the Marines Memorial Theater, but that the venue currently remains closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

President Horn noted that a rental waiver for a patriotic purpose is consistent with the mission of the San Francisco War Memorial and that this request is for a concert that is part Fleet Week, which is a long-standing civic celebration in the City. The concert will feature performances by the 1st Marine Division band and attendees are admitted free of charge.

Trustee Myatt stated that due to his position as a member of the Board of Directors of the San Francisco Fleet Week he would abstain from voting on this item.

Following discussion, on motion of Trustee Pelosi and seconded by Trustee Lui, the following resolution was unanimously adopted with Trustee Myatt abstaining:

RESOLUTION NO. 21-27

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that it approves the request of the San Francisco Fleet Week to waive rental fees for its "Honor the Fallen Concert" at the Herbst Theatre.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Trustee Shultz mentioned an interview with the Chronicle about the new seats in the War Memorial Opera House and commended Assistant Managing Director Jennifer Norris for the elegant way in which she presented how the seats would accommodate people of all shapes and sizes. Trustee Shultz thanked Jennifer Norris and the Board for the great success of the War Memorial Opera House Seat Replacement Project.

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 pm in memory of Trustee Wallace Levin.



Jennifer E. Norris
Executive Secretary