

MINUTES
WAR MEMORIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, January 12, 2022

The Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met remotely in special session on Wednesday, January 12, 2022, at 2:00 p.m., President Horn presiding.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Trustee Wilsey

Staff Present: John Caldon, Managing Director

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Horn opened the meeting by noting the recent surge in the Omicron variant of COVID will likely extend the time before the Board will be able to hold meetings in-person again.

President Horn announced Committee assignments for 2022, which required changes due to the passing of Trustee Bechtle and Trustee Shultz. He noted that the Building Committee would remain the same with Trustee Pelosi as Chair. President Horn also noted that because Vice President Lui would now be *ex officio* on all Committees, Trustee Myatt would become Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee. He further reported that due to the loss of Trustee Bechtle, Trustee Wilsey has agreed to become Chair of the Presentors Liaison Committee. President Horn noted that because Trustee Myatt would be Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, Trustee Kopp would now be Chair of the Veterans Committee. President Horn stated the full list of Committee assignments would be distributed to Trustees after the meeting.

President Horn shared that the San Francisco Ballet has moved its opening night gala, which was scheduled to be held at the War Memorial Opera House and San Francisco City Hall on Thursday, January 27, 2022, back eight weeks to Thursday, March 24, 2022, due to the COVID omicron surge.

President Horn also reported that Tamara Rojo, the famed Spanish ballerina who heads the English National Ballet, will become the Artistic Director of the San Francisco Ballet when Helgi Tomasson retires at the end of this season. President Horn noted that Ms. Rojo will be the first woman, and only the fifth director, to lead the troupe. President Horn stated that her appointment comes after a year-long search for a successor to Helgi Tomasson, who has led the San Francisco Ballet for 37 years. On behalf of Trustees, President Horn congratulated Ms. Rojo and wished her the best of luck on her tenure with the Ballet.

Danielle St. Germain-Gordon, Interim Executive Director of the San Francisco Ballet, remarked how grateful she was to the War Memorial and to Opera House staff for their willingness to be nimble with the revised date for the Ballet's gala. She also noted how thrilled the Ballet is with the announcement of new Artistic Director Designee Tamara Rojo, who will be joining the Ballet at the end of the calendar year as Helgi Tomasson's retirement will become effective July 1, 2022. Ms. St. Germain-Gordon stated that the Ballet is currently working on a transition plan to ensure suitable coverage on the artistic team and noted that Trustees will have an opportunity to meet her during one of her visits to San Francisco this year.

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Approval of Consent Agenda: Director Caldon stated that items submitted on the Consent Agenda included: minutes of the December 9, 2021 meeting of the Board; Rental Requests for January 12, 2022; December 2021 Housekeeping Expenditure Reports; and the Resolution adopting findings under Assembly Bill 361 to continue remote meetings. Mr. Caldon requested their approval. On motion of Vice President Lui, seconded by Trustee Moscone, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 22-01

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that the minutes of the December 9, 2021 meeting of the Board; Rental Requests for January 12, 2022; December 2021 Housekeeping Expenditure Reports; and the Resolution adopting findings under AB 361 to continue remote meetings, are hereby approved.

COVID Update: Director Caldon provided an update on the recent Omicron surge of COVID. He noted that the War Memorial has seen an increase in COVID exposures. Prior to Omicron surging in December, Mr. Caldon stated there were approximately 20 exposures on campus during the pandemic. Mr. Caldon stated that staff is now receiving on average notice of approximately two to three daily COVID exposures across War Memorial venues. Mr. Caldon noted that this is impacting the War Memorial on all fronts: back of house, front of house, and engineering. He shared that the good news is that most people recover quickly, and with the CDC reducing the isolation time recommendation from 10 days to 5 days, staff is returning to work more quickly. Mr. Caldon noted that the increase in cases is impacting security and engineering schedules, creating some challenges.

President Horn inquired about whether the reported exposures are due to people being infected in War Memorial facilities. Director Caldon stated that because it is protected medical information, the resident companies do not share specifics regarding who has been infected or how they became infected. For War Memorial staff, he noted that the War Memorial performs contact tracing with anyone who reports they are feeling symptomatic or has received a positive COVID test result. Vice President Lui asked if there had been cancellations in the Herbst or Green Room or other events due to the surge. Mr. Caldon replied that booking has been steady, outside of a postponement and a few inquiries into the War Memorial's cancellation policies. Mr. Caldon also pointed out that there were no refund requests on the consent agenda for the current meeting, and there have not been a wave of cancellations or postponements on par with the early stages of the pandemic in 2020.

Vice President Lui announced the annual Chinese New Year concert will be happening at Davies Symphony Hall, but that the dinner celebration and gala have been cancelled because of the current surge. Mr. Caldon noted that at the Mayor's Department Head Meeting earlier that morning Dr. Colfax stated that this wave should peak at the end of the month and taper off in February. Director Caldon reported that Dr. Colfax was also convinced that we are moving into an endemic stage, in which COVID would be with us for "quite some time," and that we should anticipate periodic outbreaks going forward.

Director Caldon also reported that the definition of a "mega-event" was revised by the State and the change impacts the War Memorial. He noted that mega-events were previously defined as 1,000 or more people indoors, or 5,000 or more people outdoors, which did not impact Veterans Building venues. Mr. Caldon reported that California had reduced this threshold to 500 people, so the "mega-event" category now applies to the Herbst Theatre. Director Caldon stated that the War Memorial will begin treating events in the Herbst Theatre, Wilsey Center, and the Green Room per the mega-event guidelines to minimize confusion. Director Caldon noted that the stricter guidelines involve requiring vaccinations in Veterans Building venues and boosters will be required starting February 1, 2022. Director Caldon stated that the new requirements do increase complexity for front of house staff tasked with confirming that patrons are current with vaccinations.

Trustee Kopp inquired about a rental request from the Human Rights Commission. He stated that it seems odd to him that the Human Rights Commission can meet in-person, while the Board meeting today is remote instead of in-person. Director Caldon noted that the Human Rights Commission event is a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration, and not a meeting of a public body, so it is not subject to the same restrictions to which public meetings of boards and commissions are currently subject per Mayoral Proclamation.

Assistant Managing Director Search: Director Caldon reported that the job description for the Assistant Managing Director position would be posted mid-January. He noted that the job description was created with assistance from the War Memorial Human Resources team and that it had been given to a racial equity review per the War Memorial's Racial Equity Action Plan. Mr. Caldon stated that the job description itself comports with all City and County requirements and will be shared with Trustees following the meeting so that they may share it with their networks.

Director Caldon noted the job description is very extensive, as the City requires many elements be included. He also noted that President Horn had reviewed and approved the job description. Mr. Caldon shared that the application process will open on Friday, January 14, 2022, and be kept open until January 28, at a minimum. He also noted that if adequate responses have not been received by that time, the City does allow for the posting to be kept open beyond that date. Director Caldon also noted that there is a process outlined in the department's Racial Equity Action Plan to distribute the posting to an extensive list of local organizations that support a diverse array of communities. Director Caldon expressed his hope that there would be a good candidate pool.

Finally, Mr. Caldon noted that included in the Trustees' Board meeting packets, was a revised meeting schedule for 2022. He pointed out that the biggest change was the scheduling for today's meeting, which was moved to accommodate Trustee Shultz's memorial service, which was unfortunately postponed due to the Omicron surge, and that the City Attorney advised that the Budget and Finance Committee meeting schedule be revised to comport with the City ordinance requiring two public hearings regarding the budget.

GOOD AND WELFARE

President Horn congratulated the Ballet for having successfully completed their Nutcracker run, understanding that with the current health situation, there had been trepidation all around. He noted that the Ballet did not miss one performance and that he looked forward to the upcoming season.

Trustee Pelosi inquired about how the Ballet plans to introduce the new Ballet Artistic Director. Danielle St. Germain-Gordon, Interim Executive Director for the San Francisco Ballet, noted that Tamara Rojo will in San Francisco at the end of January, should travel be allowed. She noted that Ms. Rojo plans to be in town on a semi-regular basis and that there will be a plan to introduce her to the Board of Trustees at an appropriate time.

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 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 415-554-6377 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.

Trustee Myatt noted that from 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. there would be an historical presentation in the Veterans Gallery regarding African American veterans. He stated that he toured it and the curator of the show has a very interesting story. He reported that the curator had been researching his relatives and found he had a relative who was in the Civil War, and then discovered that he had a family member in every campaign that the US has had waged since the American Revolution. Trustee Myatt encouraged Trustees to visit the exhibit, which will be in place for a month.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, President Horn adjourned the meeting at 2:26 p.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Caldon". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

John Caldon
Managing Director