

**MINUTES**  
**WAR MEMORIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**BUILDING COMMITTEE / SPECIAL MEETING**

**Tuesday, February 11, 2020**

The Building Committee of the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 11, 2020, in the Trustees' Board Room, War Memorial Opera House. Building Committee Chair, Trustee Pelosi presided.

**ROLL CALL**

Roll call was taken. A quorum was not established. Per prior guidance from the Office of the City Attorney, Committee Members could hear "information-only" items outlined on the Agenda but could not vote on any issues. Discussion of these items was permissible, as was Public Comment, but action could not be taken.

Committee Members Present: Chair Pelosi, Trustee Bechtle, Trustee Levin and President Horn, Ex officio

Committee Members Absent: Vice-chair Gatti, Trustee Shultz and Trustee Wilsey

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

Chair Pelosi noted that due to the lack of quorum there are several action items on the agenda that will not be heard.

**Replacement of Pittosporum Trees at the Opera House and Veterans Building:**

Chair Pelosi stated the committee would hear about the status of the trees around the Opera House and Veterans Building. He invited Roy Leggitt an arborist from Tree Management Experts, an arborist consulting firm, to speak about their evaluation of the health, structural defects, and useful life expectancy of the War Memorial's Pittosporum Trees. A grove of these trees is located at the corners of the War Memorial Opera House and Veterans Building along Van Ness Avenue, and additional trees are located near the corner of Grove and Franklin Streets. The arborist found that the grove is declining, with thinning canopies and yellowing foliage. This indicates that their health is failing, and they have reached the end of their useful lives. Mr. Leggitt stated that since their initial report was issued in May 2017, the health of the trees has continued to decline and today five of the 16 trees are now dead. These dead trees represent a safety hazard.

Mr. Leggitt stated that removal and replacement of the trees is a two-part process. He recommended removing them now for aesthetic and safety reasons as they are at risk of falling down. After the trees are removed the soil will need time to recover and then new trees can be planted. He noted that the Pittosporum trees are dying due to the presence of a specific pathogen in the soil. The new tree species should be selected from a list of plants that are tolerant to the pathogen and won't be negatively affected by its presence in the soil.

Chair Pelosi stated that in the absence of a quorum, no action may be taken on this item. Staff indicated that given the present risk to the public it would act to remove the trees promptly.

**Veterans Commemoration Committee request to install banners in Veterans Lobby commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the end of WWII and the signing of the UN Charter.**

Chair Pelosi stated that in the absence of a quorum, this item would be continued to a future meeting of the War Memorial Board or the Committee.

**Veterans Commemoration Committee Request to install signage on the second floor of the Veterans Building to guide patrons to the Veterans Commemoration Committee exhibits on the 2nd Floor.**

Chair Pelosi stated that in the absence of a quorum, this item would be continued to a future meeting of the War Memorial Board or the Committee.

**San Francisco Opera's request to approve the design of the bas relief of former Opera General Director Pamela Rosenberg for the Opera House main lobby:**

Chair Pelosi stated that today's agenda includes the review, consideration and adoption of a recommendation to the War Memorial Board of Trustees on the San Francisco Opera's request for design approval of the bas relief of former General Director Pamela Rosenberg, which would be installed in the Opera House main lobby.

While the lack of quorum prohibits the committee from adopting a recommendation, they did hear from Matthew Shilvock, General Director of the San Francisco Opera, who shared with them an in-progress photo of artist Bertrand Freiseleben's mold. The mold features Pamela Rosenberg seated and gazing into a mirror which, when the mold is complete, will reflect her image. Mr. Shilvock noted that the final piece, which is the same size as the bas relief of Lotfi Mansouri, will be cast in bronze, as is the Mansouri piece. As previously approved by the Board of Trustees, it will hang on the column adjacent to the Mansouri piece at the north end of the Opera House main lobby.

Chair Pelosi thanked Mr. Shilvock for the update on the project and indicated that this item would be continued to a future meeting of the War Memorial Board or the Committee.

**Update on the Opera House ADA Barrier Removal and Seat Replacement Project:**

Chair Pelosi noted that the Update on the Opera House ADA Barrier Removal and Seat Replacement Project was an information only item. He asked staff to give the Trustees present an update on the project. John Caldon, Managing Director, stated that during the spring and summer of 2021, all seats in the Orchestra, Grand Tier and Dress Circle sections of the War Memorial Opera House will be replaced, improving comfort and sightlines in the auditorium. The creation of new accessible seating areas is also included in this final phase, furthering our commitment to maximizing accessibility for all patrons.

Mr. Caldon stated this is the third and final phase of the seating upgrade initiative, which began in summer 2013 with the replacement of chairs in the Box level. He noted that Phase 2 included the replacement of all Balcony and Balcony Circle seats in summer 2015. The majority of this work is being funded by proceeds accumulated from a facility fee added to tickets sold by the San Francisco Ballet and the San Francisco Opera. The City of San Francisco is funding additional architecture and design services related to the accessible seating portion of the project.

Mr. Caldon made an informational presentation about the final phase of the project:

Project Goals:

- Improve patron experience by providing greater comfort through use of better support and increased comfort from denser foam, more legroom with higher mounted seat bottoms, and wider seats.
- Improved Sightlines by staggering center aisle seating, which will create better stagger throughout center section of the Orchestra
- New Wheelchair seating, which will create more dispersed seating areas with new platforms in the left and right sections of the Orchestra. This increases our compliance with the ADA requirements while better serving patrons who require the accessible features of a wheelchair platform.

Project Partners:

- Planning Team: War Memorial; San Francisco Ballet and San Francisco Opera
- Vendor Partners: The Shalleck Collaborative; DPW Bureau of Architecture & Threshold Acoustics

**Project Funding:**

- Facility Fee Funds collected by SF Ballet and SF Opera will account for most expenses.
- War Memorial will fund a minimal amount of DPW work to create permit drawings and usher them through the permitting process.
- Anticipated total project cost: \$3.7 million

**Seat Manufacturer:**

- DuCharme Seating selected as seating manufacturer following a Request for Qualifications Process
- Known for their ability to work collaboratively to produce a custom chair appropriate for historic settings
- Breadth of experience in world class venues
- Excellent reputation and references
- Company based in Montreal with manufacturing in Canada

**Next Steps:**

- Seat design: select attributes
- Center aisle: end standard, lighting, carpet stripe
- Floor Surface: reflective surface between rows; carpet in aisles
- Grand Tier and Dress Circle: seat design and seating lay-out

**Milestones:**

- Planning Team Review Seat Sample: mid-April to early May 2020
- War Memorial Board update & recommendations: May 9, 2020
- Final Seat Sample Review: July 2020
- War Memorial Board approval final sample: August 13, 2020

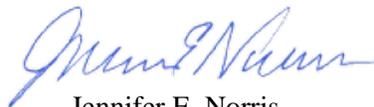
Following the presentation, Chair Pelosi thanked Mr. Caldon and stated his sense that the Building Committee would like to move forward by looking at samples of fabric and wood stains.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Pelosi called for any general public comment on items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Committee, but which did not appear on the agenda. There being none, public comment was closed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Building Committee, Chair Pelosi adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.



Jennifer E. Norris  
Executive Secretary