

**MINUTES**  
**WAR MEMORIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
**Thursday, January 9, 2025**

The Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met in regular session on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at 2:05 p.m., in the Trustees' Board Room, War Memorial Opera House, President Wilsey presiding.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: President Wilsey, Vice President Horn, Trustee Fisher, Trustee Gatti, Trustee Kopp, Trustee Lam, Trustee Makras, Trustee Muduroglu, Trustee Pelosi, Trustee Rocco, and Trustee Wright

Absent: Trustee Newstat

Staff Present: Kate Sofis, Managing Director; Rob Levin, Assistant Managing Director; and Francesca Cicero, Board Secretary

Board Secretary Cicero made an opening announcement related to remote public comment. She stated that remote public comment, except as necessary for disability accommodations, has been discontinued. She noted that members of the public are invited to observe the meeting in-person or online, but only members of the public attending the meeting in-person will have an opportunity to provide public comment. She stated that no one online will be permitted to unmute themselves or present at the Board Meeting.

Requests for accommodation for remote public comment should be made at least 48 hours prior to the meeting, by email or voicemail (WarMemorialBoard@sfgov.org or 415-554-6377).

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On motion of Trustee Gatti, seconded by Trustee Muduroglu, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

**RESOLUTION NO. 25-01**

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco, the minutes of the December 12, 2024, Regular meeting of the Board are hereby approved.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Wilsey congratulated Mayor Daniel Lurie on his inauguration on behalf of the entire Board and expressed eagerness to collaborate with the new administration on advancing arts and culture in San Francisco. She also welcomed two new trustees: Trustee Lyna Lam and Trustee Farah Makras. President Wilsey noted that Trustee Lam has founded her own business, has been a dedicated advocate for the Khmer community and acknowledged her significant contributions to education and cultural preservation. President Wilsey also recognized Trustee Makras as a dedicated civic leader, including her support of numerous cultural and educational initiatives in San Francisco, including her work with organizations like the San Francisco Opera and the Asian Art Museum. President Wilsey stated that the San Francisco Ballet's Opening Night Gala will be held on January 22, 2025, at the War Memorial Opera House and San Francisco City Hall, and the first performance of *Manon* will begin on January 24, 2025. She announced the new Committee assignments.

**MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Managing Director Kate Sofis reported that the Mayor's office has directed all City Departments to reduce their

departmental budgets' general fund support by 15 percent, which is approximately 1.5 million dollars for the War Memorial. She explained that this figure is less than 15 percent of the War Memorial's total budget, due to the special trust department status as a department that also earns income from rental of the venues. She also reported that the Mayor has instituted a hiring freeze City-wide, with an exception for hiring around public safety, and has paused all new programs that require general fund support. She stated she would confirm with the Mayor's office that the Evolve contract for patron screening system would be able to be finalized in light of this directive.

Michael Petrelis gave public comment on the impact of reductions in budget on remote public comment.

### **ASSISTANT MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Assistant Managing Director Rob Levin explained that the current revenue numbers at the fiscal half-year point are at 49 percent of budget and is confident that the department is on track with regards to revenue. He also pointed out that January bookings are typically lower after the holiday season. Director Levin notified the Board that Global Gourmet is working with the Ballet on special food pairings for the upcoming *Manon* performances.

### **BOARD SECRETARY REPORT**

Board Secretary Cicero reported that the Trustees completed the required Department of Human Resources training and the Ethics trainings and Form 700s will be due in April.

### **COMMITTEE REPORT**

President Wilsey invited the Chair of the Presentors Liaison Committee, Vice President Horn to present to the Board.

**Presentors Liaison Committee Report:** Vice President Horn explained that the Presentors Liaison Committee considered a request from the San Francisco Symphony to install DipJar fundraising devices in Davies Symphony Hall. Following discussion, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Board approve the Symphony's request for a six-month pilot program involving four DipJar donation kiosks, contingent upon the approval of the kiosk signage and placement by War Memorial staff, and the agreement to submit monthly progress reports to assess the success of the program. Rachel Kirley, Deputy Director, Development and Individual Giving, from the Symphony, explained the program is designed to build the community of donors, rather than directly receive large gifts through these devices, and they intend to begin the program in September. She also acknowledged that they would receive donor information primarily to thank donors for their gift, and assured the Board that any information is securely maintained.

Michael Petrelis made public comment thanking President Wilsey for her recognition of small donors.

Following discussion, and on motion of Vice President Horn, seconded by Trustee Pelosi, the following recommendation was unanimously adopted:

### **RESOLUTION NO. 25-02**

RESOLVED, That the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco approve the Symphony's request for a six-month pilot program involving four DipJar donation kiosks, contingent upon the approval of the kiosk signage and placement by War Memorial staff, and the agreement to submit monthly progress reports to the Board of Trustees.

### **REGULAR ITEMS**

**Marketing Presentation:** President Wilsey invited the marketing consultant, Maureen Futtner of Futtner & Associates, to present to the Board on the recent marketing efforts and social media campaigns developed to promote the War Memorial venues. Ms. Futtner reported the current landscape in San Francisco in the post-Covid

world for entertainment includes competing with both at-home entertainment and large-scale outdoor events. She explained that some of the marketing goals include raising brand awareness of the War Memorial, elevating outside licensees of the buildings, while also amplifying the resident companies, and driving interest in rentals of the building from new and diverse licensees, which can lead to new audiences for the venues. She explained that the initial strategy heavily involves social media, and includes onsite signage, partnerships, memberships, and driving traffic to the War Memorial website. She noted that traffic to the website has increased 68 percent, and the social media reach has increased 450 percent. Ms. Futtner addressed questions about how to reach new and younger audiences through social media influencers. Director Sofis briefly mentioned the re-named Marketing and Community Engagement Committee and that they hope to explore different methods of business development to attract different licensees, while simultaneously supporting the resident companies. Trustees mentioned the lack of awareness of venues like the Green Room and potential partnerships to explore. President Wilsey noted there seemed to be a lot of opportunity and welcomed input on the subject.

### **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

### **GOOD AND WELFARE**

There being no good and welfare, President Wilsey closed good and welfare.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

C.J. Reeves, Chair of the American Legion War Memorial Commission, presented information on the current exhibition in the Veterans Gallery in the Veterans Building regarding veterans who survived breast cancer. Michael Petrelis made public comment regarding the Mayor's transition team occupying space in the Veterans Building. There being no further public comment, President Wilsey closed public comment.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, President Wilsey adjourned the meeting at 3:11 p.m.



Francesca Cicero  
Board Secretary