

MINUTES
WAR MEMORIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Thursday, January 11, 2024

The Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met in regular session on Thursday, January 11, 2024, at 2:11 p.m., in the Trustees' Board Room, War Memorial Opera House, President Horn presiding.

ROLL CALL

Present: President Horn, Vice President Wilsey, Trustee Kopp, Trustee Lui, Trustee Muduroglu, Trustee Pelosi, Trustee Wilsey, and Trustee Wright

Absent: Trustee Fisher, Trustee Gatti, Trustee Newstat, and Trustee Rocco

Staff Present: Kate Sofis, Managing Director; Rob Levin, Assistant Managing Director; 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).

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Horn opened the meeting congratulating the San Francisco Ballet on its successful Nutcracker season. He shared that the Ballet's Opening Night Gala, is scheduled at the War Memorial Opera House and San Francisco City Hall on Wednesday, January 24th, with a theme of *Pandora: Curiosity Unveiled*. He wished the San Francisco Ballet and Tamara Rojo a successful upcoming season, with the first performance of *Mere Mortals*, beginning on Friday, January 26, 2024.

President Horn also announced that Peter Pastreich, who was Executive Director of the San Francisco Symphony for thirty years, has offered to give the Trustees a tour and historical perspective of how Davies became a part of the War Memorial. He suggested that at 1pm, immediately before the March 14th Regular Meeting of the Board, Mr. Pastreich present to the Trustees on the relationship between the San Francisco Symphony and the War Memorial, to provide context and information to both newer Trustees, as well as those who have been on the Board for many years. He stated that this tour would also be publicly noticed as a Special Meeting of the Board.

President Horn also distributed the Committee assignments for the 2024 calendar year to the Trustees.

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Managing Director Kate Sofis stated that staff has been very busy preparing for this year's budget cycle. She noted that it will be a challenging year with all departments being asked to cut 10% from their operating budgets, which for the War Memorial is \$660K, plus an additional \$330K of cuts for contingency, in case the City's economic

position changes mid-year. She explained that staff has been diligently working to identify all revenue opportunities, as the departmental budget comes from a combination of revenue and General Fund monies. She stated that the next step is to present the budget to the Budget and Finance Committee, being newly chaired by Trustee Wright, in the first of two required meetings: first, Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at 2pm and then again on Thursday, February 8, 2024. Director Sofis noted that once the budget is passed by this Board, then the approval process with the Mayor's Budget Office begins in late February, where those cuts are accepted or rejected. She stated the final phase is the budget is presented before the Board of Supervisors in May/June. She also explained that elevator maintenance remains an important capital priority, for safety, ADA compliance, and patron experience of the venues. President Horn noted that the War Memorial is one of the only City Departments that brings in its own revenue, not only within its own complex, but also as an economic driver to the surrounding neighborhood.

Finally, Director Sofis announced to the Board that in collaboration with the resident companies, they have increased coverage of perimeter security during performances, along with expansion of a pilot program for escorts in collaboration with the Civic Center Community Benefit District Ambassador program to help patrons walk to public transit and parking lots. She also explained that security expert, GFIS, would be doing an comprehensive safety and security assessment of the buildings and demonstrates the collaboration that the War Memorial and resident companies have been undertaking together. Director Sofis then announced that the City has a new Controller, Greg Wagner, who comes most recently from the Department of Public Health.

ASSISTANT MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Approval of Consent Agenda: Assistant Managing Director Levin stated that items submitted on the Consent Agenda included: the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of December 14, 2023; Rental Requests for January 11, 2024; and the Revenue, Appropriations and Housekeeping Expenditures reports for December 2023.

Following discussion, on motion of Trustee Wilsey, seconded by Trustee Newstat, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 24-01

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco, the minutes of Regular Board Meeting of December 14, 2023; Rental Requests for January 11, 2024; and the Revenue, Appropriations and Housekeeping Expenditures reports for December 2023, are hereby approved.

Assistant Managing Director also updated the Board that The Green Room wedding bookings for the upcoming summer have increased from a previous count of zero to four confirmed, so the recent price change seems to have made a difference.

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

San Francisco Opera's Proposed Bas Relief Commemorating David Gockley (SF Opera's Sixth General Director): President Horn noted that there were two items on the agenda at the Building Committee meeting on January 11, 2024, and invited Chair Pelosi to address the Board.

Chair Pelosi stated that the Building Committee received an update from the San Francisco Opera on the bas relief sculpture commemorating David Gockley, San Francisco Opera's Sixth General Director. Chair Pelosi reminded the Board that the Board approved the request from the San Francisco Opera seeking to install a bas relief sculpture of San Francisco Opera's sixth General Director, David Gockley, in the lobby of the War Memorial Opera House, as well agreed on the proposed location in the Opera House Lobby. He stated that Jordan Amman from the San Francisco Opera presented the final design of the bas relief to the Committee, who voted unanimously to recommend approval of the final bas relief design.

Following discussion, on motion of Vice President Wilsey, seconded by Trustee Muduroglu, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 24-02

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco to adopt the Building Committee's recommendation and the San Francisco Opera's final bas relief design commemorating David Gockley as submitted is hereby approved.

Request from San Francisco Symphony to begin entitlement process for possible future improvements to Davies Symphony Hall: Chair Pelosi stated the Building Committee also received an update from the San Francisco Symphony on the entitlement process with the City for potential modifications to Davies Symphony Hall. He noted that the Symphony is looking to redesign the lobby and public spaces, including the auditorium, backstage and support spaces, to create more connection with the artists and provide a flexible, open, welcoming and accessible space for the public. Matthew Spivey, CEO of the San Francisco Symphony, and the architect, Mark Cavagnero of Mark Cavagnero Associates, presented to the Board on the updated design that will soon go in front of the San Francisco Arts Commission, as part of the Civic Design Review process, focusing on increasing connection to the greater community, making the space more open and inviting. Mr. Cavagnero stated that the design preserves the emotional memory of the 45 years of musicianship having taken place, while also modernizing the building and bringing it into the 21st century. Mr. Spivey noted that the entitlement process should be completed prior to September 2025.

REGULAR ITEMS

None.

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

None.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Trustee Pelosi remarked on the recent dedication of the street in front of Davies Symphony Hall as "MTT Way" and that he will conduct his final three performances at the end of January. There being no further good and welfare, President Horn closed good and welfare.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There being no public comment, President Horn closed public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Horn adjourned the meeting at 2:49 p.m.



Francesca Cicero
Board Secretary