

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

The Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met in regular session on Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 2:00 p.m., in the Trustees' Board Room, War Memorial Opera House, President Horn presiding.

ROLL CALL

Present: President Horn, Trustee Fisher, Trustee Gatti, Trustee Kopp, Trustee Newstat, Trustee Pelosi and Trustee Wright

Absent: Vice President Wilsey, Trustee Lui, Trustee Muduroglu, and Trustee Rocco

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).

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Horn had no report for this meeting.

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Managing Director Kate Sofis stated that there is a security steering committee that includes the War Memorial and the resident companies, who have engaged an outside security firm, GSIS, to evaluate the security at all the War Memorial buildings. She reported that the security consultant would be attending the May Board meeting to discuss these security recommendations. Board Secretary Cicero confirmed that there is an exception in the Brown Act to hold a closed session to discuss security matters. Director Sofis also announced that effective this week, beverages can be brought into the Herbst Theatre, making all venues consistent to enhance the patron experience and assist with beverage sales.

ASSISTANT MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Assistant Managing Director Rob Levin started with acknowledgement of the Booking Team, including Booking Team Supervisor, Emma Logan, training all the new staff on the team, and Elizabeth Dreeseon, the Booking Manager for The Green Room for bringing in 16 new events to The Green Room since the last Board meeting. He also reported on a new licensee for three performances in Davies Symphony Hall and 7 new bookings in the Herbst Theatre. Director Levin also noted six confirmed weddings, and an additional 8 holds and 12 site visits for The

Green Room, which indicates a positive trajectory for weddings in the venue, resulting from the price decrease. He also pointed out that with 9-10 months of the fiscal year in the books, almost all revenue numbers are hitting the target of 80-83% of projected earned revenue, outside of The Green Room.

Approval of Consent Agenda: Assistant Managing Director Levin stated that items submitted on the Consent Agenda included the minutes of the March 14, 2024 Regular meeting of the Board; Rental Requests for April 11, 2024; and Housekeeping Expenditure Reports for March 2024.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 24-08

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco, the minutes of March 14, 2024 Regular meeting of the Board; Rental Requests for April 11, 2024; and Housekeeping Expenditure Reports for March 2024, are hereby approved.

COMMITTEE REPORT

San Francisco Ballet and Opera Proposal to use of Accrued and Future “Facility Fee” funds for upgrades to automatic rigging system in the Opera House: President Horn stated that the Presentors Liaison Committee met earlier to consider the proposal from the San Francisco Ballet and Opera to approve use of current and future accrued “Facility Fee” funds, related to upgrading the automatic rigging and associated theatrical systems in the Opera House and to dedicate future collected “Facility Fees” to the project to cover expected expenditures. He noted that the Committee recommended to the Board that it adopt the proposal from the Opera and Ballet as submitted. Director Sofis explained that the automatic rigging and associated theatrical systems are crucial systems in the Opera House, involving the art of moving things onstage using motors and computers: including curtains, scenery, lighting bridges, and people. She stated that the systems critically need replacement now, due to the obsolescence of the current system by the vendor.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 24-09

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco, to adopt the recommendation of the Presentors Liaison Committee and approve the request from the San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Ballet to use accrued and future “Facility Fees” towards the upgrades to the automatic rigging and associated theatrical systems in the Opera House as presented, is hereby approved.

Proposal to Extend Collection of “Facility Fee” to Outside Licensees of the Opera House: President Horn stated the Presentors Liaison Committee also recommended approval to begin collecting “Facility Fees” from all outside licensees who rent the Opera House.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 24-10

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco, to adopt the recommendation of the Presentors Liaison Committee and approve staff’s proposal as presented to begin collecting “Facility Fees” from all outside licensees who rent the Opera House, is hereby approved.

Global Gourmet Catering Contract Terms: President Horn stated that the Presentors Liaison Committee recommended that the Full Board adopt staff’s proposal regarding the renewal agreement with Global Gourmet Catering, and to direct staff to negotiate the final contract with Global Gourmet, to begin on January 1, 2025, as submitted. Director Sofis noted that the recommendations that staff have proposed are the result of a working group collaborating for the last nine months, including Global Gourmet and the resident companies. She stated that the first category of changes is how to set aside funds for improvements and upgrades. Director Sofis explained that the proposal involved combining two overlapping mechanisms currently in place into one single Food and Beverage Improvement Fund, calculated at 6% of gross receipts, to be paid monthly. She stated this would include releasing Global Gourmet from the remaining \$240K in capital expenditure expense obligations from the previous contract, noting that the new calculations should provide the Department with more investment funds moving forward on a regular basis. She noted the second is to have the current contract end on December 31, 2024, one month early to coincide with the calendar year. Director Sofis also noted that all three resident companies are seeking ways to provide patrons with experiences that combine a performance with a special food and beverage “experience” before, during, or after the performance, like extending regular concession hours, to concessions with a themed specialty food or cocktails. She stated that the changes to the current contract would allow for a third category of resident company events and activations, a hybrid model between concessions and one-off catering events. She also clarified that two annual outside caterer exemptions allotted to each resident company cover all activations/sub-events for the same event, no matter how many spaces or buildings are used, which allow resident companies to save costs by engaging a single caterer for their large-scale events. Trustee Kopp asked about whether the contract was competitively bid and President Horn responded that it was. President Horn commended staff and Director Sofis on the collaboration.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 24-11

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco, to adopt the recommendation of the Presentors Liaison Committee and approve staff’s proposal regarding the renewal agreement with Global Gourmet Catering, and direct staff to negotiate the final contract with Global Gourmet on these terms, to begin January 1, 2025, as submitted, is hereby approved.

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

None.

GOOD AND WELFARE

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ann Lemberg asked the Board to reconsider the placement of the World War history banners on the second floor of the Veterans Building to move them back to the first floor. There being no further public comment, President Horn closed public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Horn adjourned the meeting at 2:32 p.m.

Francesca Cicero
Board Secretary