

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

The Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met in regular session on Thursday, July 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 Kopp, Trustee Lui, Trustee Muduroglu, Trustee Newstat, Trustee Pelosi, and Trustee Rocco

Absent: Vice President Wilsey, Trustee Gatti, and Trustee Wright

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 congratulated the San Francisco Opera on the conclusion of its summer season and looks forward to the opening gala of the 102th season on September 6, 2024. He also reported there would not be a Board of Trustees regular meeting scheduled for August.

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Managing Director Kate Sofis noted that the upcoming John Legend concert at the Symphony is almost sold out, and they will be piloting the Ovation Lounge in the Wattis Room for that event. She also reported that in June the Department successfully defended its budget in front of the Board of Supervisors. She acknowledged and congratulated the Booking Team for meeting the revenue targets for the year. Director Sofis reported on a few improvements to the buildings, including a renovation to the North Stage Door entrance, an upgraded soundsystem in the Herbst Theatre, and a new point-of-sale system. She also noted that the Frameline Film Festival recently presented sold out screenings in the Herbst Theatre. There was public comment by Michael Petrelis requesting information about the Frameline Festival in the Herbst Theatre.

ASSISTANT MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Assistant Managing Director Rob Levin introduced the Technical Team to the Trustees and thanked his team for all the good work they do on behalf of the Department. He reported that the revenue targets for the fiscal year were at 111% of the budget.

Approval of Consent Agenda: Assistant Managing Director Levin stated that items submitted on the Consent Agenda included the minutes of the June 13, 2024, Presentors Liaison Committee meeting, the minutes of the June 13, 2024, Regular meeting of the Board; Rental Requests for July 11, 2024; and Housekeeping Expenditure Reports for June 2024. There was public comment by Michael Petrelis thanking Trustee Pelosi for his service and stating the Board of the Symphony is not doing enough to retain Esa-Pekka Salonen.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 24-15

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco, the minutes of the June 13, 2024, Presentors Liaison Committee meeting; the minutes of the June 13, 2024, Regular meeting of the Board; Rental Requests for July 11, 2024; and Housekeeping Expenditure Reports for June 2024, are hereby approved.

REGULAR ITEMS

Proposition D & Ethics Commission Legislation: President Horn invited Director Sofis to address the Board. She reported that the City Attorney indicated it has a basis of support to allow members of the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial to concurrently be members of the boards of resident companies and will be drafting a formal opinion reflecting this. She noted that Trustees must recuse themselves from any vote involving a resident company that they sit on the board of. President Horn stated that the obligation by the City to keep and maintain the buildings, as reflected in the Trust, is paramount. Director Sofis noted that the Department has received a formal opinion by the Ethics Commission that there will be one ticket available to Trustees to observe the operations of the venue at a performance. Director Sofis also explained that the consent agenda would be changing at the meetings moving forward. She noted that the monthly rental requests that have been included are actually bookings that have already been made and contracted by the Booking Team, consistent with City rules. She noted similarly that the Board approves the Departmental budget every year in February, and the monthly Departmental expenditures are made according to that budget, rather than needing to be approved by the Board monthly. She stated that the Department would continue to share this information with the Board every month, but would not need to be voted on. She explained that the Board would continue to vote on approval of the minutes every month. Board Secretary Cicero announced the Ethics Commission would be offering voluntary virtual trainings about Prop. D over the next few months. Michael Petrelis gave public comment on providing free tickets to San Francisco residents who have been in the City for more than five years. Laura Leibowitz provided public comment inquiring about the application for renovations to the Symphony Hall and what organization was driving that process.

Consideration of Renewal of the Agreement between the War Memorial Board of Trustees and the American Legion War Memorial Commission: President Horn stated that the agreement between the War Memorial and the American Legion War Memorial Commission regarding payments to the Commission from Herbst Theatre revenues is set to expire on December 31, 2024. He referred the matter to the Veterans Committee and requested that the Committee meet to review and consider approval of a renewal agreement prior to the December Board meeting.

Consideration of American Legion War Memorial Commission's Request for Rental Fee Waiver for Pancake Breakfast: President Horn stated that Trustees received a letter from the American Legion War Memorial Commission requesting a waiver of rental fees to present a Labor Day pancake breakfast on August 31, 2024, open to veterans and members of the public free of charge. He invited CJ Reeves, Chairman of the ALWMC to present the request to Trustees. Mr. Reeves noted that California Friends of Veterans have donated all the pancake supplies and all traffic issues have been addressed with staff, in order to hold the event outdoors in the parking lot of the Veterans Building. Assistant Managing Director Levin clarified that the request is for permission to hold the event in the parking lot as well as a waiver of the rental fee.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 24-16

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco, that the American Legion War Memorial Commission's request to waive rental fees for the back parking lot of the Veterans Building to hold a Labor Day Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, August 31, 2024, from 8am to noon, is hereby approved.

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

None.

GOOD AND WELFARE

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Petrelis made public comment requesting the Board send a letter to the Symphony Board regarding budget constraints being put on Maestro Salonen. Trustee Kopp stated that he did not think it would be appropriate for the Board to interfere in a personnel matter with the Symphony's board. Director Sofis noted her one-year anniversary at the War Memorial was upcoming and thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve and looks forward to the partnership for many years to come. There being no further public comment, President Horn closed public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President Horn adjourned the meeting at 2:41 p.m.



Francesca Cicero
Board Secretary