

MINUTES
WAR MEMORIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Thursday, September 11, 2025

The Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met in regular session on Thursday, September 11, 2025, at 2:00 p.m., in the Trustees' Board Room, War Memorial Opera House, President Wilsey presiding.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: 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).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

RESOLUTION NO. 25-21

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco, the minutes of the Veterans Committee and Regular meetings of August 14, 2025, as amended, are hereby approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Wilsey reported on the San Francisco's Opera Ball which occurred on Friday, September 5, 2025, with a performance of *Rigoletto*. She also thanked CJ Reeves, Chair of the American Legion War Memorial Commission, for his service on that Board and looked forward to working with their new Chair to continue to support veterans in the buildings. She also announced a tour of the Symphony Hall by Peter Pastreich, former Executive Director of the San Francisco Symphony, immediately following the October Board of Trustees meeting.

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Managing Director Kate Sofis distributed an article that appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* which highlighted the programming diversity at Davies Symphony Hall, including the Yeah Yeah Yeahs, a performance by "Wicked" star, Cynthia Erivo, Raphael Saadiq, and Queens of the Stone Age. She discussed the partnership between the San Francisco Symphony and the War Memorial to both lift up the resident company and diversify the programming in Davies. She also reported that the Mayor had certified that Trustee Wilsey and Trustee Horn's

roles on the San Francisco Performing Arts Center Foundation were part of their official City duties.

ASSISTANT MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Assistant Managing Director Rob Levin reported on the increase in bookings since the last meeting. Vice President Horn requested that an agenda item be added to next month's meeting to consider waiving the fee for the Celebration of Life planned by Katie Jarman, for former War Memorial Trustee Claude Jarman. Director Levin also reported on the successful rollout of the patron screening system in Davies Symphony Hall.

BOARD SECRETARY'S REPORT

Board Secretary Cicero reminded the Board of their Department of Human Resources trainings due by the end of the year and asked Trustees to complete the demographic survey for the Department on the Status of Women. She also noted that the Commission Streamlining Task Force was expected to discuss the War Memorial Board of Trustees at their meeting on Wednesday, October 1st, in City Hall Room 408.

REGULAR ITEMS

Presentation on Industry Context for Optimizing the War Memorial's Operation: President Wilsey invited consultants Bill Blake and Lauren Frankel from AMS to present to the Board their research and analysis regarding the competitive landscape of the performing arts market in San Francisco and potential options on how the War Memorial could strategically increase revenue. Mr. Blake noted that the War Memorial's recently updated Mission and Vision statements call for high-volume activation, diverse audiences, and significant economic impact. He stated that the War Memorial's goals are strongly aligned with the City's priorities for revitalization, including cultivating an "only-in-San-Francisco" cultural and civic experience. He explained that increasing venue utilization is a key tool for achieving increasing activation, venue and diverse audiences, which would include adjusting user and event types, calendar availability, and rental/ancillary fees. Ms. Frankel broke down the roles required to run a performing arts center: the owner, the operator and the content provider. She noted that the War Memorial is currently both the owner and operator of the venues. She also highlighted the fact that the more control that a performing arts center takes over content, the greater financial risk it assumes, as both host and presenter. She explained the different types of revenue available to venues who provide their own content. There was a discussion on potential hybrid structures, which may include continuing to partner with the resident companies. Trustees discussed the importance of building relationships with presenters, as well as discussed how to bring younger patrons into the venues. Trustee Gatti also suggested that they could try to book more tech events and conferences at the Herbst Theatre. Director Sofis suggested that there could be cross-promotion of shows across the campus. Mr. Blake noted that AMS is currently in the midst of an extensive utilization and attendance analysis of the War Memorial and a rate comparison of similar venues. He explained they would return with peer institutions "exemplars" for the Board.

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

None.

GOOD AND WELFARE

Vice President Horn encouraged the Trustees to attend the Symphony Hall tour after next month's Board meeting. There being no additional good and welfare, President Wilsey closed good and welfare.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President Wilsey adjourned the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

Francesca Cicero
Board Secretary

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