

MINUTES
WAR MEMORIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Thursday, October 12, 2023

The Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met in regular session on Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 2:03 p.m., in the Trustees' Board Room, War Memorial Opera House, President Horn presiding.

ROLL CALL

Present: President Horn, Vice President Lui, Trustee Fisher, Trustee Kopp (*arrived at 2:15pm*), Trustee Muduroglu, Trustee Newstat, Trustee Rocco, and Trustee Wilsey

Absent: Trustee Gatti (*appeared on video, not counted for quorum or voting purposes*), Trustee Pelosi, and Trustee Wright

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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Horn opened the meeting with a tribute to Senator Dianne Feinstein, who passed on September 29, 2023. He noted that she devoted her life to public service, beginning with an appointment to the Women's Parole Board, then became a Supervisor and then President of the Board of Supervisors, to Mayor of San Francisco, and ultimately United States Senator. He remarked that Mayor Feinstein led the City through an incredibly difficult period in 1978, after becoming Mayor due to the murders of Supervisor Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone. President Horn explained that Mayor Feinstein also led the effort to consolidate the War Memorial campus and acquire the land to make the building of Davies Symphony Hall possible, making it the second largest cultural center in the United States, behind Lincoln Center. President Horn also expressed how much Senator Feinstein meant to him personally and how much she changed his life, after he sent her a letter back in the 1970s when he was a new San Francisco resident. He noted how much Senator Feinstein loved the War Memorial and veterans, which included advocating and establishing the first Fleet Week in 1981. Her support of funding for veterans' activities and benefits only continued in her role as U.S. Senator. President Horn stated that if there was no objection, he would adjourn the meeting in Senator Feinstein's memory.

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Managing Director Kate Sofis reminded the Board that Open Enrollment for City and County employee benefits ends Friday, October 27, 2023, if Trustees are interested. Director Sofis then stated that the Department on the Status of Women requested the Board's participation in its bi-annual survey. She noted as background, in 2008, San Francisco voters approved a City Charter amendment (section 4.101) that made it a City policy for the membership of commissions and boards to reflect the diversity of San Francisco's population and the department is required to conduct a gender analysis of the demographic makeup of San Francisco's Commissions and Boards every two years. She explained that this year's analysis includes number of board members by race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, and veteran status.

Director Sofis announced that the American Legion War Memorial Commission has elected a new Chair, C.J. Reeves, who serves as a post with the American Legion and has a leadership role with the Lions. President Horn

invited Mr. Reeves to address the Board. Mr. Reeves stated that he hopes to make an impact with veterans as the Commission Chair. President Horn welcomed him to the position.

Director Sofis stated that the Department is re-starting a process that was underway with the previous Managing Director, John Caldon, for the War Memorial Performing Arts Center Foundation Board and the Department to create a formal Memorandum of Understanding to define the relationship between the two organizations. She remarked that this is taking place with all three trust organizations, which includes the Fine Arts Museums and the Asian Art Museum, who all have longstanding relationships with their respective foundations. She stated that codifying and defining the relationship between the entities, sets up the organization to be able to leverage resources, while adding in protections as the ethics landscape within the City continues to evolve. Director Sofis stated that one of the Foundation directors, Elizabeth Murray, will lead the representation of the Foundation in that regard.

Director Sofis then reported on the current budget outlook for the City, since the Mayor and the Mayor's Budget Office announced the City is falling behind its current fiscal targets, and all City Departments are being asked to identify mid-year budget cuts. She noted that all departments have the same target, to cut 3% from the general fund monies allocated to each department, identifying those cuts to the Mayor by October 26, 2023. Director Sofis reported that the Department's overall budget is approximately \$37 million dollars, and of that \$17 million is general fund-supported expenditures, which would require approximately \$500K in cuts. She explained that she expects at the next Board meeting to be able to report on the actual cuts and adjusted budget figures. She also noted that she expects these cuts to continue into next year. Director Sofis remarked that not only was the team looking at the difficult cuts to be made, but also focusing on how to bring in new revenue sources of funding into the organization. Director Rocco asked about the type of expenditures that are typically paid from the general fund. She explained that the earned income, typically coming from rentals of the space, and the general fund are typically pooled together, so cuts would impact every expenditure category, minus large-scale capital projects like the Opera House mansard roof renovation, which would come from certificates of performance. She explained the department is looking at salary savings, ongoing maintenance of the buildings, interdepartmental contracts, and considering what to delay or where things can be modified, but pointed out that most of the savings will not be from holding vacant positions. Director Sofis explained that her staff has been examining the revenue targets on all the venues and looking for creative ways to increase revenue. She gave an example by referring to the September 2023 Board meeting, where the Board approved alternative pricing for The Green Room to encourage more wedding rentals in that space. She noted there were smaller tactical approaches, such as the San Francisco Film Commission potentially renting space in the Veterans Building or changes to parking fees, but long-term to look at the role the War Memorial plays in economic development for all of Civic Center. She noted there may be other funding sources, governmental or foundation, that the department may be able to pursue.

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 Building Committee Meeting of September 12, 2023; the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 14, 2023; Rental Requests for October 12, 2023; and the Revenue, Appropriations and Housekeeping Expenditures reports for September 2023.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 23-29

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco the minutes of the Building Committee meeting of September 12, 2023; the Regular Board Meeting of September 14, 2023; Rental Requests for October 12, 2023; and the Revenue, Appropriations and Housekeeping Expenditures reports for September 2023 are hereby approved.

Director Levin stated that the reception after Senator Feinstein's funeral was held in The Green Room in the

Veterans Building. He took the opportunity to thank the incredible staff for the herculean effort that it took to make the event happen, including Global Gourmet Catering who catered the entire event with less than 72 hours' notice. Trustee Muduroglu echoed the appreciation for everyone's hard work who was involved in the events surrounding the funeral. President Horn also commented that Trustee Muduroglu, in her capacity as the Mayor's Chief of Protocol, was involved in all the activities and thanked her for an incredible job.

REGULAR ITEMS

Consideration of Request to Install Four Digital Display Monitors in Veterans Building Lobby: President Horn stated that there was a two-year closure of the Veterans Building from 2013-2015 for a \$150+ million-dollar construction improvement project to the building. He noted the renovation project involved comprehensive seismic upgrades, earthquake-damage repair from the Loma Prieta earthquake, energy and accessibility modernizations, and improvements to the interior and theater of this landmark building. He explained that the building re-opened in September 2015, with updates to the Herbst Theatre, The Green Room, the veterans' offices and meeting rooms, as well as the creation of Café Valor, the Arts Commission offices and gallery, and the Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera. President Horn stated that the energy modernization and updates of the project included replacing electrical, mechanical and plumbing systems in the building. He noted that at the time of the renovation, four east-facing columns in the lobby of the Veterans Building were wired with infrastructure to support digital display monitors to be installed at a future time, but this phase stalled due to lack of funding.

President Horn invited Managing Director Kate Sofis to present the request to move forward with this contemplated second phase of modernization and install four monitors in the lobby of the Veterans Building. Director Sofis noted that she has heard feedback of the need to better broadcast information about the wealth of things occurring in the Veterans Building, specifically focused on information that veterans' organizations provide to the community, that may otherwise be unseen because the activity is happening on the second floor of the building. She stated that the request contemplates four large tv-like monitors that would be proportional to the size of the columns, approximately 72 inches. She also informed the Board that staff have been working with Ken Maley, to determine where the World War I banners, currently in the lobby, could be re-located on the second floor. She also noted that she believes that these digital display monitors could be installed prior to the holiday season.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 23-30

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco the request to install four digital display monitors on the east-facing columns of the Veterans Building Lobby, in order to broadcast information related to the American Legion, veterans' groups, venue licensees, events, and other information relevant to visitors, is hereby approved.

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

None.

GOOD AND WELFARE

President Horn congratulated Trustee Rocco on a successful Fleet Week celebration. Trustee Rocco thanked the United States service members and noted that some events were held at the Marines Memorial hotel, which was reminiscent of pre-COVID times. He also observed how much the service members and pilots loved San Francisco. President Horn noted that he watched the Blue Angels perform the "missing woman formation" in Senator Feinstein's honor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Horn adjourned the meeting in memory of Senator Dianne Feinstein at 2:48 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'FC', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Francesca Cicero
Board Secretary