

MINUTES
WAR MEMORIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES
VETERANS COMMITTEE
Wednesday, November 10, 2022

The Veterans Committee of the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco met in-person at 1:45 p.m. on Thursday, November 10, 2022, in the Trustees' Board Room, War Memorial Opera House, Chair Kopp presiding. As authorized by California Government Code Section 54953(e) and Mayor Breed's 45th Supplement to her February 25, 2020 emergency proclamation, some members of the public also attended this meeting remotely.

ROLL CALL

Committee Members Present: Chair Kopp, Trustee Newstat, Trustee Rocco, Trustee Wright, President Thomas E. Horn, *Ex officio* and Vice President Gorretti Lo Lui, *Ex officio*

Committee Members Present: Trustee Gatti
(*on video*)

Committee Members Present: Trustee Pelosi
(*telephonically*)

Non-Committee Members Present: Trustee Wilsey

Staff Present: John Caldon, Managing Director and Rob Levin, Executive Secretary

REGULAR ITEMS

Proposed Renewal of Agreement with American Legion War Memorial Commission:

Chair Kopp stated that the item up for consideration by the Committee was renewal of the Agreement between the War Memorial and the American Legion War Memorial Commission. Chair Kopp noted that the renewal agreement under consideration stems from the 1977 transfer of management and control of what is now the Herbst Theatre and The Green Room from the Commission to the Trustees, and the Commission's relinquishing two basement rooms to the Museum of Modern Art. He pointed out the agreement was made in exchange for the Commission receiving a more assured source of income to help cover the Commission's office expenses related to administering Veterans Building space allocated for veterans' use.

Chair Kopp also stated that the Staff Report provided to Trustees included membership data from 2018 regarding the San Francisco Posts of the American Legion. He continued that prior to the meeting, staff requested updated information from the Commission and learned there are currently 10 Posts and 506 veteran members. Staff also learned that the Commission has a membership goal of 900 and is working on recruitment efforts.

Chair Kopp remarked that each of the original 1977 agreement and 20 subsequent renewal agreements specified an annual sum to be paid by the Trustees to the Commission from Herbst Theatre rental revenues based on the Commission's needs and requirements at the time. He noted the last renewal agreement covered the 1-year period from January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022 and the Committee would now consider a proposed 21st renewal of the agreement for a 2-year period effective January 1, 2023.

Chair Kopp stated that documents distributed to Trustees include a Staff Report, which provides a history of this agreement and a staff recommendation for the January 1, 2023 renewal, a draft of the proposed 2-year renewal agreement, War Memorial staff's worksheet for the American Legion War Memorial Commission 2023-24 budget with staff recommendations, and a history of the sums paid by the Trustees to the Commission over the last 45 years.

Upon invitation from Chair Kopp, Director Caldon reviewed the documents provided to the Committee. He noted that staff recommended a two-year renewal agreement for calendar years 2023 and 2024 with an annual sum of \$53,400 to be paid to the Commission by the War Memorial annually. He continued that this amount is based on the Commission's actual expenditures from 2019, which is the most recent pre-pandemic year to which comparison can be made, and the projected actual expenses from the current year. Director Caldon noted that the Commission also requested to increase the amount of time their single staff member works from 25 hours per week to 32 hours per week. He also highlighted that these annual funds will be in addition to the War Memorial's in-kind support of \$425,000 per year, which includes space use, custodial and other support services.

Director Caldon further reported that the terms of the proposed renewal agreement have been agreed upon by the American Legion War Memorial Commission through Chair Courtney Ellington.

Vice President Lui inquired about whether these increases were reflected in the departmental budget. Director Caldon responded that staff is drafting its budget for the next two fiscal years and that the cost will be reflected as a decrease in the projected earned revenue from rentals of the Herbst Theatre. He distinguished this from the \$425,000 of in-kind support, which is not a cash outlay.

Trustee Wright asked about the staff member and whether they were responsible for activation of the building. Director Caldon responded that the Commission is responsible for managing all veterans' activities in the building and that Chair Ellington had requested the funds for additional staff time to have someone who can more effectively assist her with increased recruitment efforts, as she is anticipating that activity levels will continue to increase post-pandemic. Director Caldon noted that this increase would also provide the Department with greater access to someone for questions related to veterans' space utilization.

Trustee Wright asked how the \$53,400 amount was reached and whether the Commission's expectations about usage are realistic. Trustee Rocco noted that a similar situation occurred at the Marines Memorial post-COVID, and that without adequate staff time one cannot increase activity levels. Trustee Rocco stated that he thought it a good idea to have a person in the Commission office for additional time and to then review at a future date whether that helped to increase activity.

Following discussion, and on motion of Trustee Rocco, seconded by Chair Kopp, the following recommendation was unanimously adopted:

RECOMMENDED, To the Board of Trustees of the War Memorial of San Francisco that it approve the proposed two-year renewal agreement between the War Memorial Board of Trustees and the American Legion War Memorial Commission effective January 1, 2023, as recommended by staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment is an opportunity for members of the public to directly address the Trustees on items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board, but not on the agenda.

There being no public comment, Chair Kopp closed public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Chair Kopp adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rob Levin".

Rob Levin
Executive Secretary