



New Orleans Public Library
Regular Board Meeting
(Meeting Held via Teleconference)
Main Library Board Room
Tuesday, July 14th, 2020
4:30 PM
MINUTES

NOTE REGARDING PUBLIC COMMENT:

The legal purpose of open meetings is to allow individuals to observe and participate in the deliberations of public bodies. Meetings of public bodies must be open to the public unless closed pursuant to a statutory exception, such as set forth in R.S. 42:16 – 42:18, which authorizes closed executive sessions. Public bodies must provide an opportunity for public comment prior to action on the agenda item upon which a vote is to be taken. The governing body may adopt reasonable rules and restrictions regarding the comment period. R.S. 42:14, requires each public body, except school boards, conducting a meeting that is subject to the notice requirement of R.S. 42:19(A), to allow a public comment period prior to action on an agenda item upon which a vote is to be taken.

NOTICE OF TELECONFERENCE MEETING:

This meeting is being conducted via teleconference per Executive Order 59-JBE-2020 Section 2.C, which states: “All state agencies, boards and commissions, and local political subdivisions of the state shall continue to provide for attendance at essential governmental meetings via teleconference or video conference and such attendance shall be allowed during the pendency of this emergency. All efforts shall be made to provide for observation and input by members of the public. Before any meeting conducted pursuant to this section, the state agency, boards and commission, or local political subdivision of the state shall first provide a written certification that it will otherwise be unable to operate due to quorum requirements. Such certification shall be posted at the same time and in the same manner as the agenda for the meeting. Nothing in this order shall be interpreted to waive any notice requirements.”

AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order** — Board Vice-Chair Vonda Flentroy-Rice called the July 14, 2020 regular board meeting to order at 4:46 p.m.

- II. **Roll Call** — Executive Assistant Tammy Hanson (1 minute)
Member Present: Board Chair Vonda Flentroy-Rice
James Chassee
Mary Moran
Andrea Neighbours
Daniel Tapia
Raquel Dufauchard

Laurance Eustis III

Staff Present: Executive Director, Dr. Gabriel Morley
Budget Manager, Michel Thompson
Executive Secretary, Tammy Hanson

- III. **Public Comments** — (Vonda Flentroy-Rice, 2 minutes)
- A. There were no public comments
- IV. **Action Item: Approval of Consent Agenda** — (Phala Kimbrough Mire, 2 minutes)
- A. Review of draft May 12th Regular Board Meeting Minutes
1. Ms. Neighbours made a motion to approve the draft May 12th Regular Board meeting minutes. A second was made by Mr. Eustis. Carried unanimously.
 2. Ms. Dufauchard inquired whether the public attendees were able to voice comment if they were muted coming into the meeting. Ms. Flentroy-Rice asked public attendees to use the chat feature if they wished to comment.
- B. Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
1. Ms. Flentroy-Rice made a motion to approve the July 7th Executive Committee minutes. A second was made by Raquel Dufauchard. Carried unanimously.
- V. **Information Items** — (Phala Kimbrough Mire, 4 minutes)
- A. Introduction of New Board Member Daniel Tapia
1. New Board member, Daniel Tapia, introduced himself to the committee.
- VI. **Discussion Items**
- A. Executive Director's report (Dr. Gabriel Morley, 5 minutes)
1. On July 6th all branches opened to the public by appointment. This allows a limited number of patrons in each branch for 45-minute visits with cleaning intermittently. The library started computer use on July 13th. The COVID situation is monitored closely by the City and the Health Department as we move forward.
 2. One Book One New Orleans requested to install a mural on the side of the Norman Mayer Library. This building is city-owned and they are collaborating with the Arts Department who has tentative contracts with several local artists. This endeavor is close to City approval and if no board members are opposed, we will continue to move forward.
 3. The library is focusing on a three-part project to promote equity and inclusion.
 - a. Shukrani Gray will fill a new role at the library to focus on day-to-day issues of equity and inclusion.
 - b. The second part is to establish a Scholar in Residence to enable local university scholars to studying race-related issues unique to New Orleans. The goal is to produce at least two projects from three scholars (total of six projects for the year) surrounding race, power, policing, hospitality and justice issues and produce scholarly reports/articles, a documentary, art exhibit, virtual experience, etc. that are focused on local data and scenarios
 - c. The third part of this project is to establish a library to become a library and cultural center that focuses exclusively on amplifying the voice of minority

groups. The Nora Navra branch is targeted as the location to house a collection of minority and equity research/literature, the current African American collection at Main, and build programming around these issues. Tentative costs for improvements would be under \$100,000.

4. Ms. Flentroy-Rice made a motion for the board to support the Equity and Inclusion Library at Nora Navra. Ms. Dufauchard seconded the motion. During discussion, Ms. Neighbours asked if the community/Nora Navra patrons has had input to whether they are willing to forgo the traditional library and if current services will be offered in tandem with the cultural center. Dr. Morley responded that the details are still vague and not necessarily specific to the Nora Navra location. Mr. Tapia is supportive of the Nora Navra location. He has met with Ms. Gray and would like community member input. Ms. Dufauchard wants to ensure that these efforts includes the LGBTQ community. Dr. Morley responded that the new center's name will reflect all minority groups. Ms. Moran asked how all branches can allow spaces for materials/an environment that is all-inclusive of marginalized groups. She inquired about the selection process of the aforementioned projects and if they will be led by scholars of color. Dr. Morley responded that Ms. Gray is identifying potential participants and their project needs. This also gives the Friends of NOPL and the NOPL Foundation a forum to solicit individual donations. Long-term vision depends upon this project's momentum and continued funding. Tentatively, FNOPL is providing funding exclusively. Dr. Morley will continue to provide the Board information as it becomes available.
 5. A vote moved forward for board support of the Equity and Inclusion Library initiative. Motion carried unanimously.
- B. Finance Committee meeting minutes, NOPL Financial Dashboard (Michel Thompson, James Chassee, 5 minutes)
1. The Finance Committee met on July 13th to discuss incorporating flexibility into the operating budget and allocating funds. The goal is having more Board involvement NOPL finances. Due to increased property values, the City has dropped the millage from 5.6 mills to a net 4.9 mills to become revenue neutral.
 2. Budget Director, Michel Thompson, explained the Financial Dashboard. We have received 99% of our 2020 budgeted revenues by 2nd quarter's end. Personnel costs are down due to CARES ACT assistance FMLA and Civil Leave salary costs. Our mid-year operating budget is at 30%, but as more vendors get acclimated to the new system, will get back on target. No services or material holdings have been reduced, but we have increased digital holdings.
 3. In an effort to continue services with the same dollars budgeted for 2020, the \$19.4 million represents the 4.91 mills rate, but the value for each mill has increased to 3.9 mills. Real personnel costs through mid-June have been used to project costs through the end of the year. Including key positions (i.e. Deputy Director and a social worker) and personnel savings from previous years, \$1 million has rolled over into reserves. Those savings have been redirected into the operating budget to increase collections and digital holdings and add to our internet subscriptions to aid in distance learning objectives. Our budget for technologies has increased to accommodate building remodeling costs for COVID

social distancing. The marketing budget has increased to allow more advertising to potential users and to support the Equity and Inclusion Center. We have made accommodations to use reserve monies for unknown expenses while ensuring the same services.

4. Ms. Neighbours inquired if we made plans to use our entire operating budget for the year and not have monies rolled into the reserve fund. Ms. Thompson responded that we are working on spending all or most of the 2020 budget. Dr. Morley added that FEMA Grant and the CARES ACT are covering some; thus, we will have some underruns even with increased expenditures and added that this money can be used toward other expenditures. There is approx. \$1 million in trusts that the Trust Board needs to allocate.
5. Ms. Neighbours asked Dr. Morley if he's received any positive feedback from the City or council members regarding our increased use of budget monies. Dr. Morley responded that budget meetings with various City departments will occur in upcoming weeks. Ms. Neighbours also asked whether the NOPL needs board support during these budget meetings. Dr. Morley responded that a letter of support will be initiated and sent to the board, if necessary.

C. Capital Projects (Michel Thompson, James Chassee, 10 minutes)

1. Ms. Thompson stated that last year we submitted an entire Main inclusive project which includes the City Archives and any build-out from the Main building. This year's capital projects request includes roof repairs and HVAC System repairs, Keller library expansion to incorporate staff break areas/offices, and expenses for termite/vegetation structural damage at the Hubbell branch.
2. The Main inclusive project was approved for the feasibility study to look at whether Main can accommodate an addition and fire suppression system including the engineering study to determine costs to move the archives from the basement. All items are carry-overs from last year with the exception of the Hubbell project. Mr. Eustis asked whether the Board will be informed should these projects move forward. Dr. Morley responded that the City will put out a detailed RFP and solicit for bids. When Dr. Morley receives a draft of the RFP, we will share it with the Board.

D. Norman Mayer Mural (Dr. Gabriel Morley, 3 minutes)

1. This item was previously discussed during the Executive Director's Report.

VII. **Action Item: Approval of 2021 Proposed Operating and Capital Budget** (Michel Thompson, James Chassee, 10 minutes)

- A. Ms. Neighbours made a motion to approve the NOPL 2021 Operating and Capital Budget. The motion was seconded by Raquel Dufauchard and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

VIII. **Action Item: Board of Trustee Officer Elections** (Vonda Flentroy-Rice, 5 minutes)

- A. The Governance Committee met on July 10th to create a slate for officer positions. The slate as presented is: Secretary, Andrea Neighbours; Vice-Chair, Vonda Flentroy-Rice; Chair, Phala Kimbrough-Mire. Ms. Flentroy-Rice opened the floor up to nominations.

Ms. Dufauchard made a motion to nominate the slate as presented. A second was made by Larry Eustis III. Motion was carried unanimously.

IX. **Attachments**

X. **Adjournment**

A. Board Vice-Chair, Vonda Flentroy-Rice adjourned the July 14, 2020 Regular Board meeting at 5:53 p.m.

APPROVED: _____ DATE: _____
Secretary, Andrea Neighbours

DRAFT