



**Minutes  
of the Board of Directors Meeting  
June 1, 2023  
8:00AM**

Present: David Barrett, *Chair*, Rick Costello, *Treasurer*, Melvyn Colon, Andrew Diaz-Matos, Carlos Galdamez, Floyd Green, Suzanne Hopgood, Sara Lashetski, Sarah Needham, Daniel P. O’Shea, Mark Overmyer-Velazquez, Phyllis Shikora, Karen Taylor, and Tyrone Walker.

Also Present: Bridget E. Quinn, President and CEO; Gwen Cannon, Human Resources Director; Leticia Cotto, Customer Experience Officer; Gina Federico, Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations; Marie Jarry, Public Services Director; Brenda Miller, Executive Director, Culture & Communications; Gilda Roncari, Director of Donor Relations; Mary Tzambazakis, Chief Administrative Officer and General Counsel; Andrea Figueroa, Senior Executive Assistant, and Karl Fisher, Finance Director.

**1. Call to Order**

Chair David Barrett called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

**2. Consent Agenda**

***Board Action:*** Motion was made to approve the consent agenda that included minutes of the February 28, 2023 special Board of Directors meeting; minutes of the February 28, 2023, Barbour Task Force Committee meeting; minutes of the March 15, 2023, Development Committee meeting; minutes of the March 22, Finance Committee meeting; minutes of the May 18, 2023, Development Committee meeting; minutes of the May 23, 2023, Finance Committee meeting, and minutes of the May 25, 2023, Executive Committee meeting. The motion was moved by Suzanne Hopgood and was seconded by Mark Overmyer-Velazquez. The motion carried.

**3. President and CEO’s Report**

Ms. Bridget Quinn introduced Gwen Cannon as HPL’s newly appointed HR Director.

Ms. Quinn gave an overview of the third quarter providing a few highlights of her report which was distributed in advance.

Ms. Quinn also highlighted the statistical comparison of circulation, door traffic, and programming pre-flood and post-flood.

Ms. Quinn shared Development activities with some benchmarks to identify where there are robust opportunities for increased philanthropic support. The vast majority of support comes from individuals. There is a larger opportunity for funding support through government that will help with HPL's advancement goals.

Ms. Quinn talked about the Downtown Library and where things are with the repair and renovation project and community engagement. There were some focus groups scheduled to talk to community and partners about what the downtown library means to them, their ideas and how the Library should function.

#### **4. Mission Moment**

Ms. Quinn introduced members of the Leadership Team to talk about activity within their departments at other locations system wide:

Ms. Brenda Miller talked about the opening of the Hartford History Center Annex at the Ropkins Library back in April. The Hartford History Center has a small impactful shop where an introductory genealogy program was hosted at the Albany Library called Tracing African American West Indian ancestors.

Ms. Leticia Cotto talked about the Programming and Events Department. Most are collaborative programs with the Public Services, Youth Services, Hartford History Center, and others. One of the biggest programs is Baby Grand Jazz. Other successful programs include Hartford's LIT, Jazz Activation Program, Court Vision (a small production studio), Podcasts, and much more.

Ms. Quinn reported on behalf of Homa Naficy. A part of TAP is working at the West Middle School. It was a challenge finding an alternate location for all TAP services, but the principal at West Middle has been very supportive and has worked closely with HPL to be able to expand access to the space. Looking forward to expanding a conjunction with the school through our Boundless relationship and being able to serve their school resource center.

Ms. Marie Jarry talked about Public Services activities throughout the branches and other locations. South Church has been the temporary location for story times and Central Church as well. Books are made available with a google form and pick up locations are at South or Center Churches. The first month 660 books went out. Partnered with the Bushnell Park Foundation where they offered their Carousel space for story times and families get free rides. In April and May, there were eight programs with a total of 550 people attending. The Summer Learning Kick-Off is scheduled for June 10. The theme this year is 3,2,1 Blast Off, all about the Moon, Mars, and Beyond. HPL was one of only eight libraries to get a visiting NASA exhibit this Summer. This exhibit was to be housed Downtown, but instead it will

be split up between the branches creating a scavenger hunt encouraging everyone to visit the branches. Branch managers try to put at least 2 programs a month for their adult community. Each branch knows their community and what they need so the programs are built around their needs which include citizenship classes, basic computer classes, Zumba, Financial Literacy, homeownership workshops with Webster Bank, and much more. The teen programming transitioned to Albany with some upgrades to programs. They were able to engage up to 2,060 students.

Ms. Gilda Roncari talked about the unveiling of the Fromson Sculpture at the Park Library this month. Ms. Roncari also reminded all about Beyond Words in November. This year will bring back an author and a Caroline Hewins Medalist and this year is Luke Bronin.

Ms. Cotto talked about a remote locker that will be placed outside the egg lobby on Arch Street to make resources available to customers 24 hours a day. Customers will have the ability to place holds and pick up at the lockers.

Members of the Board asked about a monthly calendar of events since there are so many programs happening at HPL.

## **5. Board Chair's Report**

Mr. David Barrett talked about the services happening throughout the Library how it flows with the Strategic Plan. The community asked for expanded services out at the branches and it happened quicker than expected. Mr. Barrett also mentioned the monthly activities calendar so all Board members can try to attend some of them.

## **6. Committees and Task Force Reports**

Ms. Quinn reported that currently there are three projects going on simultaneously, Albany, Barbour and Downtown. The same design and construction teams Silver Petrucelli, Margaret Sullivan Studios, and Downes Construction are working on all three projects. Silver Petrucelli is now on City contract which is great to not have to go out to bid. They were also engaged with the designs for the Swift Factory and HPL will make provisions to the contract to continue the work for Barbour.

Barbour has been confirmed to be relocated to 234 Barbour Street, which was the former Snyder supermarket. Ms. Quinn has been working closely with the Mayor on the financial pieces for funding. The contract with the design professionals is being finalized for Barbour.

The Albany Project is moving forward as well. The City is taking the lead on the remediation and stabilization of the building at Northwest School and then turning it over to HPL so we can do the fit out.

## 7. New Business

### *Soliciting, Fundraising, Petitioning, Campaigning and Other Activities Policy*

This policy is to help our public services staff manage requests and setting parameters for what is appropriate for HPL space being a public space. HPL is a limited public forum. This policy will allow for easier conversations with people wanting to use HPL space.

**Board Action:** A motion to approve the Soliciting, Fundraising, Petitioning, Campaigning and Other Activities Policy was moved by Suzanne and was seconded by Dan O’Shea. Motion carried.

### *FY24 Budget*

There were a couple of increases in both revenue and expense made since the Board Retreat and an increase to passports revenue based on two locations. That budget is \$12,751,752 which constitutes a 4.2% increase.

**Board Action:** A motion was made to approve the FY24 Budget as presented. Rick Costello moved and was seconded by Sarah Needham. Motion carried.

### *Liberty Bank Resolution*

This is a partnership with HPL and Liberty Bank to establish a parent account allowing people to have a savings account.

WHEREAS, Hartford Public Library and the Connecticut Association of Human Services (CAHS) have chosen to establish *The Savings and Credit Building Library Circles* asset building program to help low-income immigrant, refugee, and migrant families establish a habit of savings. 12 Circles are formed over the duration of the three-year grant (August 2022 – July 2025). Each Circle enrolls 6 participants totaling 72 participants.

WHEREAS, Hartford Public Library’s program offers participants inventive matches, personal finance and money management education, peer and staff support, and individual counseling in order to make asset ownership obtainable.

WHEREAS, HPL, Liberty Bank, and CAHS have entered into an agreement, under which Liberty Bank will serve as a cooperating financial institution for the Program and a depository of the SCBLC matched savings program towards the participants savings for the purpose of supporting the SCBLC matched savings program.

THEREFORE, Homa Naficy, Executive Director of The American Place, and Karl Fisher, Director of Finance, are authorized to establish a Matched Savings Master Account with Liberty Bank and each act as co-signers of the account on behalf of Hartford Public Library.

**Board Action:** With the understanding that Karl and Homa will look into the security questions, a motion to approve the resolution authorizing Karl Fisher and Homan Naficy as signatories was moved by Suzanne Hopgood and was seconded by Rick Costello. Motion carried.

## 8. Other Business

### *Approval of the FY2023-24 HPL Holiday Calendar*

**Board Action:** A motion was made to approve the HPL Holiday Calendar of FY23-24. Carlos Galdamez moved and was seconded by Phyllis Shikora. Motion carried.

### *Review of COVID-19 Protocols*

HPL has had a Covid testing policy since 2021. Organizations are now stepping away from a vaccine requirement and just making it a recommendation. Guidelines will also be updated.

**Board Action:** A motion was made to rescind the Covid vaccination requirement for staff. Dan O'Shea moved and was seconded by Mark Overmyer-Velazquez. Motion carried.

Mark Overmyer-Velazquez invited everyone to walk through the education justice history wall on the first level of UConn that involves a lot of the good folks from HPL. Includes local artists and interviews with students and community members.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:11 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bridget E. Quinn  
President and CEO