

YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD MEETING  
ELECTRONIC MEETING  
NOVEMBER 18, 2021

**ATTENDANCE**

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| TRUSTEES:                   | Nancy Maron<br>Stephen Jannetti<br>John Saraceno<br>Hon. Michael Sabatino<br>Josephine Ilarraza   |
| LIBRARY DIRECTOR:           | Jesse Montero   |
| ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR: | Shauna Porteus  |
| BUSINESS MANAGER:           | NONE  |
| ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY:   | James Hackett   |
| WLS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:   | NONE  |
| UNION REPRESENTATIVE:       | Arnaldo Torres  |
| GUESTS:                     | Dominick Savarese, Brandon Neider,<br>Carlos Figueroa, Zahra Baird, Anne<br>Campbell, Diane Mignault, Elizabeth<br>Caruso, Mary Robison, Suzanne Johnson,<br>Rose Avilés, Oswaldo Coto-Chang, Emily<br>Power, Sandhya Sanal, Eileen Fusco |

The Board Meeting was held electronically via ZOOM®, Conference ID# 892 8826 4136

The Board Meeting began at 7:06 pm

**MINUTES**

On motion of Trustee Sabatino, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the Meeting of October 21, 2021.

**MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Director Montero reported that there have been no cases of COVID-19 among the staff since the last meeting.

Director Montero briefly introduced some of the new staff recently hired: Librarian Oswaldo “Oz” Coto-Chang of the Riverfront Reference Department, Clerk Sandhya Sanal of the

Grinton I. Will Circulation Department and Librarian Trainee Diane Mignault of the Riverfront Reference Department.

Director Montero updated the Board on the status of Crestwood Library following the aftermath of Hurricane Ida. Crestwood remains closed to in-person visits however it continues to provide contact-free pickup services and virtual and outdoor programming. New tile floors have been installed and a follow-up air quality test for mold was conducted. As they await the test results the staff has begun to reorganize the rest of the building in anticipation of a reopen. He acknowledged that remediation has taken longer than expected but was excited about the refreshed appearance and updated collection and thanked Branch Manager Zahra “Z” Baird and the staff of Crestwood for their hard work.

Director Montero reported that Will Library received over 650 feet of new shelving units. The new units will display over 10,000 DVDs and replace older, mismatched shelves and enhance the browsing experience. Director Montero thanked Suzanne Johnson and the Will circulation and custodial departments for managing the project and its logistics.

Director Montero reported on recent programming hosted by Yonkers Public Library. YoFi Film Festival, hosted at Riverfront Library, was celebrating its ninth year with film screenings and workshops in person over three weekends, with several online and virtual programs offered during the week. Riverfront Library also hosted a resource fair sponsored by Family Services Society of Yonkers and Will Library will host several performances sponsored by the Friends of Yonkers Public Library and the Yonkers Philharmonic Orchestra over the coming weeks.

Assistant Director Porteus updated the Board on the progress of YPL’s diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) committee. More than a dozen staff members meet weekly to share perspectives, discuss ideas on how to incorporate DEI principles in programming, collections, and services and provide professional development opportunities to the staff. The committee also started a Speaker Series for the staff to improve their knowledge and comfort with DEI topics and welcomed as its first speaker Lucria Ortiz of the Yonkers YMCA.

Trustee Jannetti inquired about the financial cost of the repairs at Crestwood. Director Montero replied that YPL has submitted a request for reimbursements from FEMA but does not expect to make an insurance claim as the required repairs do not meet the policy’s \$50,000 deductible. Director Montero also noted that administration has been in touch with the City of Yonkers budget department to redirect unspent funds elsewhere in its budget and is confident the repairs will be fully funded.

Trustee Sabatino asked if any additional compensation was available for hosting FEMA’s disaster recovery center (DRC) at Will Library last month. Director Montero replied that fees were charged for the cost of labor overtime but there was no additional compensation or expedited reimbursement process for DRC hosts.

## **UNION REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT**

President Savarese had no report but noted there were other items to discuss later in the meeting.

## **WLS REPORT**

There was no report from the WLS Board of Trustees, however Director Montero reported that he met with the WLS executive director and head of IT to express YPL’s continued dissatisfaction with the performance of several IT services. Director Montero was cautiously optimistic that performance may improve following the recent hire of a new operations manager.

## **PERSONNEL REPORT**

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board ratified the following appointments:

Thomas, Bree, P/T Page, \$14.00/hr, eff. 10/22/2021

Iwuchukwu, Mbanefo Frank, Perm. Technical Support Specialist, \$80,192.00/yr, eff. 10/29/2021

Neider, Brandon, Perm. Technical Support Specialist, \$80,192.00/yr, eff. 10/29/2021

Acknowledged the following terminations:

Davis, Kiyah, P/T Page, \$14.00/hr, eff. 10/1/2021

Asheley, Anita, P/T Page, \$14.00/hr, eff. 10/31/2021

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Finance, Budget & Planning** – Maron, Jannetti, Saraceno.

Board President Maron announced that donations and endowments would be discussed at a later meeting.

**Employee Relations** – Maron, Puglia.

**Buildings & Grounds** – Maron, Puglia, Giuffrida

**Policy** – Maron, Ilarraza, Sabatino

**Fundraising & Development** – Maron, Jannetti

Foundation update: Trustee Maron reported that the Foundation was preparing to launch its annual fundraising campaign and remarked that it has already donated over \$100,000 to YPL since 2018.

Board President Maron announced a Nominating Subcommittee to choose a slate of nominees for election at January’s annual meeting and asked for volunteers. Trustee Sabatino volunteered and was appointed.

## **PAYMENT OF BILLS**

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment of bills as listed on Schedule #833.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Director Montero updated the Board on YPL's 5 Year Strategic Plan and announced that YPL had contracted Library Development Solutions to lead the process of preparing a new plan beginning in 2022. Library Development Solutions was responsible for the current plan crafted in 2017 and expires at the end of 2021. He looked forward to working with the Board and the staff in developing the plan, specifically noting the opportunity for staff to join smaller working groups responsible for shaping specific areas of the plan, such as facilities, diversity and collections. He expects the process to take several months and would update the Board as progress is made. Board President Maron added that there would be opportunities for trustees and others to participate in focus groups, surveys and meetings as well.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Director Montero led a discussion on ideas for YPL's budget proposal for the fiscal year ending in 2023. He acknowledged that the current budget is a very good one and hoped to maintain that progress, specifically noting the transfer of collection funds from the capital budget to the operations budget. He presented several new proposals to the operating budget request, including funds to contract a digital graphic design firm for rebranding and marketing and an expanded budget for professional development, programming and professional services.

Director Montero presented proposals for the capital budget as well. While YPL is still waiting on funds to be allocated from the present capital budget, he noted that additional funds will still be required to complete work at Crestwood. He also proposed funding for Will Library following the completion of a building conditions survey and five year plan conducted earlier this year by the architectural firm KG+D which revealed deferred infrastructure maintenance over its 60 years of continuous operation, specifically in its HVAC systems, as well as the dated appearance of some interior spaces and furniture like the Pincus Auditorium and its equipment. He was hopeful that the recent successes of several programs at Will Library like the FEMA DRC and vaccination clinics would persuade the City of the worthiness of these building improvements.

Board President Maron asked if Director Montero intended to include requests for additional staff. He replied that YPL is committed to the challenge of filling its current vacancies but would inquire on the viability of additional staffing following more conversations with the City. She added that the Foundation would like to host its annual gala at Will Library in the spring and was hopeful that the event could help build excitement around these needed renovations.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Board President Maron motioned the Board into Executive Session at 7:49 pm to discuss personnel matters. Union President Savarese was invited to join them. Trustee Ilarraza joined the Board

Board Meeting – November 18, 2021

Meeting at 7:56 pm and immediately entered the session. Union President Savarese exited the session and Director Montero entered the session at 8:14 pm. The session ended at 8:35 pm.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE** – Thursday, December 16, 2021

On motion of Trustee Saraceno the Meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm.

Jesse Montero  
Library Director & Secretary