

YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD MEETING
ELECTRONIC MEETING
FEBRUARY 17, 2022

ATTENDANCE

TRUSTEES:	Nancy Maron Stephen Jannetti Joseph Puglia Hon. Michael Sabatino Stephan Giuffrida, M.D. Patricia Duggan
LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	Jesse Montero
ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	Shauna Porteus
BUSINESS MANAGER:	Vivian Presedo
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY:	James Hackett
WLS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:	Trustee Puglia
UNION REPRESENTATIVE:	Brandon Neider
GUESTS:	Alan Houston, Zahra Baird, Arnaldo Torres, Rose Bannister, Emily Power, Eileen Fusco, Phyllis Cole, Elizabeth Caruso

The Board Meeting was held electronically via ZOOM®, Conference ID# 844 6132 4798

The Board Meeting began at 7:00 pm.

MINUTES

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of January 13, 2021.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Director Montero updated the Board on the status of COVID-19 at Yonkers Public Library. He reported no new cases among the staff since the last meeting, when he reported nine staff had tested positive. He remarked that case levels of the latest omicron variant of the virus appears to have fallen as rapidly as it rose. As a result, YPL ended its hybrid-staffing model where some staff worked from home and restored some limited in-person programming on January 31, although the requirement for staff and patrons to wear a mask in public areas of the building remain.

Director Montero acknowledged that Governor Hochul had recently lifted New York State's mask mandate in most venues except for schools, public transit and hospitals or medical facilities. Citing falling case levels, the imminence of school mask policies ending and the growing difficulty of enforcing patron compliance, he advised the Board that he was inclined to end the library's mask policy and asked the Board for their support to end the policy as early as March 1 or whenever appropriate.

Director Montero announced several new collections and programs celebrating Black History Month, specifically highlighting a Periodic Table of Black History display at Riverfront Library, the upcoming program Redlining and Its Lasting Impact on Black Communities and several dance programs. He thanked the staff for their creativity and initiative in planning and promoting the activities, specifically praising the appearance of the new marketing and promotional material.

Director Montero updated the Board on the ongoing shifting and relocation projects at Grinton I. Will Library. He shared before-and-after illustrations of the newly relocated Fine Arts and Young Adult sections and the refreshed appearance of the Main Reading Room and Children's Room. He expects the next project would include relocating CDs and music to the Fine Arts section and update the Young Adult section with new furniture and electronic equipment. He thanked the circulation and custodial departments at Will Library for planning and coordinating the project.

Assistant Director Porteus updated the Board on the progress of the marketing department and its changes. She announced that the first phase of the redesign was recently completed and consisted of updated print and digital marketing material with higher quality graphics and color-coded schemes as well as smaller updates to the website. She said the second phase would consist of replacing all of the signage at the individual libraries and was hopeful this phase would be complete at Will by April, and Riverfront and Crestwood shortly thereafter. The third phase would be a redesign of YPL's logo and would begin upon the start of the new fiscal year. She thanked graphic artist Mario Pereira for his instrumental role in designing and producing the changes.

Director Montero announced that Westchester Library Association recently honored Alan Houston, reference librarian at Will Library, with the first Bonnie Katz Award. Some of Mr. Houston's accomplishments include organizing several vaccination clinics with New York State of Health and presenting popular programs such as the Telehealth Intervention Program for Seniors (TIPS) and Senior Law Day. The award is given to Westchester public librarians whose passionate dedication and commitment to patrons and communities reflect the spirit of the late Bonnie Katz from the Ossining Public Library. Hr. Houston spoke about the honor of an award in her name and thanked his colleagues for the nomination and support.

Following the conclusion of the management report, Director Montero asked the Board to consider his request to end the library's policy of requiring the public and staff to wear a mask while in its building as early as March 1, or whenever appropriate. After some discussion on the state of the pandemic and mask mandates, the Board reaffirmed its support of Director Montero's authority to modify the library's code of conduct, specifically the use of library space and mask requirements, as needed in light of changing conditions and until the Board chooses to terminate that authority. Director Montero thanked the Board for their support and confidence.

UNION REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT

Union Representative Neider reported that the staff respect each other in areas where some other staff may believe masks should still be worn and the majority of the staff support the termination of the mask policy, as other City departments have already done.

WLS REPORT

Trustee Puglia announced that WLS is hosting a trustee-gathering event on February 23 designed to promote participation of member library trustees and he invited all YPL trustees to attend.

Trustee Puglia also announced that New York State is considering removing the Mount Vernon Public Library (MVPL) Board of Trustees for failure to follow state protocol and fiscal mismanagement and he expressed his concern for repercussions in neighboring libraries should MVPL close. The Board discussed the controversy at length, specifically the misappropriation of millions of dollars and its designation as central library for Westchester County. Director Montero explained the purpose of a central library but did not believe a change in its status would significantly affect WLS member libraries and did not believe it would be appropriate for other member libraries to try to take that status.

PERSONNEL REPORT

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

Bannister, Roseanne, Permanent Clerk IV, \$62,824.00/yr, eff. 1/21/2022
Grady, Khanliah, Permanent Principal Library Clerk, \$53,206.00/yr, eff. 1/21/2022
Pinto, Victoria, P/T Page, \$15.00/hr, eff. 1/21/2022
Sibaweihi, Hofsatu, P/T Page, \$15.00/hr, eff. 1/28/2022

Acknowledged the following terminations:

McManus, Carmela, P/T Page, \$15.00/hr, eff. 1/22/2022

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Board President Maron asked for volunteers to serve as chairs of the standing committees to periodically update the Board on its progress.

Finance, Budget & Planning- Maron, Jannetti, Sabatino
Trustee Jannetti volunteered to chair.

Employee Relations – Maron, Puglia, Duggan
Trustee Puglia volunteered to chair.

Buildings & Grounds – Maron, Giuffrida
Trustee Giuffrida volunteered to chair.

Policy – Maron, Ilarraza, Puglia, Sabatino
Board President Maron appointed Trustee Ilarraza chair.

Fundraising & Development – Maron, Jannetti
Board President Maron volunteered to chair.

Foundation Update: Trustee Maron confirmed Wednesday, May 11, 2022 as the date of the gala at Will Library. She announced that the Foundation had formed a committee to plan ticket and sponsorship sales and asked for assistance from trustees and management. Trustee Jannetti and Assistant Director Porteus offered their assistance.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment of bills as listed on Schedule #836.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

NONE

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Board President Maron motioned the Board into Executive Session at 7:48 pm to discuss a personnel matter. The session ended at 8:01 pm.

NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE – Thursday, March 17, 2022

On motion of Trustee Sabatino the Meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.

Jesse Montero
Library Director & Secretary