

YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD MEETING  
RIVERFRONT LIBRARY  
DECEMBER 21, 2023

**ATTENDANCE**

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| TRUSTEES:                   | Nancy Maron<br>Joseph Puglia<br>Patricia Phelan<br>John A. Daily Jr.<br>Ofunne Edoziem |
| LIBRARY DIRECTOR:           | Jesse Montero  |
| ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR: | Shauna Porteus   |
| BUSINESS MANAGER:           | Vivian Presedo   |
| ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY:   | James Hackett  |
| WLS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:   | Trustee Puglia   |
| UNION REPRESENTATIVE:       | NONE   |
| GUESTS:                     | Oswaldo Coto-Chang, Amanda Ospina,<br>Haifa Bint-Kadi, Angel Castro                    |

The Board Meeting began at 7:00 pm.

**MINUTES**

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded by Trustee Daily and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the Meeting of November 16, 2023.

**MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Director Montero reported several staff updates. He announced that Crestwood Library Branch Manager Zahra Baird was recently recognized by the Westchester East Putnam Region PTA (WEPR PTA) with a Heroes in Education award; Ms. Baird was honored at their Fall Luncheon on November 16th and received a Certificate of Recognition from New York State Senator and Education Committee Chair Shelley Mayer. Director Montero also announced that Riverfront Children's Department Head Oswaldo Coto-Chang was permanently appointed to the position following his temporary promotion three months ago. Director Montero also introduced Librarian Trainee Amanda Ospina. Ms. Ospina was hired in August to serve in the Riverfront Children's Department and recently received her degree. Ms. Ospina introduced herself to the Board. She said she was happy to have the

opportunity to serve the community and already feels like she belongs; the Board welcomed her to YPL.

Trustee Edoziem arrived at 7:04 pm.

Director Montero reported that YPL received a \$25,000 grant from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA). He believed this is the largest arts grant YPL has ever received. The grant is intended to support an organization's entire artistic operation instead of a specific program or project. He expects the award to be used to fund stipends for teaching artists or commissioning art installations.

Director Montero reported that YPL recently received a Community Partner Award from the Yonkers Youth Bureau. The award was presented to YPL at the Nodine Hill Community Center on December 16 in recognition of the library's outstanding youth programs and services and support for the Youth Bureau and the community.

Director Montero updated the Board on several IT projects. Riverfront Library recently deployed new PCs to its Computer Room. The new PCs feature Windows 11 and Microsoft Office as well as built-in microphones and cameras. The Computer Room and its new PCs also use a new print management system that controls reservations and printing, making it more efficient and easier to use for patrons and staff while enhancing privacy and security. Future projects will include a new guest pass system and credit card processing for printing and copying.

Assistant Director Porteus updated the Board on YPL's partnership with the Einstein College of Medicine. In January YPL partnered with Einstein to host three students for four hours a month as part of a service learning class. She reported that the partnership was a success and improved health literacy in the community by offering several programs and information tables. Programs included pathways to a career in medicine for teens, decoding cancer for adults, storytimes on nutrition and fitness for children and information tables on blood pressure. She expects the partnership to continue in the new year and believes it will focus on teens and environmental health.

## **UNION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT**

NONE

## **PERSONNEL REPORT**

On motion of Trustee Phelan, seconded by Trustee Daily and unanimously carried, the Board ratified the following appointments:

- Ojeakhena, Ohiosimuan Olufemi Jamal; P/T Page, \$15.00/hour, eff. 11/25/2023
- Rabbaa, Rema; P/T Page, \$15.00/hour, eff. 11/25/2023
- Allen, Albert; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023
- Amoyaw, Alfred; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023
- Awwad, Zaina; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023
- Bannister, Frances; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023

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Burgos, Mariangelis; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Cardona, Diana; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Clark, Lori; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Colavolpe-Leone, Nina; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Collins, Laurel; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
DeLeon, Radilisa; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Fascaldo, Sunday; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Grant, Madison; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Hickey, Douglas; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Jacob, Hephshibah; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Javier, Sade; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Keefe, Olivia; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Lawyerr, Gabrielle; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
McCluskey-Nightengale, Ella Mbali; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Miller, Alecia; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Mintah, Lord; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Monaco, Gabriella; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Moudud, Aliya; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Murshed, Mohamed; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Okang, Samuel; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Ortega, Alessandra; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Osei-Agyemang, Keziah; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Pineda, Adriana; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Powell, Crystal; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Primitivo, Cristian; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Rabadi, Roselyn; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Robles, Alison; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Rodrigues, Matthew; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Saccente, Valentina; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Schiffino, Roman; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Schoenlank, Erin Elizabeth; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Schoenlank, Janet; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Siegel, Pamela; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Sullivan, Caroline; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Sullivan, Juan; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Tolentino, Kristin; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Trovato, Lucia; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Varker, Natalie; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Williams, Debra; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Williams, Josiah; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Zagha, Dina; Junior Clerk (PT), \$15.00 per hour, eff. 11/25/2023  
Rojas, Angel; P/T Page, \$15.00 per hour, eff. 12/2/2023  
Coto-Chang, Oswaldo; Permanent Librarian III, \$85,361.00/year, eff. 12/11/2023

Acknowledged the following resignation:

Hannigan, Michael; Custodial Worker, \$60,641.00/yr, eff. 11/1/2023

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Fundraising & Development** – Jannetti (chair)

Foundation Update: President Maron announced that the Foundation’s annual appeal is ongoing and that contributions could now be made online in addition to regular mail and urged trustees to share the news. She also reported that at the last Foundation meeting they wrote a \$25,000 check to the library, although she noted that the Foundation will retain some funds to invest in a part-time employee to assist with donor outreach, programming and fundraising and development.

**Policy** – Sabatino (chair)

Assistant Director Porteus presented a proposal of minor changes to the Social Media Policy. In light of growing engagement and new branding and personnel, she believed it was an appropriate time to review the policy and internal procedures. The Board discussed the implications of freedom of expression and the safety of patrons. On motion of Trustee Daily, seconded by Trustee Puglia and unanimously carried, the Board adopted the Social Media Policy as proposed in its Board Report.

**Nominating** - Daily (chair)

Chairman Daily of the temporary Nominating Committee reported that he had conversations with trustees to determine a slate of nominees for the election of officers at the annual meeting next month. He announced that Nancy Maron, Joseph Puglia and Stephen Jannetti would again be put forth as nominees for President, Vice President and Treasurer, respectively, at the annual meeting next month. Patricia Phelan would also accept appointment as Representative to the WLS Board of Trustees.

In addition to determining the slate of nominees, Trustee Daily also discussed goals and action items trustees were interested in for the new year. These included shadow officers to better understand and diversify the roles of elected officers, aligning the goals of standing trustee committees to the needs of the Board and YPL, more review of metrics and reports to better meet the goals of committees, and more advocacy. President Maron and Trustee Daily suggested a group workshop to discuss this in greater detail prior to the next annual meeting next month.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

On motion of Trustee Daily, seconded by Trustee Phelan and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment of bills as listed on Schedule #858.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Director Montero discussed YPL’s operating budget request of the City for the fiscal year ending in 2025. He reported that he received a letter from the City informing departments that they expect fiscal years 2025 and 2026 to be difficult due to the expiration of COVID era funds and increased debt service. Although YPL intends to fill its present vacancies, it will not ask for any new full-time positions; new requests will also include increased

insurance funding due to rising costs and the continuation of a rental chiller unit at Will Library during the summer months.

Director Montero also discussed YPL's capital budget request. He noted that while the City Council approved and authorized the capital budget request of \$3.4 million for Will Library Improvements last year, which includes a new permanent chiller and auditorium renovations, the availability of those funds are uncertain until the City of Yonkers bonds for the money. In addition to the pending status of that approved request, YPL will also request capital funds to purchase a new vehicle to replace the aging Jeep that is near the end of its useful life.

Trustee Phelan inquired on the status of the elevator at Will Library. Director Montero acknowledged that the repair project following a failed inspection is behind schedule, but reported that YPL met with the Yonkers Fire Department and Department of Housing and Buildings to identify the problem and expects it to pass inspection following the holidays and the new year. He also noted that these repairs are fully funded through previously allocated capital funds.

Director Montero does not believe that the fiscal situation will be awful, although he understands the need for the City to manage expectations and noted a much more dire situation at New York Public Library where budget cuts have been severe.

Trustee Puglia inquired about declining circulation. Director Montero acknowledged that while circulation has begun to plateau at some libraries, he believes it is consistent with national trends and noted that other metrics of engagement such as gate counts and programming attendance, as well as anecdotal evidence, are encouraging. The Board also discussed the appropriate application of data and statistics in other areas such as advocacy and marketing.

Trustee Phelan inquired about outreach and service to senior citizens who may be homebound or find it difficult to visit libraries in person. Director Montero replied that he has had discussions with staff about conducting an analysis of the value of a bookmobile and whether it would be a viable capital budget request in the future. He also discussed the Library-By-Mail program and partnerships with the Office for the Aging and Neighborhood of Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NNORC).

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

President Maron motioned the Board into Executive Session at 8:05 pm to discuss the employment history and performance of management employees.

The Board exited the Executive Session at 8:17 pm. On motion of Trustee Daily, seconded by Trustee Puglia and unanimously carried, the Board voted to authorize a salary increase for Assistant Director Porteus, Business Manager Presedo and Manager of Public Relations and Marketing Angel Castro consistent with the raises received by other unrepresented City of Yonkers employees.

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**NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE** – Annual Meeting on Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 7:00pm at  
Grinton I. Will Library.

On motion of Trustee Edoziem, seconded by Trustee Phelan and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned the Meeting at 8:18 pm.

Jesse Montero  
Library Director & Secretary