

YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY
MONTHLY MEETING
RIVERFRONT LIBRARY
FEBRUARY 27, 2025

ATTENDANCE

TRUSTEES:	Nancy Maron John Daily Jr. Joseph Puglia Michael Sabatino Ofunne Edoziem
LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	Jesse Montero
ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	Shauna Porteus
BUSINESS MANAGER:	Vivian Presedo
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY:	James Hackett
WLS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:	NONE
UNION REPRESENTATIVE:	Brandon Neider
GUESTS:	Oswaldo Coto-Chang, Patricia Ricardo, Mary Robison, Tara Somersall

The Board Meeting began at 6:59 pm.

MINUTES

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded by Trustee Sabatino and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of January 16, 2025.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Director Montero discussed the eclectic schedule of programming and services celebrating Black History Month at YPL. He highlighted a film series of Blaxploitation films, a hip hop dance series, an offsite tour of the historic Apollo Theater and a talk with AJ Woodson, author and editor of Black Westchester, as well virtual lecture series, art workshops and dance and storytelling performances.

Director Montero updated the Board on the chiller and switchgear project at Will Library. On January 30 the City of Yonkers awarded a \$1.862 million contract to Thermodynamics Corp. following a competitive bidding process. The City filed a notice to proceed on February 18 and work has commenced with parking lot mark-ups and cutting, as well as

the procurement of the chiller and pumps. He has been pleased with the process of working with them so far and the library's engineering and architectural consultants have had good reviews of them as well. He expects the project to last through July and stay under budget and will update the Board as construction progresses.

Director Montero announced that librarians Ana Gantzer, Eileen Fusco and Mary Robison attended ALA's LibLearnX conference in Phoenix. Ms. Gantzer and Ms. Fusco moderated the panel discussion "Harvesting Health: Sustainability and Beauty, One Seed at a Time", where they detailed their experience running YPL's Seed Library, which is in its fourth year. The panel was well-received and attendees all received a seed packet with instructions on geo-tagging after planting the seeds so their growth could be mapped across the country. He expects more staff to attend more conferences in the future and hopes it will raise the profile of YPL.

Director Montero reported that the Westchester County Board of Legislators and ArtsWestchester awarded YPL a \$10,000 legislative initiative grant to fund an artist-in-residency program at the Riverfront Art Gallery to sustain art workshops and classes and feature the artist's work. He noted that this grant is in addition to the \$40,000 already received from NYSCA, bringing the total funding to \$50,000, or a tenfold increase from five years ago. He added that the Board of Legislators also committed to maintain nearly \$30,000 in funding for health and wellness programming and digital literacy and STEM programming.

Assistant Director Porteus reported that Will Library hosted "A Voyage Through Time", a senior prom-themed event for senior citizens, on Valentine's Day. The program, which featured line dancing, mocktails, photos and a prom king and queen crowning, received very good feedback from over 120 attendees and was the result of a partnership with NNORC and the Office for the Aging.

Tara Somersall, Branch Administrator of the Will Library, commented that the success of the senior prom inspired her to think of another program for the senior citizen community, A Mid-Summer's Night Dream, a dance based on the William Shakespeare play and announced a tentative date of Thursday, June 12. Ms. Somersall and the Board discussed several music and entertainment options.

GUEST SPEAKER

Director Montero introduced Oswaldo Coto-Chang, Head of the Riverfront Children's Department, as part of the ongoing staff speaker series. Mr. Coto-Chang took a moment to introduce himself and his department of five. He discussed in detail the locations his department supervises, such as the Cove, the Sensory Room and the food pantry, as well as services and programs his department provides like outreach and storytimes. The food pantry, a product of a partnership with Feeding Westchester, has become a particular success after they reconfigured their service model to allow patrons to choose the groceries they need instead of picking up a pre-assembled package. The Board was pleased with the success of the Riverfront Children's Department and thanked Mr. Coto-Chang for the presentation and his service.

UNION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Representative Neider had no report.

WLS REPORT

NONE

PERSONNEL REPORT

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

Mordan, Jose; Custodial Worker (P/T), \$16.50/hr, eff. 2/1/2025

Varker, Emily; Junior Clerk (P/T), \$16.50/hr, eff. 2/1/2025

Acknowledged the following resignations:

Youshock, Marie; Library Assistant, \$79,791/year, eff. 12/21/2024 (retired)

Zatkovich, Stephanie; Junior Clerk (P/T), \$16.50/hr, eff. 1/22/2025

Awwad, Zaina; Junior Clerk (P/T), \$16.50/hr, eff. 1/23/2025

Nembhard, Ajarni; Custodial Worker (P/T), \$16.50/hr, eff. 1/24/2025

Saccente, Valentina; Junior Clerk (P/T), \$16.50/hr, eff. 1/27/2025

Martinez, Luis; Custodial Worker, \$52,026/year, eff. 2/5/2025

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Policy - Sabatino (chair), Jannetti, Edoziem.

Trustee Sabatino asked Director Montero to discuss the library's policy regarding interactions with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and/or other law enforcement agencies inquiring about the immigration status of patrons and staff. Director Montero said that WLS provided guidance and suggested procedures, but he was happy with YPL's existing policy and current law, which requires a court order or subpoena to access staff-only spaces or confidential records, and instructed staff interacting with law enforcement to summon administration immediately. He said he would keep the Board apprised of any future interactions with ICE or law enforcement.

Buildings and Ground - Daily Jr. (chair), Sabatino, Puglia

Vice President Daily reported that he met with Director Montero, Assistant Director Porteus, President Maron and Deputy Mayor Gerry regarding the development of a fourth library and other capital improvements, such as ADA accessibility at Crestwood and a new auditorium at Will. Director Montero characterized the meeting as positive and planned to have similar meetings with members of the City Council.

Outreach - Edoziem (chair), Jannetti

Trustee Edoziem reported that she met with Trustee Jannetti to discuss the viability of a bookmobile to better reach young children and senior citizens and explored possible outside funding sources and grants.

Fundraising & Development - Daily (chair)

Foundation Update: President Maron reported that the Foundation was busy promoting the gala in April, noting that invitations will go out within the week and asked trustees to promote and share the invitations within their personal networks as well. The Board also discussed social media promotion.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

On motion of Trustee Edoziem, seconded by Trustee Daily and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment of bills as listed on Schedule #872.

NEW BUSINESS

Director Montero presented a stipulation of settlement with SEIU 704B for the Board's approval. On motion of Trustee Edoziem, seconded by Trustee Sabatino and unanimously carried, the Board approved the stipulation of settlement with SEIU 704B.

Trustee Sabatino asked Director Montero for an update on the event honoring Lucia Trovato. Director Montero replied that furniture was purchased and set up to put together a waiting area near the lobby of the Central Avenue entrance of the Will Library and shared photos of the space with the Board. Director Montero added that he has been in contact with the family to plan a ribbon-cutting ceremony and would update the Board when a date has been set.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded by Trustee Daily and unanimously carried, the Board entered into Executive Session to discuss the proposed acquisition of real property at 7:54 pm and asked Director Montero, Assistant Director Porteus and Business Manager Vivian Presedo to join them. The Board exited the Executive Session at 8:37 pm.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Thursday, March 20, 2025 at 7:00 pm at Grinton I. Will Library

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded by Trustee Daily and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned the Meeting at 8:37 pm.

Board Meeting – February 27, 2025

Jesse Montero
Library Director & Secretary