

YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY
ANNUAL MEETING
GRINTON I. WILL LIBRARY
JANUARY 16, 2025

ATTENDANCE

TRUSTEES:	Nancy Maron Joseph Puglia Steven Jannetti Michael Sabatino John Daily Jr. 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:	Patricia Ricardo, Tara Somersall, Anthony Ortiz, Mary Robison, Zahra Baird

The Board Meeting began at 7:02pm.

Director Montero chaired the meeting until the election of officers for 2025.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2025

Director Montero asked Trustee Jannetti to present a slate of nominees for office in 2025. Trustee Jannetti presented the following slate of nominees: Nancy Maron for President, John Daily Jr. for Vice President, and Joseph Puglia for Treasurer. With no other nominations or objections from the floor, those nominees were elected by acclamation. The Board congratulated the elected officers.

President Maron also announced that Trustee Sabatino was reappointed by the Yonkers Public Schools (YPS) Board of Education to serve another five year term as trustee at their last meeting in December and took his oath of office earlier in the week.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Director Montero suggested to the Board that a different member of the staff be invited to each meeting to spotlight different departments and areas of library service. The Board was pleased with the suggestion and invited Custodial Worker Anthony Ortiz to share his accomplishments and responsibilities with the Board. Mr. Ortiz gave a presentation about his latest project polishing and buffing the 60-year-old stone floors of the Will Library. The Board congratulated him on the successful completion of the project and thanked him for his service.

Director Montero continued to update the Board on staff news. He was proud to report that Custodial Worker Reginald Hill received a proclamation and distinguished service award from the City of Yonkers in recognition for performing the Heimlich maneuver on co-worker Pablo Duran when he was experiencing a choking episode. Director Montero also reported that Sandhya Sanal of the Will Library Circulation Department was promoted to Clerk II and that librarian trainees Jacqueline Leone and Charlie Loftus recently earned enough credits to receive their Master's of Information and Library Science from SUNY Buffalo and Rutgers University respectively and expects them to be eligible for promotion to Librarian at some point in 2025. He believed the librarian trainee program has been a success and a good way to groom and develop talented librarians.

Director Montero reported that the City of Yonkers Purchasing Department conducted the opening of sealed bids for the chiller project at Will Library and was pleased to inform the Board that all bids came in under budget of approximately \$2.5 million and believes the project can proceed. The next steps will be to review the bids to determine the lowest responsive and responsible bidder and meet with them.

Director Montero also updated the Board on the status of facility improvements at Crestwood Library. Library staff met with the architectural engineering firm Fuller D'Angelo at Crestwood to discuss the project, which includes replacement of the building's original windows, its fire alarm system, and upgrading to LED lighting.

Director Montero discussed library upgrades to its broadband infrastructure through E-Rate funding. E-Rate is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program that subsidizes schools and libraries with internet technology and services equipment. The first phase of the project involved upgrading the buildings' cabling from Category 5 to Category 6 and was completed earlier in the week; the second phase will replace the buildings' wireless access points. E-Rate reimbursed 90% of the project cost of \$83,000 for a savings of \$71,000. He added that E-Rate will also reimburse 90% of its monthly internet bill as well. He expects the project to increase wireless speeds from 1 to 5 Gbps at Riverfront and 500 Mbps to 2 Gbps at Will.

Director Montero reported that YPL submitted its application to the City of Yonkers Planning Department for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. Planning oversees disbursement of federal funding from Housing and Urban Development for low to moderate socioeconomic census tracts, such as where Riverfront Library is located. The Social Service Hub project will feature improvements to areas of the second floor at Riverfront that provide social services to the community, such as the Sensory Room, food pantry and Literacy Solutions. If awarded, funds will be used to purchase furniture and technology that will make the area easier to access and use the social services provided there.

Assistant Director Porteus discussed the Winter Reading Warm-Up Challenge. The program is an effort to connect with the community and build excitement for the larger summer program and runs from January 1 through March 15. Updates to the program this year include a collective system-wide goal of 2,025 books read by the community and new staff training on the Beanstack digital platform used to track progress, as well as collaboration and partnership with local YPS teachers. Participants will also win a small prize for signing up and for every third book read; the grand prize winner will choose something from the YPL online merchandise store. President Maron suggested an afterschool program to stimulate signups; Assistant Director Porteus replied that the difficulty is not signups but ongoing participation, so library programming such as storytimes has been used to maintain engagement and log progress

President Maron commented that she was pleased with the ongoing professional development of staff, such as trainees pursuing their degrees. Vice President Daily commented that he was impressed with the savings on the wireless speed upgrades.

MINUTES

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded by Trustee Daily and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the Meeting of December 18, 2024.

UNION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Representative Neider directed the Board to his written report in their packet. He highlighted a few examples of miscommunication with administration over instances of out-of-title pay and the implementation of the Beanstack digital platform but noted that overall the Union and Management were working well together. President Maron welcomed the written report as a good way to keep track of issues.

WLS REPORT

NONE

PERSONNEL REPORT

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

Sanal, Sandhya; Permanent Clerk II, \$52,676/yr, eff. 1/3/2025

Acknowledged the following resignations:

Thaler, Susan; Librarian II (P/T), \$25.35/hr, eff. 12/1/2024

Costanza, Blanche; Permanent Clerk II, \$65,547/yr, eff. 1/3/2025 (retired)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

President Maron asked Vice President Daily to help actively guide the committees in their work this year and made the following appointments, adding that the special committees of Fundraising & Development, Buildings & Grounds and Outreach would be retained from last year. Vice President Daily also led a discussion on the role and mission of each committee.

Finance, Budget and Planning - Treasurer Puglia (chair), Trustee Jannetti

Policy - Trustees Sabatino (chair), Jannetti, Edoziem

Employee Relations - Vice President Daily (chair), Trustee Sabatino

Buildings and Grounds - Vice President Daily (chair), Trustees Sabatino, Puglia

Outreach - Trustees Edoziem (chair), Jannetti

Fundraising & Development - Vice President Daily (chair)

Foundation Update: President Maron reminded the Board that the date of the annual gala honoring Wilson Kimball and long-time librarian Eugene Howell will be April 24 at Riverfront. She added that the annual appeal, which went almost entirely digital this year, was on target to meet or exceed its goals.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded by Trustee Puglia and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment of bills as listed on Schedule #871.

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded by Trustee Sabatino and unanimously carried, the Board voted to designate Trustee Jannetti to certify claims for payment in the absence of the Treasurer and the President.

NEW BUSINESS

President Maron asked Director Montero if a date had been set to honor the late library employee Lucia Trovato, whose family had generously donated to the Foundation in her name. Director Montero announced that furniture was purchased for the lobby at the Central Avenue entrance of Will Library to furnish a comfortable new waiting area for patrons waiting for transportation. He expects the furniture to arrive and be set up within a week and hopes to plan a ribbon-cutting event soon after depending on the availability of the family and the Mayor's Office.

Trustee Sabatino announced that he would be retiring from the City of Yonkers on March 20, but would continue to advise the City on a part-time basis. The Board congratulated him for his service to Yonkers.

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Head of Riverfront Reference and Adult Services Mary Robison discussed with the Board some upcoming conferences her staff would be attending. Librarians Ana Gantzer and Eileen Fuco would be presenting and moderating at Lib Learn X, the American Library Association's (ALA) winter conference in Phoenix, on the work of the Seed Library and community gardening. Ms. Robison added that she, Assistant Director Porteus and President Maron, would also present at the Connecticut Digital Humanities in New Britain on growing a library's archival program through digital humanities projects.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded by Trustee Edoziem and unanimously carried, the Board entered into Executive Session to discuss the history and performance of a particular employee at 7:49 pm and asked Director Montero to join them. The Board exited the Executive Session at 9:00 pm.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 7:00pm at Riverfront Library

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded by Trustee Edoziem and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned the Meeting at 9:00 pm.

Jesse Montero
Library Director & Secretary