

YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY
MONTHLY MEETING
RIVERFRONT LIBRARY
JULY 17, 2025

ATTENDANCE

TRUSTEES:	John Daily Jr. Joseph Puglia Michael Sabatino Patricia Phelan
LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	Jesse Montero
ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	NONE
BUSINESS MANAGER:	Vivian Presedo
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY:	James Hackett
WLS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:	Patricia Phelan
UNION REPRESENTATIVE:	Brandon Neider
GUESTS:	Mary Robison, Tara Somersall, Patricia Ricardo-Ortiz, Z. Baird, Elizabeth Caruso

The Board Meeting began at 7:00 pm.

MINUTES

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded by Trustee Phelan and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the Meeting of June 16, 2025.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Director Montero announced that Z. Baird, Branch Administrator of Crestwood Library, was recognized by the East Yonkers Kiwanis Club on June 16 with the Everyday Hero Award. The Kiwanis Club cited achievements such as her mentorship and leadership in the community and collaboration with other community organizations such as the Friends of Crestwood Library and the Crestwood Historical Society. The Board congratulated Ms. Baird for the award.

Director Montero reported that YPL was awarded a \$200,000 Local Community Assistance Program (LOCAP) grant from New York State to repave the Will Library parking lot. The project is expected to begin in mid-2026 following the completion of the chiller

project and the winter. Director Montero thanked Senator Shelley Mayer, whose sponsorship was instrumental in securing the funds.

Director Montero updated the Board on the status of the chiller project at Will. Since the commencement of trenching and demolition of the parking lot and sidewalks and the discovery of an unforeseen drainage pipe in the spring, the project has progressed well under the guidance of the City of Yonkers Engineering Department. Delivery of the new chillers are expected next week and the parking lot and sidewalks will be restored following the chiller installation and testing, which is expected sometime in September. The arrival and installation of the electrical switchgear, however, is expected to take longer. Director Montero will keep the Board apprised of the project as it progresses.

Director Montero presented a new mural in the children's department at Riverfront Library. The new mural, by Victor Alexander St. Hillaire (VASH), is a depiction of downtown Yonkers as a colorful, joyful and vibrant community. VASH completed the mural over the span of several days in full view of the public, which Director Montero believed made the experience more special for children. The mural was funded by the New York State Council for the Arts (NYSCA) grant and a ribbon-cutting ceremony with Mayor Spano is expected next week.

Director Montero reported that YPL contracted with Adaptive Signage to produce and install signage at Riverfront for its inclusive wayfinding project. The project, funded by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), is the result of a study commissioned by Steven Winter and Associates last year and includes strategies for making the building more accessible and easy to navigate. Signage includes restroom signs and directories, vinyl wrapping and a feature wall for the Sensory Room. Director Montero added that staff have already noted fewer directional questions from patrons as a result of the improvements.

Director Montero announced that YPL received a \$5,000 grant from the New York Community Trust as a result of an anonymous recommendation. Director Montero believes this is the first such anonymous recommendation in the organization's history and reflects YPL's growing visibility among donors and grantmakers.

GUEST SPEAKER

Mary Robison, Head of Reference & Adult Services at Riverfront and lead for YPL's local history and archives team, presented an update on the system's history and archive work. Ms. Robison described the system-wide team's structure and growth in programs and outreach—especially genealogy sessions, field trips, and partnerships with Sarah Lawrence College and regional cultural organizations—which have increased engagement and visibility, including recent conference presentations. She also reported progress on collection digitization, World War II oral histories, scanning Yonkers City Council minutes, and new online collections documenting African American, Assyrian and LGBTQ+ histories. She also noted recent grants from METRO for collection digitization and from DHPSNY for an archives assessment. Going forward, she previewed programming on Revolutionary Westchester, a John Edward Bruce documentary, processing a major

donation of African American history titles and supporting the Crestwood Library's upcoming centennial celebration next year.

UNION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

NONE

PERSONNEL REPORT

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

Hill, Reginald; Temporary Building Custodian I, \$71,824.00/yr, eff. 6/3/2025

Leone, Jacqueline; Permanent Librarian I, \$62,281.00/yr, eff. 7/4/2025

Akoto, Shanelle; Junior Clerk (P/T), \$16.50/hr, eff. 6/28/2025

Villanueva, Harrison; Junior Clerk (P/T), \$16.50/hr, eff. 6/26/2025

Acknowledge the following terminations:

Azarcon, Emma; Librarian II (P/T), \$25.35/hr, eff. 6/11/2025

Hickey, Douglas; Junior Clerk (P/T), \$16.50/hr, eff. 6/11/2025

Keefe, Olivia; Junior Clerk (P/T), \$16.50/hr, eff. 6/11/2025

Grullon, Arkenny; Page (P/T), \$16.50/hr, eff. 7/4/2025

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Policy - Trustees Sabatino (chair), Jannetti, Edoziem

Director Montero reported to the committee that he completed the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and Program and would propose it to the Board later in the meeting.

WLS REPORT

Trustee Phelan reported that the WLS Board will not meet in July and August and had no formal report to make.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

On motion of Trustee Phelan, seconded by Trustee Sabatino and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment of bills as listed on Schedule #877.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board discussed the proposed Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and Program. Director Montero outlined next steps and an implementation of the policy and program,

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including staff training through the library's insurance carrier, a request to the Yonkers Office of Emergency Management for a safety audit, exploration of quicker communication with security from public service desks, standardized incident reporting and a review of security camera placements. He added that the policy would be reviewed annually. Director Montero also went on to describe a recent incident at Riverfront where a patron reported seeing another patron in possession of a firearm. The incident received a significant police response, as well as local media coverage, but only a hammer was discovered after police investigated. Director Montero and the Board discussed communication strategies with the staff and public that focus on de-escalation and proper reporting.

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded by Trustee Phelan and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and Program.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Thursday, September 18, 2025 at 7:00pm at Riverfront Library

On motion of Trustee Sabatino, seconded by Trustee Phelan and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned the Meeting at 7:48pm.

Jesse Montero
Library Director & Secretary