

YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD MEETING
ELECTRONIC MEETING
DECEMBER 17, 2020

ATTENDANCE

TRUSTEES:	Nancy Maron Josephine Ilarraza Stephen Jannetti Joseph Puglia Hon. Michael Sabatino
LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	Jesse Montero
DEPUTY DIRECTOR:	Susan Thaler
BUSINESS MANAGER:	Vivian Presedo
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY:	James Hackett
WLS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:	Trustee Puglia
UNION REPRESENTATIVE:	Brandon Neider
GUEST SPEAKER:	Mary Ann Penzero, Friends of Crestwood
GUESTS:	Carlos Figueroa, Elizabeth Caruso, Zahra Baird, Eileen Fusco, Kay Donohue, Philip Poggiali, Carmela McManus, Odalys Aguilar, Phyllis Cole, Christopher Sheerin, Sumie Hernandez-Moss, Gloria Fields

The Board Meeting was held electronically via ZOOM®, Conference ID# 950 9493 9913.

The Board Meeting began at 7:03 pm.

MINUTES

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the Meeting of November 19, 2020.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Director Montero reported that Yonkers Public Library returned to a contact-free pick-up service model for two weeks following the Thanksgiving holiday while continuing a team-based hybrid schedule where staff rotate between working from home and in-building. Riverfront and Grinton I. Will libraries reopened to the public earlier in the week with limited services, such as the elimination of computer use and public seating. Crestwood remained

closed to the public, providing only contact-free pick-up services. Director Montero announced that YPL plans to return to contact-free pick-up following the December holidays.

Director Montero was pleased to report that the staff who had tested positive for the virus as of the last meeting had recovered and were doing better. He added that since the last meeting a staff member at Riverfront had tested positive and was quarantining. He learned of the incidence on December 4. Riverfront did not close, as this staff member's exposure to others was minimal due to the hybrid staff schedule.

Director Montero informed the Board of several ongoing technology projects. YPL improved its wireless speeds with little added cost at all of its branches: Will and Crestwood's speeds were increased fivefold, while Riverfront's increased tenfold; they were also investigating the possibility of expanding the wireless signal to reach the parking lot at Will so as to allow patrons access to library services without actually entering the building. Director Montero also announced the implementation of a text messaging service for staff to alert them of urgent matters, such as a building closure, and the distribution of various equipment to enable them to work from home as necessary.

Director Montero announced that virtual programming has continued uninterrupted despite the various building closures and schedule changes. YPL recently offered its 1,000th program and total attendance at virtual programs is over 16,000.

Director Montero updated the Board on several partnerships and initiatives with other community organizations, including the launch of a new library card profile for Yonkers Public Schools educators, various programming with the Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NNORC) and Yonkers Office for the Aging, and a 150th anniversary celebration with the Yonkers Police Department in early 2021.

Director Montero announced that YPL has been in touch with Yonkers Arts and the Department of Planning to accept a donation of public art from Adam Schultz to beautify the interior of Will Library. Director Montero also announced that he has discussed with the YoFi Digital Media Arts Center a public art project at Riverfront Library where images and videos may be projected on to the windows of the fourth floor to better enhance the visibility of the building to local residents and train passengers.

Deputy Director Thaler updated the Board on the progress of Sarah Lawrence College humanities fellow Dr. Kishauna Soljour's work with students and teens at Will and Riverfront libraries. Dr. Soljour has instructed the teens in audio editing and podcast production for their oral history projects.

Deputy Director announced that this would be her last Board meeting before her retirement in early January and thanked the Trustees for their support during her tenure at Yonkers Public Library. She remarked that it has been the highlight of her professional career and looks forward to staying involved during her retirement.

Board President Maron inquired about recent circulation data and trends. Director Montero answered that while circulation of physical material remains down, it briefly recovered in the fall before going down as new coronavirus cases rose over the last couple of months. Electronic content became more popular in the spring during the initial outbreak of the pandemic and, although it has slightly subsided, it remains very popular compared to last

year. This data has also been used in collection development strategies, such as book leasing and better ebook purchases.

UNION REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT

Union Representative Neider had no report but noted the Union looks forward to working with Management on the upcoming budget proposal.

WLS REPORT

Trustee Puglia reported that the role of a trustee and the potential for conflicts of interest was discussed at the most recent WLS Board of Trustees meeting.

PERSONNEL REPORT

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board ratified the following appointment:

Mia McCants, P/T Page, \$13.00/hr, eff. 11/20/2020

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance, Budget & Planning - Maron, Jannetti, Puglia.

Board President Maron thanked Trustee Jannetti for arranging a recent meeting to discuss the budget proposal for the new fiscal year beginning in July.

Employee Relations - Maron, Puglia.

Buildings & Grounds - Maron, Saraceno

Policy – Maron, Ilarraza, Sabatino.

Fundraising & Development – Maron, Jannetti, Mack.

Foundation update: Board President Maron reported that the Foundation voted to award Yonkers Public Library \$20,000 at its last meeting. She also updated the Board that the Foundation’s annual appeal continues to be conducted online and is going well. She noted that the Foundation is still looking for new directors to serve on their Board as well.

GUEST SPEAKER

Mary Ann Penzero was invited to discuss updates from the Friends of Crestwood Library. Ms. Penzero reported that the Friends recently held their annual meeting and that recent efforts have focused on community collaborations, including a virtual reading of the Nutcracker by students from School 15, health and wellness and book chat programs with NNORC and the

Friends' annual raffle fundraiser. She was also excited to announce that the Friends' 501(c)3 status as a non-profit organization was made official this past year and they looked forward to continuing to support the Crestwood Library.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment of bills as listed on Schedule #822.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Director Montero had no new policies or procedures to propose and referred to the management report to discuss new procedures that have already been implemented, such as the adjusted service model and new public and staff schedules. He also shared with the Board a memo he circulated to staff regarding health and safety expectations.

Director Montero updated the Board on the City's schedule and timeline for the budget request process. He expects a meeting in early January and was told by the Department of Finance to prepare a normal budget request without any adjustments in anticipation of COVID-related cuts, however he did note that the budget will ultimately hinge on the availability of federal and state support. The budget he intends to propose will look very similar to the budget they requested last year and reflect a continuity of effort and the important role libraries will play in the recovery from the pandemic. Business Manager Presedo added that, aside from the new teen librarian and art gallery curator positions requested last year, new funds will be needed to fill the new reading lists compiled by Yonkers Public Schools, purchase increased custodial supplies and renew the security contract at the Will Library. Director Montero hoped to have a proposal for the Board to approve at the next Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Board President Maron reminded trustees of the election of officers at the annual meeting next month and appointed Trustee Puglia to serve on the Nominating Subcommittee and announce a slate of nominees for election next month.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NONE

NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE – Thursday, January 21, 2021

Before adjourning, Director Montero and the Board congratulated Deputy Director Thaler on her retirement and thanked her for her exceptional service to Yonkers. In recognition of her leadership as Acting Director in the extraordinary early months of 2020 when the coronavirus pandemic first reached Yonkers, Director Montero revealed a presentation that honored her

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on an official roster of all eight YPL directors dating as far back as 1895. The trustees and several other guests in attendance also shared their memories and gratitude for her service and wished her well in retirement. Deputy Director Thaler was moved by the gesture of appreciation and thanked Director Montero and others for the tribute. She promised to stay in touch and remain involved in the community and looked forward to the future of Yonkers Public Library.

On motion of Trustee Puglia, the Meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

Jesse Montero
Library Director & Secretary