

YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD MEETING
ELECTRONIC MEETING
SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

ATTENDANCE

TRUSTEES:	Nancy Maron Josephine Ilarraza Steve Jannetti Joseph Puglia Hon. Michael Sabatino Darryl J. Mack
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
GUESTS:	Dominick Savarese, Arnaldo Torres, Carlos Figueroa, Elizabeth Caruso, Tara Somersall, Phyllis Cole, Zahra Baird, Tyisha Baker, Odalys Aguilar, Sumie Hernandez-Moss, Mbanefo Frank Iwuchukwu

The Board Meeting was held electronically via ZOOM®, Conference ID# 936 4081 1246.

The Board Meeting began at 7:07 pm.

MINUTES

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the Meeting of July 16, 2020.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Director Montero announced that it had been approximately ten weeks since Yonkers Public Library opened its doors to in-building service and there have been no known reports of COVID-19 from the staff or patrons. Computer and technology access was restored two weeks after opening. Most other technology has been restored since then, including juvenile and teen computers in anticipation of the new school year.

Director Montero reported that Riverfront and Grinton I. Will served as cooling centers and charging centers during several heat waves and Tropical Storm Isaias over the summer while many homes were without power and/or internet service. While there was no access to water fountains due to safety precautions, bottled water was available to the public as needed.

Director Montero discussed Yonkers Public Library's role in the 2020 Census and the Yonkers Counts complete count effort. Community Services Coordinator Rose Avilés led the census outreach effort by canvassing library patrons and visiting local community events. To date, YPL had assisted 688 residents be counted in 223 different Yonkers households. Riverfront Library also hosted the Census Bureau's training sessions, technology distribution and swearing-in of new enumerators.

Director Montero also discussed Yonkers Public Library's summer youth services. Riverfront Library's Event Space was a site for the Yonkers Public School's "Grab 'n' Go" summer meals distribution; YPL staff assisted in distributing 3,940 meals. Director Montero discussed YPL's partnership with JCY-Westchester Community Partners and its virtual version of the popular Summer Reading Buddies program where 208 students and 144 volunteers participated.

Director Montero updated the Board on virtual programming, including a full calendar of Hispanic Heritage programs that included a discussion of Puerto Rico's 65th Infantry Regiment. Director Montero also reported the few in-person programs that were conducted at YPL, including Planning Department public hearings, a police reform forum sponsored by the County Executive and parent-teacher technology workshops.

Deputy Director Thaler updated the Board on Yonkers Public Library's partnership with Sarah Lawrence College and its public humanities fellow, Dr. Kishauna Soljour. Dr. Soljour joined YPL in August as part of the Mellon Foundation grant and will be embedded with YPL for three years, working with teen patrons to help them produce podcasts that discuss the history of Yonkers and the impact of the library in the community, as well as assist them conduct art programs and oral history interviews.

Director Montero announced that as the Census count concludes YPL will begin to focus its efforts on voter registration. Director Montero also announced that Riverfront and Grinton I. Will will serve as the only early voting locations in Yonkers.

Trustee Sabatino shared that he had received an inquiry from a patron about expanding library hours. Director Montero discussed the availability of resources and the time needed for staff to conduct the additional daily tasks required to meet public health guidelines. Director Montero will reevaluate the hours of service and consider expanding them when possible.

UNION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

President Savarese inquired about the procedures used to monitor the number of patrons in library buildings at any time to make sure building capacities are not exceeded, specifically during early voting at Riverfront and Will. Director Montero discussed how security guards track the number of patrons in the buildings and how early voting will be conducted at each building to minimize the contact between voters and the staff and/or library patrons.

President Savarese also inquired about the status of full-time staff vacancies, specifically clerical, and expressed the Union's concern that some staff were experiencing difficulty scheduling unused vacation time before the end of the year. Representative Neider added that, although Management allowed the staff to carry over additional vacation time into 2021 as the buildings were closed during quarantine, some senior staff were still finding it difficult to maintain acceptable department staffing levels and schedule enough time off before the end of the calendar year. The Union asked that Management consider a stipulation of agreement to allow staff to carry over vacation time they would otherwise lose. Management confirmed that they had permitted staff to carry over an additional 25% beyond what they were already permitted to at their discretion and they agreed to discuss the matter further at another time.

WLS REPORT

Trustee Puglia announced that WLS would meet later in the month, however he reported that he did meet with Library administration earlier in the week to discuss new protocols for regularly communicating the needs and priorities of Yonkers Public Library directly to the WLS Board.

PERSONNEL REPORT

On motion of Tr. Puglia, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board ratified the following appointments:

Magnus Guzman, P/T Page, \$13.00/hr, eff. 7/3/2020
Catherine Alexandres, P/T Page, \$13.00/hr, eff. 8/21/2020
Jasmine Tetteh, P/T Page, \$13.00/hr, eff. 8/28/2020
Salem Murshed, P/T Page, \$13.00/hr, eff. 8/28/2020

Acknowledged the following terminations:

John Favareau, Librarian II, \$83,806.00/yr, eff. 8/6/2020
Jody Maier, P/T Librarian II, \$25.35/hr, eff. 7/24/2020
Kwame Kuffour-Berko, P/T Librarian II, \$25.35/hr, eff. 4/3/2020
Lloyd Conley, P/T Page, \$13.00/hr, eff. 6/17/2020
Elizabeth Sodano, Clerk I, \$52,085.00/yr, eff. 8/30/2020
Peter Alaimo, P/T Page, \$13.00/hr, eff. 8/27/2020
Daniela Ranallo, P/T Page, \$13.00/hr, eff. 9/3/2020
Amy Kranes, P/T Page, \$13.00/hr, eff. 3/14/2020

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Employee Relations - Maron, Puglia.

Buildings & Grounds - Maron, Saraceno

Policy – Maron, Ilarraza, Sabatino.

Fundraising & Development – Maron, Jannetti, Mack.

Foundation update: President Maron announced that the Foundation received \$7,000 in funding for programming through the assistance of County Legislator Ruth Walter. President Maron also announced that the Foundation was preparing to launch a promotion campaign beginning in October to last through the end of the year.

The Board welcomed Children’s Librarian Tara Somersall. She thanked Director Montero for his leadership during the pandemic and spoke about an experience of racial insensitivity she encountered from another employee during the previous Library leadership and urged the Director Montero to provide more training for the staff on diversity and implicit bias. Director Montero agreed more training is a good idea and announced that he would assemble a diverse committee of staff to find the right training opportunities.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Trustee Jannetti thanked Business Manager Presedo and her office for their quick responses to his inquiries as they worked virtually during the pandemic. On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment of bills as listed on Schedules #818 & #819.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

Director Montero updated the Board on the status of the Yonkers Public Library budget as a result of expected revenue shortfalls during the pandemic. \$21.6 million in aid and incentives for the City of Yonkers were withheld by New York State, causing the City to ask its departments to find additional savings. Director Montero announced that to find this savings while avoiding lay-offs to full-time staff and continuing to maintain high public safety standards, Sunday service would be eliminated through June 2021, vacant full-time positions would remain unfilled and the part-time budget would be substantially reduced. The savings would result in an effective 10% reduction of the operating budget. Vacancies would be filled and service returned upon restoration of the budget by the City.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Maron motioned the Board into Executive Session at 8:00 pm to discuss a personnel matter. The session ended at 8:29 pm. On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board adopted the following resolution:

Board Meeting – September 17, 2020

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Yonkers Public Library hereby ratifies and approves the stipulation of settlement between the Library, Local 704 B, Service Employees International Union, AFL-CIO, and employee #732671

President Maron also announced that Director Montero had completed probation and would continue to serve as permanent Library Director.

NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE – Thursday, October 15, 2020

On motion of Trustee Ilarraza, the Meeting adjourned at 8:31 pm.

Jesse Montero
Library Director & Secretary