

YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD MEETING
ELECTRONIC MEETING
MARCH 18, 2021

ATTENDANCE

TRUSTEES:	Nancy Maron Stephen Jannetti Joseph Puglia Hon. Michael Sabatino Dr. Stephan Giuffrida
LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	Jesse Montero
BUSINESS MANAGER:	Vivian Presedo
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY:	James Hackett
WLS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:	Trustee Puglia
UNION REPRESENTATIVE:	Arnaldo Torres
GUESTS:	Carlos Figueroa, Dalyz Aguilar, Sumie Hernandez-Moss, Liz Caruso, Mary Ann Penzero, Phil Poggiali, Zahra Baird, Eileen Fusco, Rose Bannister, Chris Sheerin, Mary Nowak

The Board Meeting was held electronically via ZOOM®, Conference ID# 940 1533 1981

The Board Meeting began at 7:06 pm.

Following the open of the meeting, Board President Maron congratulated Director Montero on completing his first year of service as Library Director. She also welcomed its newest trustee, Dr. Stephan Giuffrida, who was appointed to former Trustee Mack's expired term. The Board spent a few minutes introducing themselves to each other.

MINUTES

On motion of Trustee Sabatino, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the Meeting of February 18, 2021.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Director Montero reported that four more staff had tested positive for COVID-19 since the last meeting. One of these staff did not belong to an isolated work team due to the nature of their responsibilities and as a result necessitated the closure of all three buildings for three days beginning March 3 due to the greater potential for spread among staff. Will Library remained

closed for an additional two days through March 9 as the resulting tests and quarantines among staff meant the building could not be responsibly opened. Director Montero was pleased to announce that all staff were recovering and there have been no cases since.

Director Montero noted that, while cases overall in Westchester County have fallen, the rate of decline suggests the trend may not continue and because of this public services like seating and computer access will remain restricted. However he was hopeful those restrictions will not last long as vaccine availability grows. He remarked library workers recently qualified for vaccination eligibility as government and “front-facing” employees and was pleased to announce that some have already registered or received their vaccination, many with the help of other co-workers’ assistance.

Director Montero updated the Board on the progress of refreshing several of YPL’s study rooms and meeting rooms. Many study rooms at Riverfront Library have already been refitted with new flat-screen televisions and furniture and the Senator Flynn Room has also had new floor tiles installed, as well as new paint and furniture. While this work was underway, YPL also submitted a request to the City of Yonkers Planning Department for funding through the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to renovate the Community Room at Riverfront. Planned upgrades include new audio/visual equipment, updated furniture and needed repairs to its dividing wall. While the status of the request is still in review, Director Montero was optimistic and added that the Foundation for Yonkers Public Library also committed funds to support the project.

Director Montero reported that YPL had just completed its third consecutive month of record-breaking attendance at virtual programs. He commented that since the launch of its first virtual program a year ago, YPL has conducted over 1,300 programs with a combined attendance of over 23,000.

Director Montero introduced the Board to several new programs YPL had launched with community partners, including arts education classes with Youth Theater Interactions, free crisis counseling with Westchester Library System (WLS) and a comic book creation class with Yonkers Arts.

Trustee Puglia inquired about the role of WLS in the various building improvement projects. Director Montero replied that funding so far has been secured through the City of Yonkers and/or YPL’s own capital budget, however he acknowledged that WLS does administer state construction aid, but the aid is relatively thin and YPL has not pursued funding from it for the current fiscal year’s building improvement projects.

Trustee Jannetti asked about the health and recovery status of staff who tested positive for COVID-19. Director Montero could not discuss the matter at length in order to maintain medical confidentiality, but was happy to answer that all of the infected staff had already recovered or were currently recovering.

Trustee Maron briefly discussed the changing metrics of how libraries are traditionally measured for success, specifically the falling turnstile figures but rising virtual programming attendance.

UNION REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT

Union Representative Torres reported that many Union members were nervous following the recent spread of COVID cases among the staff but thanked administration for their prevention efforts and noted that he has received fewer complaints since reopening.

WLS REPORT

Trustee Puglia reported that he would have an update on the ongoing discussions of the role of WLS services as it recovers from the pandemic and the appropriate role of trustees who serve on the boards of both WLS and its member libraries following the next WLS Board of Trustees meeting. The Board also discussed a survey they received in the mail from WLS and how they would answer.

PERSONNEL REPORT

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

Houston, Alan, Provisional Librarian II, \$65,109/yr, eff. 2/22/21

Acknowledged the following termination:

Osterman, Justine, Permanent Librarian I, \$58,449/yr, eff. 3/9/21

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Board President Maron explained the responsibilities of each committee.

Finance, Budget & Planning – Maron, Jannetti, Saraceno. Trustee Sabatino updated the Board on the timeline of the City’s budget process and discussed how they might hold meetings with the City Council.

Employee Relations – Maron, Puglia

Buildings & Grounds – Maron, Puglia

Policy – Maron, Ilarraza, Sabatino

Fundraising & Development – Maron, Jannetti

Foundation update: Trustee Maron reported that the Foundation discussed new ideas on how committed funds from the Foundation can be used by YPL.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment of bills as listed on Schedule #825.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

Director Montero presented a proposal for professional services from the architectural firm KG+D. The proposal was for a building conditions survey at Will Library and would begin the process of planning several needed building upgrades. The survey would define the scope of services required for the needed upgrades and produce a phased five year plan that would be a crucial part of any fundraising effort and include input from community stakeholders, staff and the public. The survey would be paid for with a \$25,000 grant funded by Assemblyman Nader Sayegh. Director Montero asked the Board for its support and authorization to enter into the agreement with KG+D.

After a discussion of the proposal, the Board declared its support for the survey. On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded and unanimously carried, the Board adopted the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Yonkers Public Library supports Library Director Montero’s proposal and authorizes him to enter into a contract with the architectural firm KG+D for the purpose of a building conditions survey for the Grinton I. Will Library.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Trustee Maron motioned the Board into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter at 8:09 pm. The session ended at 8:41 pm.

NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE – Thursday, April 15, 2021

On motion of Trustee Sabatino, the Meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Jesse Montero
Library Director & Secretary