

**NEW ROCHELLE PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES**  
**Thursday September 14, 2017**

Chuck Burke, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:41 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS

Charles Burke, Jr, President  
Dierdra Clark Gray, Vice President  
Yadira Ramos-Herbert, Secretary  
Quentin S. Jacobs  
Damon Maher  
Greg Varian

ADMINISTRATION

Thomas Geoffino  
Jean Manning  
Mary Kane Passacreta

WLS REPRESENTATIVE

LaRuth Gray (excused)

OLD BUSINESS:

Board Member Resignation:

President Chuck Burke announced that Board member Haina Just-Michael submitted her resignation as of September 1<sup>st</sup>. In the aftermath of Haina's resignation, Chuck indicated the Board is publically "advertising" for her temporary replacement with the closing date for applications scheduled for October 15<sup>th</sup>. The Board will review the submissions and expects to fill the appointment at its November 9<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. Chuck further detailed that the annual Library election in May, 2018, will include the election of two library trustee positions: one for the regularly-scheduled election of a trustee for a 5-year term, and one to complete the last year of Ms. Just-Michael's former seat. The candidate who receives the most votes will serve the five-year term. The Board re-empathized its commitment to making the application process as open and fair as possible. To that end, the following specialized publicity will be implemented: press release to all media sources, library website announcement, e-blast to weekly e-news subscribers, social media efforts and vacancy search announcement posted throughout the library in English and Spanish.

Chuck Burke moved to accept the resignation of Haina Just-Michael effective September 1<sup>st</sup>, seconded by Greg Varian and approved.

Downtown Redevelopment:

President Chuck Burke, reported that he and Seth Pinsky, the library RXR liaison, have restarted the conversation regarding the proposed Phase 1 agreement to perform a valuation of the library property and associated development rights. The tentative Phase 1 approach currently calls for RXR to establish an imprest account which it will fund that the Library in turn can use to pay the fees for valuation services noted in the Phase 1 agreement. Advisors engaged by the library may include to a real estate consultant, attorneys and related service providers (as selected solely by the library board.) In exchange for the monies provided by RXR for the valuation services, the library would agree to a yet to be determined time period of exclusivity during which time the Library and RXR would engage in a discussion to see if there is a value or range of values at which the Library and RXR would be willing to move to a second phase of discussions exploring potential redevelopment opportunities for the Library.

Chuck indicated that RXR seems to be favorably inclined to accept these terms but strongly emphasized that no agreement is imminent but additional conversations, likely involving the library's real estate consultant, will move forward. He also restated the previous Board commitment to make full public disclosure regarding the agreement prior to execution of the document in order to continue to achieve the goal of transparency throughout the process. Much discussion ensued.

#### FINANCE TREASURY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE:

Committee member Greg Varian detailed the situation surrounding the delay in the library's Theater HVAC Project. Despite the recent award of a NYS Library Construction grant, the Finance Committee is temporarily delaying the action in relation to this effort as it considers reasonable options in obtaining the "gap" monies needed to fully fund this project. Greg discussed the general concerns the Committee members are experiencing in relation to the library Fund Balance and the most appropriate/prudent amount to be left unassigned in this account in order to allow this account to be available in times of emergency or other unusual circumstances. He closed this report by postulating that future capital projects could possibly be funded by sources not directly connected to New Rochelle taxpayers.

#### PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

The following individuals spoke during this time:

Dan Miller	14 Lakeside Drive
Dorothy Oliver	162 Clinton Avenue
Marjorie Sachs	14 Lakeside Drive
Patricia O'Keefe	<a href="mailto:pintroc35@gmail.com">pintroc35@gmail.com</a>
Nora LeMorin	<a href="mailto:nirmala1@msn.com">nirmala1@msn.com</a>
Nina Arron	300 Pelham Road, 8R
Frank Buddingh	300 Pelham Road, 8R
Lynn McCormick	<a href="mailto:mccormicklynn1@gmail.com">mccormicklynn1@gmail.com</a>
Lourdes Font	<a href="mailto:lordsmaria.font@gmail.com">lordsmaria.font@gmail.com</a>
Jennifer Minto-Hinton	

#### WLS REPORT:

No report was made.

#### PROJECT MANAGER'S REPORT:

Roxanne Neilson, Project Manager, did not attend the meeting. No report was submitted in advance by Ms. Neilson.

#### MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING:

The July 13th meeting minutes were reviewed by the Trustees. Quentin Jacobs moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Chuck Burke and approved.

The August 10th Special Meeting minutes were reviewed by the Trustees. Yadira Ramos-Herbert moved that the minutes be approved as amended, seconded by Chuck Burke and approved.

#### EXPENDITURES:

Vouchers previously reviewed by various Board members were found to be in order and co-signed appropriately. Board approved payment of the following vouchers:

<u>JE/JY/AUG Vouchers</u>	
Bond-Capital	\$1,335,274.42
Health Care	\$257,039.78
Contractual	\$257,600.28
Various	\$3,974.02
Materials	\$36,297.39
Petty Cash	\$140.67
Gifts and Donations	\$16,585.52
Grants	\$657.90
Workers Comp	\$15,878.04
Total:	\$1,923,348.02
BAN Replaced	\$1,923,348.02
Total spent: JE/JY/AUG	\$697,979.02

#### FINANCIAL REPORT:

Tom Geoffino reported that the New Rochelle Board of Education, on September 5<sup>th</sup>, passed a resolution allowing the New Rochelle School district (NRSD) to obtain a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) on September 5<sup>th</sup> that combined both NRSD and New Rochelle Public Library short-term financial needs. Our library will be allowed to borrow up to \$1.5 million over FY2017/18 in order to address its ongoing cash flow needs. Chuck Burke highlighted the draft agreement (soon to be finalized after much effort) between our organization and NRSD that will memorialize the TAN and library Bond process. This draft agreement provided the framework for the recent BOE action specific to the library obtaining its TAN monies. Also highlighted was the ongoing audit of FY2016/17 library (and NRSD) accounts as undertaken by the auditors as hired by NRSD. Access to this report is expected in October/November 2017.

#### PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

No report was made as it was integrated into the Director's Report.

#### DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Tom Geoffino reported on the following issues:

+ Main Library Theater HVAC Grant: In August 2016, our library submitted a FY 2016/17 New York State Construction Grant awards in relation to work proposed for the Main Library Theater HVAC Project. Our grant award for this project was \$77,647 per WLS Board of Trustees. However, this award was increased by \$1,157 to \$78,804 due to the withdrawal of another WLS library grant application. Our library received the grant in August 2017 with the project currently on hold awaiting the Finance Committee's decision regarding the usage of Fund Balance monies to supplement the project cost.

+ HCL Window Replacement Window Grant: In August 2016, our library submitted a FY 2016/17 New York State Construction Grant awards in relation to work proposed for the HCL Window Replacement Project. Our grant award for this project is \$27,647 per WLS Board of Trustees. However, this award was increased by \$1,157 to \$28,804 due to the withdrawal of another WLS library grant application. Our library received the grant in August 2017 and is currently looking to potentially start the project in the next few months.

+ Proposed Main Library Circulation Desk/Area Project: Tom Geoffino indicated that the our FY2017/18 New York State Library Construction Grant Circulation Area application was submitted and

is now being evaluated by a panel of PLDA members as well as Elise Burke, WLS Administrative Assistant relative to award recommendations for WLS library grant applicants. We expect to be receive notification regarding this application within the next 2 weeks.

+ Mary Smart Foundation Grant: The Library has received formal notice of approval from the Mary Smart Foundation regarding its \$10,000 grant application to fund the retrofit of the soon-to-be vacated former Friends Book Store into a Volunteer Center space.

+ Library Summer Activities: Our library just concluded another extremely successful summer programming/reading program effort. We hosted a total of 422 programs serving 7,514 children, teens and adults as well as facilitating the participation of 661 children in reading over 9,500 books.

+ New Rochelle Street Fair (NRSF): On September 10<sup>th</sup>, Library staff Ed Roddy, Ricki Zagroba and Tom Geoffino worked at the library table the at very successful 2017 Street Fair. 122 visitors stopped at the table and collected assorted library publications as well with 102 questions answered and 28 library applications submitted by NRSF attendees.

+Meet the Teachers Initiative: Thanks to a FY2017/18 Foundation grant, library staff will be attending 13 Meet the Teachers Night in September. To date, staff have attended 2 sessions at Columbus, Trinity, Ward, and Davis Schools – with more schools to follow. Each session has yielded 25 – 30 new library card applications from parents as well as the sharing of information regarding our library’s many in-house and online resources. Our goal in this initiative is to sign-up 1,500 new patrons for library cards.

+ New Rochelle Thanksgiving Parade: Our library advocacy groups (NRPL Foundation, Friends of NRPL and Partnership for the Huguenot Library) are planning once again to sponsor a float in the November 18<sup>th</sup> New Rochelle Thanksgiving Parade. Library Trustees and staff have been asked to participate. Particulars regarding this activity will be determined in the near future.

+WLS Trustee Institute: On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, WLS will sponsor the program “Are Your Board Meetings as Effective as They Could Be?” conducted by WLS Board President Cathy Draper. Tom Geoffino is planning to attend along with Board President Chuck Burke.

+ Friends of NRPL: The Friends will hold its next monthly Board meeting on October, 11<sup>th</sup> with its Book Sale scheduled for October 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>.

+ NRPL Foundation: The first FY2017/18 Foundation Board meetings is scheduled for September 18th. On September 25<sup>th</sup>, the Foundation is sponsoring another Law at the Library Series featuring the program, “Navigating the Stormy Waters of Separation and Divorce.” The next Cocktails and Conversation event entitled “Politics and the Constitution” is scheduled for September 28<sup>th</sup>. Planning continues to move forward in relation to the next significant Foundation fund raising affair, currently entitled “A Movable Feast.” Scheduled for October 21, 2017, this event is tied to the theme of Paris in the “Roaring Twenties”. President Chris Selin will be honored on November 2<sup>nd</sup> by the New Rochelle Chamber of Commerce as a “Women of Excellence.”

## PERSONNEL REPORT:

Chuck Burke moved that upon the recommendation of the Director, the Board of Trustees does hereby accept the resignation of Librarian 1 / Archivist Jane Axelrod effective September 5, 2017 at a salary of \$30.40 per hour seconded by Dierdra Clark and approved.

Tom Geoffino reported the Library has requested that New Rochelle Civil Service post the vacant hourly Librarian 1/Archivist position as soon as possible.

Tom Geoffino also indicated that Bilingual Children’s Library Assistant 1 recruitment ended with over 20 candidates expressing interest in the position. Staff have begun the process of analyzing the resumes in order to create an interview list. The interview process will likely begin in late September with a final decision expected by mid-October.

#### BUDGET COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

#### BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE:

Tom Geoffino reported the replacement bricks for the HCL/PHCL sidewalk areas currently in disrepair have been ordered thanks to the hard work of Mickie Fossina and her family. It is expected that the repair work will be completed by late October.

#### COMMUNITY RELATIONS, FOUNDATION, FRIENDS AND HUGUENOT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE:

Tom Geoffino reported that former Library Trustee Haina Just-Michael will continue to host her monthly WVOX "All About the Library" radio show despite her departure from the Library Board. Haina also plans to continue to work/volunteer with NRPL Foundation and Friends of NRPL.

#### PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Committee Chair Dierdra Clark reported that the Committee has been unable to meet to consider the matter of the banned patron seeking to be restored to the library. Dierdra indicated the Committee will meet in the near future with the intent to settle the issue.

#### POLICY COMMITTEE:

Committee Chair Damon Maher reported that Tom Geoffino is compiling a list of library policies for the Committee to examine over the upcoming year. This list currently includes review of Library Bylaws, Museum Pass Program as well as creation of the Library Tutoring Policy and Family Computer Center Policy.

#### SPECIAL PROJECTS:

Committee Chair Yadira Ramos-Herbert indicated that the Special Projects Committee, with the approval of IT Librarian Daniel Ogyiri, supports the library theater video broadcast plan as previously detailed by the independent consultant. Tom Geoffino indicated that the \$25,000 PEG, as supported by City Manager Chuck Strome, is ready for consideration but must receive Board approval. Upon obtaining Board agreement, Tom will reach out to Kathy Gilwit, the City Public Relations Coordinator, to obtain her help in order to move the grant forward as well as assist in the process that would enable the library to obtain the specified equipment. He will also reach out to the NRSD and local colleges in order to discuss the possibility of creating partnerships that will provide for the engagement of student labor to tape the Board meetings. Tom will also research the possibility of locating a temporary solution that would provide for taping at the October or November Board meeting onward till the permanent solution is fully implemented with the installation of the broadcast system in the theater.

Yadira Ramos-Herbert moved that the Library apply for a \$25,000 PEG grant for the purposes of using the award to fund the proposed library theater broadcast system.

Committee chair Yadira Ramos-Herbert reported that the Committee is moving forward in determining "best practices" regarding insurance and security issues relative to the return of the Rockwell painting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 9:20 pm, Damon Maher moved to go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing negotiation strategy with RXR, seconded by Yadira Ramos-Herbert and approved. Executive Session ended at 9:50 pm

The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dierdra Clark  
Secretary