

**NEW ROCHELLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
Thursday July 15, 2021**

Whitney Barrat, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS

Whitney Barrat, President
Daniel Bonnet, Vice President
Sarah Langlois
Charles Burke, Jr. (absent)
Corey Galloway
Beth Acocella
Lucille Renwick

ADMINISTRATION

Thomas Geoffino
Jean Manning
Yesika Torres

WLS REPRESENTATIVE

Francis Okelo

OATH OF OFFICE:

President Whitney Barrat administered the Oath of Office to Lucille Renwick, elected in May 2021 to the Library Board of Trustees. Lucille's term of office will expire on June 30th 2026.

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING:

The June Meeting minutes were reviewed by the Trustees. Whitney Barrat moved that the minutes be approved as amended, seconded by Corey Galloway and approved.

WLS REPORT:

WLS representative Francis Okelo made the following report:

- The WLS Board is pleased to note that most of the 38-member library are operating at a near normal level following the recent relaxation of the pandemic guidelines by the authorities.
- In the last few months, the WLS Board has worked on the renewal of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) which governs the provision of IT and other services by WLS to its member libraries for another year, beginning January 2022. After a thorough-going discussion and review by the Library directors and the WLS Board, a draft of the Agreement has now been completed and is currently undergoing a legal review prior to a formal approval by the PLDA and the WLS Board of directors. Also under exhaustive discussion by the WLS staff and the PLDA is a proposed IT billing structure for the

services being provided by the WLS to the member libraries. It is expected that an agreement on an acceptable billing model will be reached in the course of September 2021 and then submitted to the WLS Board for its approval.

- WLS and many member libraries have been cooperating very well with the NY Project Hope's Westchester Crisis Counseling Team in providing a great amount of outreach services in the communities throughout Westchester County, by holding group sessions and giving presentations to seniors and others in need. This is a much needed project especially during this stressful period of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The WLS Strategy Committee (chaired by Okelo) has recommended a revised vision and mission statements for WLS. The revised statements have been submitted to the WLS Board for its consideration.
- WLS has arranged a trustee education series focused on the NYS Handbook for the Trustees for this Fall, as follows: Trustee duties and responsibilities (Tuesday, October 19, 2021; Library Board meetings (Tuesday, November 16, 2021), and Personnel (Tuesday, December 14, 2021. All member library and WLS trustees are encouraged to attend these education sessions.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:41 pm, Whitney Barrat moved that the Library Board convene an Executive Session in order to discuss a personnel matter, seconded by Lucille Renwick and approved.

At 8:11 pm, Whitney Barrat moved that the Library Board end its Executive Session, seconded by Corey Galloway and approved.

Whitney Barrat made the following motion:

With the understanding that the New Rochelle Public Library will continue to receive documentation in support of the following request, the Library Board approves a sick leave extension up to the limits as dictated in the current union contract for employee #BLH000125

seconded by Sarah Langlois and approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Whitney Barrat greeted the Board, staff and community in her new role as president of the Library Board for FY 2021/2022. She indicated that new Committee assignments have been made and are now available via the spreadsheets distributed to each Board member's folders.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Tom Geoffino reported on the following issues:

+ Library Operations: Reopening of Main and HCL Libraries: June 21st witnessed the implementation of the curtailed library schedule of hours prior to its closure in December 2021 along with full access to our library via all 3 public entrances. Activity levels can be characterized as “quiet” (yet incrementally growing larger in patron numbers) at this time. Regulations regarding mask wearing and appropriate distances are strictly enforced. Limited numbers of individuals will be allowed into the library facilities along with the gradual return of public tables and seating as well as computer access, printing, scan machine and copier machine service. We are continuing our successful tradition of offering summer reading programs for children, teens and adults. Summer programs are currently scheduled to take place outside (in addition to some “interior virtual programming”) with a tent and café furniture in place in our Children’s Garden area. The Huguenot Children’s Library re-inaugurated its successful “Summer Fun on the Patio” drop-in program with all activities scheduled outdoors on the back patio area. Our theater, meeting rooms and study rooms are now available for public use but with limited numbers. Future additional adjustments will occur as appropriate given the circumstances. Much discussion ensued.

+ Children’s Library Flood: On July 1st, the Children’s room experienced a restroom plumbing malfunction thus flooding a large portion of the area. Happily, only the carpeting was damaged – library materials, furniture and technology were unaffected by this incident. Due to the quick work of custodial and other staff (as well as our cleaning service), we were able to mitigate this damage except for the replacement of carpet in the flooded areas. The replacement carpet is scheduled to be installed within the next week and the Children’s room will be restored to full functionality shortly thereafter.

+ Main Library 2nd Floor Renovation Project-Phase 1: This project is nearly complete. Unfortunately, the pandemic has delayed installation of most of the furniture. We are close to our goal to close this grant out in July/August.

+ Main Library 2nd Floor Renovation Project - Phase 2: The grant funds were made available to us in November 2020. We are rapidly moving forward on all fronts in the implementation of the 2nd phase of this project as Phase 1 is nearly complete. Some furniture and equipment have been installed with all other elements now on order. At this point in time, we hoping to close this grant in October.

+ Future NYS Library Construction Grants: The library is actively seeking to prepare 2 new NYS Library Construction Grants for Main and Huguenot Children’s libraries. The Main Library grant would focus on the renovation of the 3rd floor and the HCL grant is slated to renovate the patio, walkways and adjacent spaces. The August Board meeting would provide further information about these grant efforts as well as gaining approval of Board resolutions required in the application process.

+ HCL Furnace/Boiler Replacement Project: The project has been successfully completed but we are still unable to close out this grant as we have remaining unspent monies. New York State Library staff have given us permission to spend our remaining funds in the installation of new LED exterior lighting and other appropriate upgrades to the HCL facility.

+ Wi-Fi HotSpot/Device Program: It is our intention to lend out Wi-Fi hot spots and devices (Chromebook and/or tablets) to New Rochelle residents as funded by our Foundation annual grant (along with limited WLS support.) We are continuing to pursue

grant opportunities with the City of New Rochelle and the federal government Emergency Connectivity Program in order to acquire additional units.

+ Friends of NRPL: The Friends Book Store is now providing the community with open hours on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Donations are currently accepted with 2 small boxes/bags allowed per individual.

+ NRPL Foundation: The Foundation's June 21st Annual Meeting witnessed a successful vote on the Outdoor Programming supplemental grant request as well as the Huguenot Children's Library's annual grant request.

Whitney Barrat moved to accept the reappointment of the following Foundation Board members: Dr. Cheryl Archbald, Secretary, Dr. Amy Bass, Judith Factor, Hon. Tim Idoni, Christina Selin, President, and Dr. James Swinehart., seconded by Daniel Bonnet and approved.

The City Wide Scavenger Hunt – also known as the “Scavaganza” –is scheduled for October 2nd and is rapidly moving ahead in relation to planning, sponsorship/fundraising and participation commitments. On October 3rd, the Foundation (in cooperation with our library) will sponsor a Family Fair themed “Superpowers/Comic Con” event during our afternoon hours of operation with the goal of showcasing the library and all it has to offer to the community. Additionally, the event will witness an official ribbon cutting for the newly renovated Second Floor area with our state legislative delegation (along with other local dignitaries) who made the funding possible. The planning team is envisioning a packed afternoon full of activities for families, creating a special kind of “festival atmosphere.”

PERSONNEL REPORT:

Whitney Barrat made the motion, upon the recommendation of the Director, the Board of Trustees does hereby approve the retirements of:

Beth Mills, Librarian III, effective June 30th, 2021 at a salary of \$95,674 per year.

Beth Golomb, Senior Library Clerk, effective June 30th, 2021 at a salary of \$60,783 per year.

Seconded by Lucille Renwick and approved.

Whitney Barrat made the motion, upon the recommendation of the Director, the Board of Trustees does hereby approve the appointments of:

Beth Mills to the position of hourly Librarian I, effective July 1, 2021 at a salary of \$26.86 per hour.

Beth Golomb to the position of hourly Library Clerk, effective July 6, 2021 at a salary of \$23.65 per hour.

Michaela Rogers to the position of hourly Library Page (Children's Services - HCL), effective July 6, 2021 at a salary of \$14.00

Seconded by Corey Galloway and approved.

Whitney Barrat made the motion, upon the recommendation of the Director, the Board of Trustees does hereby approve the resignation of Tim Tetreault hourly Librarian I

(Archivist), effective July 12, 2021 at a salary of \$29.06 per hour.

Seconded by Daniel Bonnet and approved.

Tom Geoffino reported that the following positions- Assistant Director, Librarian II (Circulation Services), Librarian I (Adult Services), hourly Children's Librarian and hourly Children's Librarian Trainee - were submitted to the Civil Service Department and recently advertised as such. The closing date for all positions are July 16th. Since Civil Service will only post on the City website and mail paper job announcements, Tom indicated that library staff has successfully made the effort to distribute the job announcements as broadly as possible with particular focus on reaching out to minority and underserved populations

BUDGET COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS, FOUNDATION, FRIENDS AND HUGUENOT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE:

Chair Daniel Bonnet reported on the following issues, events and opportunities:

+ He congratulated WLS Board member Francis Okelo on his election as 2021/2022 Rotary Club of New Rochelle President.

+ He requested Marketing and Communications Coordinator Lisa Itzkowitz to provide him with monthly "happenings" prior to Library Board meetings. Tom Geoffino suggested that Outreach Coordinator Denise Link provide Daniel with a similar monthly report. Daniel lauded Denise for her successful work in the community.

+ He inquired regarding the possibility of the library adding a room reservation software option. Corey Galloway confirmed his support of this initiative. Tom Geoffino indicated that the library has begun exploring various room reservation software packages and is hopeful a decision will be made within the next 3 months.

FINANCE, TREASURY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE:

Chair Corey Galloway reported he is continuing to investigate options in relation to changing our Library's banking affiliation. He recently met with People's Bank and is planning to meet with Wells Fargo Bank, Sterling Bank, Signature Bank along with other banks yet to be identified.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Tom Geoffino reported that the Personnel Committee will meet with the library Union negotiation team on July 21st to further discussed the pending collective bargaining agreement.

POLICY COMMITTEE:

Whitney Barrat and Tom Geoffino discussed the ongoing and troubling issue of individuals performing self-appointed “First Amendment “audits. It was decided a policy to deal with this issue was necessary – Tom has found a variety of library policies in use to serve as examples/templates and had previously reached out to the library attorneys regarding this matter. Much discussion ensued.

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE:

Chair Whitney Barrat and Corey Galloway indicated that the strategic planning process, with the support of Public Works Partners and library staff, is moving forward. The Town Hall meeting, essentially a community focus group regarding our library, is scheduled for July 27th. It will take place in the Ossie Davis Theater with Zoom access along with Spanish translation for all meeting discussions.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

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No member of the public spoke at the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Bonnet
Secretary