

**NEW ROCHELLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
Thursday January 13, 2022**

Whitney Barrat, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS

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

ADMINISTRATION

Thomas Geoffino
Jean Manning
Yesika Torres

WLS REPRESENTATIVE

Francis Okelo (Absent)

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING:

The December 9, 2021 Meeting minutes were reviewed by the Trustees. Lucille Renwick moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Corey Galloway and approved.

WLS REPORT:

No report was made.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Whitney Barrat deferred her Strategic Plan/Needs Assessment update for the Special Projects Committee report later in the meeting. She indicated that the Administration has begun the process of drafting a proposed FY 2022/23 budget for Budget Committee consideration at a yet to be determined February meeting.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Tom Geoffino reported on the following issues:
+ Library Operations: Staff are characterizing activity levels as quiet and attribute this phenomenon to the growing COVID (Omicron) infection rate. As previously indicated teen room, study/conference room Wi-Fi and computer usage continues to be strong. Some in-house programming continues but Children's preschool programming has been moved to remote status for the indefinite future.

+ Pending NYS Library Construction Grants: The WLS Board voted to approve the WLS PLDA Grants Committee recommendation to fund our 2 NYS Library Construction Grants for Main and Huguenot Children's libraries submitted in late August 2021. The Main Library grant application requests \$342,674 (with a library match of \$114,224) and proposes to provide a significant renovation of the 3rd Floor space (similar in scope to the 2nd Floor Renovation Project) with significant renovations, upgrades and updates scheduled throughout the space. The Huguenot Children's Library grant application requests \$17,813 in grant monies (with a library match of \$5,937) and proposes to replace the 3 poorly performing aged ductless mini splits installed during the successful PHCL 1998 renovation with 3 replacement units. Library Administration continues to await further analysis by New York State Library and DASNY staff. The process will continue through the current fiscal year with confirmation likely to be obtained by June 2022. It is estimated that the grant monies will be made available to our library in October 2022.

+ Main Library 2nd Floor Renovation Project - Phase 2: Most aspects of this project are now complete with a few remaining elements (some shelving and computer furniture) requiring completion prior to our closure of this project. Time frames for the finalization of most outstanding items are now estimated to be sometime in February.

+ Main Library Fire Stopping & Safety Project: In September 2020, our library received a NYS Library Construction Grant in order to address issues surrounding the integrity of the existing fire-rated demising walls throughout the Main Library. We are now in contact with the project architect in order to initiate the final planning towards the onset of the project. We estimate the process will begin in March.

+ Family Foundation Grant: The library is still in discussions with an anonymous Family Foundation regarding a possible series of grants. No formal determinations regarding these potential grants have yet been made.

+ Library Collaboration with NRSD: On November 30th, our library began to temporarily host the NRSD Huguenot Academy (H.A.) (currently the alternative New Rochelle high school) on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Due to the destruction of the H.A. facility (thanks to Hurricane Ida) located in NRHS, space for student classes, etc. was granted on our 2nd floor and lobby meeting room and theater spaces. It is expected H.A. will vacate our library in February.

+ Continuation of the Trustee Handbook Club: Additional Zoom Library Trustee continuing education courses will be offered from January to June 2022 to all interested parties. The next workshop is scheduled for January 18th and will address the topic of budget and finance.

+ AARP Tax Preparation Service: AARP is scheduled to return to our library once again starting February 1st (and end in mid-April) in order to offer free tax prep help at our library. The program is strictly appointment based (no walk in traffic will be allowed.)

+ Homework Help: Our Children's Department, in cooperation with Monroe College Work Study students, has reestablished its popular Homework Help program. Families with elementary age children are encouraged to drop in and work with tutors at no costs to our patrons.

+ Main Children's Library Renovation: Our library is in the process of renovating the Main Library children's bathroom by converting 2 tiny, dark and uncomfortable restrooms into 1 (more spacious) ADA Compliant family friendly restroom. Funds to be

utilized will be taken from the recently established Capital Projects Fund. Questions ensued.

+ Friends of NRPL: The Friends Book Store continue to provide the community with open hours on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The Winter Book Sale has been scheduled for February 4th and 5th. Donations continue to be accepted with 2 small boxes/bags allowed per individual.

+ NRPL Foundation: The next Foundation Board meeting is scheduled for January 18th. Planning is actively underway for the May 12th Foundation Gala event.

PERSONNEL REPORT:

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

+ Approve the appointment of the following individual:

- Amanda Burgos as Library Assistant (Circulation Services) on January 3, 2022 at an annual salary of \$51,873.

+ Approve the resignation of the following individuals:

- Melisa Zemba as a Library Assistant on December 29, 2021 at an hourly salary of \$28.25.
- Kathleen Waters as a Librarian I on December 29, 2021 at an hourly salary of \$32.33.

Seconded by Corey Galloway and approved.

The initial Zoom interviews for the vacant Assistant Director position involved interviewing a pool of 9 strong candidates. A second in-person round will be established for the 4 finalists with this time frame tentatively scheduled for early February. The initial Zoom interview for the recently created Programming position has resulted in a second in-person round. We are hoping to make a job offer in the next few weeks. The library has proposed the creation of a Librarian II (Children’s Services) Bilingual position but posting for this position cannot occur until the Civil Service Commission votes on this proposal at its January 26th meeting.

Corey Galloway moved that upon the recommendation of the Director, the Board of Trustees does hereby increase the salaries of the pages (see chart below) per the New York State 2022 Minimum Wage Increase regulation, seconded by Whitney Barrat and approved.

	Old Salary			New Salary	
DeNicolo, Dawn			\$14.25		\$15.25
Hernandez, Jessica			\$14.44		\$15.44
Ouammou, Malak			\$14.00		\$15.00
Johnson-Smith, DeAra			\$14.20		\$15.20

Ochoa-Ramirez, Estafani			\$14.00			\$15.00
Moraga, Urania N.			\$15.30			\$16.30
Varghese, Leena A.			\$14.00			\$15.00

BUDGET COMMITTEE:

Chair Chuck Burke indicated that the Budget Committee is intending to meet in February.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS, FOUNDATION, FRIENDS AND HUGUENOT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE:

Chair Daniel Bonnet shared the community activities report as created by Community Outreach Coordinator Denise Link:

- ESL in-person classes @NRPL Winter/Spring 2022 continues. The English Language Institute of Westchester Community College offers courses for beginning students (Levels 0-2), as well as for advanced beginners/low intermediates (Level 3 & 4). If registration is robust, expanded space in the library will be used to support classes.
- Continued outreach/tabling from People USA/Project Hope: Project Hope is a COVID-19 crisis counseling program that provides information, education, and emotional support.
- Civic/Citizenship classes 2022 continue with attorney Sonica Dixon: Zoom sessions each Thursday in February @ 6pm. Register on the NRPL website/calendar.
- Job Search Coach Rebecca Mazin is available in person to assist individuals looking for a new or improved job by helping with writing resumes and cover letters, completing online job applications, searching for jobs on the Internet, networking, and honing interview skills and completing follow ups. Attendance and sessions per month have been steady and a Job Search program for teens is in the works, in collaboration with our Teen librarian.
- Healthcare Navigator Elizabeth Blackwell is available virtually to assist with open enrollment to purchase, change or renew coverage in a NYS qualified health plan; enroll or renew coverage in Medicaid and Child Health plus; and enroll in the new Essential Plan for lower-income New Yorkers.
- COVID 19 testing and Vaccine/Booster shot appointment assistance has increased over the holidays, many from phone inquiries.

- Community Outreach at the Mobile Food Pantry, sponsored by City School District of New Rochelle and Feeding Westchester, 1/12/22. Information on NRPL programs, resources and free books!

Daniel also highlighted the upcoming Dr. Martin Luther King events held in New Rochelle as well as an Iona College Marketing class contributions regarding enhanced and additional wayfinding in the library, with an especial recommendation regarding the StackMap product. Whitney discussed the recent Washington Post article celebrating the onset of a “new golden age for public libraries.”

FINANCE, TREASURY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE:

Chair Corey Galloway indicated that he will have a report for the February meeting.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

Committee Chair Lucille Renwick reported that the Personnel Committee reached an agreement with the Union leadership regarding a new Collective Bargaining agreement for the FY 2021/22 and FY 2022/23. This agreement has met with nearly unanimous approval at a recent vote by full time union staff. Lucille highlighted the most prominent features of the agreement:

+ 2.5% increases for each fiscal year, the addition of another compassionate leave day, augmented longevity payment and the removal of the Sick Leave Bonus as of 2022.

Lucille thanked the Personnel Committee, Tom Geoffino and Jean Manning for their efforts in the resolution of this work. She indicated that the Library Attorneys’ were currently drafting the Memorandum of Understanding (MOA) with final approval to be made by the Board and union leadership. Questions ensued.

Whitney Barrat moved to accept the proposed FY2021/22 – FY 2022/23 Collective Bargaining MOA as detailed, seconded by Daniel Bonnet and approved.

POLICY COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE:

Chair Whitney Barrat indicated that the draft Strategic Plan/Needs Assessment is nearly complete but additional “fine tuning” is underway. Whitney also indicated that Public Works Partners will likely be asked to contribute additionally in order to add context and additional content to the document. It is hoped that the next iteration of the draft plan will be available in early February.

PUBLIC TO BE HEARD:

Marjorie Sachs 14 Lakeside Drive New Rochelle NY

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Langlois
Secretary