

**NEW ROCHELLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
Thursday April 21, 2022**

Whitney Barrat, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:04 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

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 7:04 pm Whitney Barrat moved that the Library Board enter into Executive Session in order to discuss a personnel related matter, seconded by Lucille Renwick and approved.

At 8:50 pm, Whitney Barrat moved that the Library Board discontinue its Executive Session, seconded by Sarah Langlois and approved.

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING:

The March Meeting minutes were reviewed by the Trustees. Whitney Barrat moved that the minutes be approved as amended, seconded by Sarah Langlois and approved

WLS REPORT:

WLS representative Francis Okelo presented the following report:

***NYS Budget 2022-2023:** The WLS Board is pleased to note that in the recently passed New York State budget 2022-2023, the Library Aid received a slight increase to \$99.6 Million, an increase of \$5.5 Million from last year's allocation of \$94.1 Million. This is a step in the right direction but it still falls below the \$102.6 Million required by the Education Law and the \$123.1 Million requested by the New York Library Association (NYLA). The Public Library Construction Aid allocation remains the same at \$ 34 Million. This amount is below the \$45 Million request proposed by NYLA, but it is important to note that this allocation is \$20 Million more than the Governor's proposed \$14 Million allocation. Considering that the State legislators were trying to support many*

new funding initiatives this year; the libraries fared well. The WLS Board is thankful to all who supported the Library Advocacy Day activities and the ongoing efforts to keep our legislators informed about the valuable work that the libraries and their staff do every day to serve the patrons in their community.

Central Library Update: *The Mount Vernon Public Library situation continues to be grave and precarious due to its failure to comply with certain mandatory State requirements for a library, notably the preparation and timely submission of the annual financial reports and the still pending library registration of the library. Furthermore, the MVPL board has generally been dysfunctional and has become increasing more so lately, thus seriously risking being officially dissolved by the State. In this sad state of affairs, the MVP is no longer deemed to be in a position to function as the Central Library. The WLS Board has instructed the WLS Executive Director Terry Kirchner to assist and work closely with the MVPL Director and his staff to expeditiously finalize the library's overdue financial sections of the 2020 NYS Annual Report, and the library's registration application. Meanwhile, The Field Library Peekskill has offered – and is on schedule -- to become the interim WLS Central Library when the WLS Board approves the move at its Board meeting on Tuesday April 26, 2022.*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Whitney Barrat reported that the Strategic Plan/Needs Assessment is now complete and was publicized and made available to the New Rochelle community during the week of April 3rd – 9th, National Library Week. More information about Strategic Plan “next steps” will be made available in her report as Special Projects Chair.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

No report was made.

PERSONNEL REPORT:

Whitney Barrat made the motion, upon the recommendation of the Director, the Board of Trustees does hereby approve:
+ the employment of Tobe Sevush, Programming Coordinator, effective March 16, 2022 at a salary of \$70,000 per year.
Seconded by Corey Galloway and approved.

BUDGET COMMITTEE:

Chair Chuck Burke recapped the three alternative budgets as created by the Budget Committee for Board consideration. Budget Scenario 1 calls for an increase of 7.56% over the current year's budget. Budget Scenario 2 shows an increase of 4.19%. Budget Scenario 3 calls for a 3.31% increase.

Chuck characterized the Budget Committee's efforts as challenging as given the following non-discretionary increases. The factors influencing this budget increase (as it impacts on each of the 3 budget options) is as follows:

- + Sizable full time salary increases which is a blend of contract mandated increases, (salary increases for all staff -union and non-union) as well as parallel increases in other salary related accounting lines.
- + Escalating medical insurance costs due to the pandemic and its aftereffects.
- + Significant increase in our payment to the New York State & Local Retirement System

The 7.56% budget option (Scenario 1) provides for the non-discretionary increases as previously detailed as well as the creation of Librarian I (Children's Services) position focused on outreach with elementary schools and families. This budget also allows for increases in programming and collection development funds. The 4.19% (Scenario 2) budget eliminates the proposed new Librarian I position and places the Library Assistant (Circulation Services) position on hold but retains the proposed programming and collection development increases along with level funding for all other accounting lines. The 3.31% budget option (Scenario 3) mirrors Scenario 2 budget option but eliminates the programming and materials budget increases.

The New Rochelle Finance Commissioner analyzed all 3 budget options and determined that the 'average' taxpayer would pay the following annually in taxes:

- + 7.56% (Scenario 1): \$379.67 per taxpayer per year
- + 4.19%: (Scenario 2): \$367.75 per taxpayer per year
- + 3.31% (Scenario 3): \$364.66 per taxpayer per year

Chuck Burke indicated that the 4.19% budget option (Scenario 2) was recommended by the Budget Committee as the option the Board should adopt.

Chuck Burke moved to adopt the FY 2022/23 budget as recommended by the Budget Committee, seconded by Daniel Bonnet and unanimously approved.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS, FOUNDATION AND FRIENDS COMMITTEE:

Committee Chair Daniel Bonnet expressed his satisfaction with the staff (Lisa Itzkowitz, Denise Link, Nikki Fudge and Tobe Sevush) successfully working, in a variety of capacities, with the New Rochelle community. He is excited to see our future efforts given the ability and commitment of our staff.

Tom Geoffino highlighted the FY 2022/23 Main Library and HCL Foundation grant requests. The Board expressed its satisfaction with these grant requests and asked Tom to share the budget requests with the Foundation Board for its consideration. Final decisions regarding these requests will be made at the June 20th Foundation Annual meeting.

FINANCE, TREASURY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE:

Committee Chair Corey Galloway indicated that the Banking Affiliations resolution would be considered at the May Board meeting.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

POLICY COMMITTEE:

Chuck Burke moved that the Board accept the Photography and Videography Policy (as recommended by the Policy Committee – and detailed below), seconded by Whitney Barrat and approved.

Photography & Videography Policy

Photography and videography by library patrons is generally permitted if it is strictly for personal use. While the library is a public place, it is considered a “limited public forum” under federal law. We reserve the right to reasonably restrict the exercise of free speech rights in our buildings, particularly when such conduct is disruptive to other patrons and staff and inconsistent with the library’s mission and code of conduct.

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE:

Chair Whitney Barrat indicated the next step in the implementation of the Strategic Plan will be the establishment of a “working group” consisting of Board members, staff and members of the public to make determinations regarding prioritizing goals and objectives.

PUBLIC TO BE HEARD:

Vince Malfetano 9 Fairview Place New Rochelle NY
Marjorie Sachs 14 Lakeside Drive New Rochelle NY

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Langlois
Secretary