

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

Whitney Barrat, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS

Whitney Barrat, President (absent)  
Daniel Bonnet, Vice President (absent))  
Sarah Langlois, Secretary  
Rhiannon Navin  
Corey Galloway  
Beth Acocella  
Lucille Renwick (absent)

ADMINISTRATION

Thomas Geoffino  
Jean Manning  
Yesika Torres  
Elizabeth Joseph

WLS REPRESENTATIVE

Francis Okelo

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING:

The September Meeting minutes were reviewed by the Trustees. Sarah Langlois moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Corey Galloway and approved.

WLS REPORT:

WLS representative Francis Okelo presented the following report:

*“The WLS Board held its last meeting on Tuesday, September 27, which I chaired as Vice President, in the absence of the Board President Karen Zevin. The Board is in the process of doing a comprehensive annual review of all its policies to ensure that they fully reflect all the recent changes in the New York State laws and NYS labor laws. The review covers the following policies: sexual harassment policy; WLS Collection Development policy; investment of WLS funds policy; purchasing policy; and the WLS Board meeting participation policy.*

*The Board formally approved a total \$34 million for the Public Library Construction Aid program for FY2022/23, provided by the State of New York. WLS was allocated \$1,605,184, based on the County’s population of 1 million. Fifteen applications were received from the member libraries, including the New Rochelle Public Library. These applications were all approved by the Board as they met the requirement set by the NYS Commissioner’s Regulations. Our New Rochelle Public Library and the Huguenot Children’s Library received a total of approx.\$200,000. It is hoped that these funds will be released expeditiously to the libraries.*

*The Executive Director's report for September 2022 is being circulated to the NRPL Board members, who are encouraged to read it. The report contains very useful and important information on the various activities of the WLS, such as the Cataloguing services, Career Coaching services, digital equity initiatives and the WLS outreach activities.*

*Lastly, The WLS Budget and Finance Committees are working on the WLS budget proposals for 2022/23 to be considered by the Board at its next meeting on October 25, 2022"*

#### PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

No report was made.

#### DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Tom Geoffino reported on the following issues:

+ 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 with confirmation long overdue. It is hoped that the grant monies will be made available to our library in October /November 2022.

+ 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. The project architect and his team (along with assistance from the library custodial staff) have since completed a more thorough examination of the facility demising walls and determined the extent of the work is far greater than the original estimation. Having obtained the Board's approval for the additional funds needed to complete this project, the project architect is moving forward with the completion of the project documents necessary for the successful completion of the project. The architect's most recent report is detailed below:

*The investigative and construction documents phases are completed for the firewall restoration project, and the project is about to go out for competitive bidding. A pre-bid conference is scheduled for Tuesday, and the bids are due by Thursday, November 3rd. After receiving the bids, an analysis will be undertaken, and the low bidder(s) will be descope to ensure they have included the correct and complete scope of work. The descope process should take two to three weeks. A contract should be expected to be*

*entered by late November or early December. The Contractor will provide a schedule, ideally with mobilization starting in December followed by three to four months of construction.*

+ 2022 NYS Library Construction Grant: The library submitted 2 NYS Library Construction Grant applications in August 2022. The intention of the Main Library grant was to underwrite the installation of a series of sound absorbing acoustic reduction solutions throughout our noisy facility. The goal of the Huguenot Children's Library grant was to allow for the installation of storage solutions throughout the facility and will include enhancements to the basement relative to flooring, an upgraded kitchen configuration and the installation of an exterior patio artist wall. Due to the submission of numerous WLS member library grant applications overwhelming the total grants funds available, all member library grant submissions received cuts in award amounts. Our grant applications were also given reduced funding amounts necessitating reconfiguration of both applications. On September 27, 2022, the WLS Board of Directors awarded the Main Library Noise Abatement Project \$175,591 in NY State Construction grant funds with a required library match of \$57,424 thus creating a total project cost of \$229,625. In addition, the WLS Board of Directors awarded the HCL Facility Improvement Project \$24,380 in NY State Construction grant funds with a required library match of \$24,380 thus creating a total project cost of \$48,760. Further analysis by New York State Library and DASNY staff will occur throughout the current fiscal year with confirmation hopefully obtained by June 2023. If this timetable is accurate, it is estimated that the grant monies will be made available to our library in October 2023.

+ ARPA Grants: In collaboration with our library, the library Foundation submitted an ARPA grant proposal in the amount of \$450,300 in order to fund the purchase of a mobile library that can deliver library services – including circulation of materials such as books, chrome books, Wi-Fi hotspots, and more; teen/children's programming, digital services such as printer and scanner access, technology training and assistance to educate residents of all ages, and information about Library and community programs/services – to communities throughout New Rochelle. Details regarding the time frame for the award announcements and the delivery of the grant award continue to be unavailable.

+ Main Library Fire Panel Upgrade Project: The final and smaller phase, of the Main Library fire panel upgrade (as previously approved by the Board) was completed in September. Sarah Langlois moved that PRM Electric be reimbursed \$4,169.86 for its Fire Panel Upgrade Project Phase 2 work, seconded by Beth Acocela and approved.

+ New Rochelle School District (NRSD) Request: NRSD/ Library Treasurer Laura Del Principio requested that the Library Board pass a resolution "appointing" her as Library Treasurer and Gloria Iannucci as Deputy Treasurer as well as reauthorizing her ability to function as a signatory for our bank accounts and also providing Gloria with the same banking authorization. Much discussion ensued. It was the sense of the Board that Tom Geoffino should speak with the library attorney regarding these requests in order to determine the appropriate Board action. Tom was asked to reach out to the NRSD and discuss these requests with Ms. Del Principio and her supervisor in order to gain context for these requests. and report on the outcome of these discussions at the October Board meeting. Tom indicated that the Library Attorney could find no case law supporting the request for the Library Board to pass a resolution endorsing the School District's Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer as the Library Treasurer/Deputy Treasurer nor did the

attorney encounter such an action in his numerous years of legal practice. Given the absence of the Board President, the Board elected to table this issue till the November meeting. Tom discussed the library's historical precedence in relation to the approval of allowing the School District's Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer to have signatory power for the library's bank accounts. Much discussion ensued. Sarah Langlois moved to appoint Laura Del Principio and Gloria Iannucci (School District Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer respectively) to act as signatories on all library banking accounts, seconded by Rhiannon Navin (with Corey Galloway abstaining) and approved.

+ Yiddish Book Discussion Grant: Our library was successful in its grant application from the American Library Association and the Yiddish Book Center for a book discussion scheduled for 2023. Former Library Board member Haina Just-Michael has agreed to serve as the volunteer book discussion leader. More details to follow.

+ Senator Mayer Grant Opportunity: Senator Shelley Mayer's office approached our library with the idea of Senator Mayer sponsoring legislation that would obtaining state funding to support projects that of benefit our library and the New Rochelle community. We are continuing to participate in conversations regarding potential project opportunities and expect to reach out to Senator Myers office in the near future.

+ WLS Trustee Institute: WLS is continuing with its ongoing Trustee Institute program series and is sponsoring the Effective Meetings Utilizing Parliamentary Procedure webinar on October 27<sup>th</sup>.

+ Thanksgiving Parade 2022: The Chamber of Commerce announced the City Thanksgiving Parade will be scheduled for Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup>. Library Board and staff, along with Foundation and Friends Board members, will march and uphold the library banner.

+ Friends of NRPL: The Friends Book Store continue to provide the community with open hours on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Donations continue to be accepted with 2 small boxes/bags allowed per individual. The Friends have begun to plan for its perennially popular Holiday sale. The date is yet to be announced.

+ NRPL Foundation: The next Foundation Board meeting is scheduled for November 21st and will be in-person at the Main Library. The planning for a future Cocktails & Conversation is underway with details to be shared once the event is in place. Other possible future events include Donor Recognition Night, New Donor Recruitment event and the fundraiser, Game Night at the Library.

#### ASSISTANT DIRECTORS REPORT:

*This September, Banned Books week was recognized in many significant ways. Our activities included an interactive Banned Book Week display and activity in the lobby in which patrons affixed stickers noting the number of banned books they read. The teens also held a button making workshop attracting 15+ students. The list of banned books in our collection was shared in the weekly newsletter. We highlighted various banned books via displays in the lobby, children's room and the 1st floor. These displays piqued interest, generated awareness and raised questions. We appreciated working with the Foundation in delivering the message about intellectual freedom and our freedom to read. The children's room began welcoming kindergarteners from our school district. The goal is to receive twenty kindergarten classes and several early elementary school students.*

*Our goal is to ensure all our young school visitors have a library card. Our grades 4-6 club geared towards emerging tweens/teens launched with a series of activities including games, arts and crafts and book discussions. We are working on making it a hub for kids with diverse reading and recreational interests.*

*As our city sees a rise in residents, we are also witnessing a similar trend at the library. We are adding hundreds of new cardholders each month. In September, we added 230 new members, In August, 311 and in July 285 new cards.*

*Our adult department continues to be busy with our ever popular proctoring service. We hosted twelve test takers in September. New Rochelle residents get this premium service without cost. However, residents outside of New Rochelle pay \$25.00.*

*The library's museum pass program generously supported by the Foundation continues to be in demand and astonish our patrons. We circulated 61 passes this past month. The most popular places, not surprisingly, are the Museum of Modern Art, Intrepid and Museum of Natural History Lastly, our local history archives are growing and expanding as more images and documents are uploaded to the digital archive. We can also be proud that the New Rochelle Public Library archive is the seventh most visited site in the NY state heritage digital collection.*

#### PERSONNEL REPORT:

Sarah Langlois made the motion, upon the recommendation of the Director, the Board of Trustees does hereby approve the appointment of:

Mia Rossi to the position of Hourly Page (HCL), effective October 4, 2022 at a salary of \$15,00 per hour.

Maureen Elia to the position of Hourly Library Assistant (Adult Services), effective October 11, 2022 at a salary of \$25.43 per hour.

Dinesh Shah to the position of Hourly Library Assistant (Adult Services), effective October 22, 2022 at a salary of \$25.43 per hour.  
seconded by Corey Galloway and approved.

Sarah Langlois made the motion, upon the recommendation of the Director, the Board of Trustees does hereby accept the resignations of:

Full Time Social Media Coordinator/Graphics Specialist Nicolette Fudge effective October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at an annual salary of \$60,466.08.

Hourly Page Michaela Rogers (HCL) effective August 26, 2022 at an hourly salary of \$15 per hour.

Hourly Page Emma Farley (HCL) effective August 26, 2022 at an hourly salary of \$15 per hour.

#### BUDGET COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

#### BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS, FOUNDATION, FRIENDS AND HUGUENOT  
PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE:

Committee Chair Rhiannon Navin shared the community activities report as created by  
Community Outreach Coordinator Denise Link:

***Highlights of BTOP Help & Learning Center  
September/October 2022***

*The Help & Learning center continues to meet with patrons one to one with all their online information and resources needs.*

- *Digital Navigator efforts are in full swing at NRPL, assisting patrons to use critical online services that provide guidance with food support, rent, education, employment, childcare, government benefits and more. Digital Navigator appointments are available for patrons needing help with using a device, securing free or low-cost internet service, and digital literacy. Chromebook coaching is available for patrons using our NRPL Chromebooks.*
- *Healthcare Navigator Elizabeth Blackwell continues to assist patrons with open enrollment to purchase, change or renew coverage in a NYS qualified health plan or enroll or renew coverage in Medicaid and Child Health plus. Wednesdays, 10:00am-1:00pm.*
- *Medicare Open Enrollment 2022 counseling will be available at NRPL for a limited time only. No appointment necessary for Senior Benefit Individual Counseling on Thursdays: 10/13, 10/27, 11/10 in the BTOP 2nd floor conference room, 10:00am-1:00pm.*
- *October is a busy month for outreach efforts, with senior housing visits to 50 Sickles and 111 Lockwood Ave. Information about the happenings at the library, giveaways, local history presentations and gentle sessions of chair yoga is still a big hit with the residents. Outreach efforts at the mobile food pantry @ IEYMS have returned on Wednesdays each month. It is always a great chance to meet up with the community and share information on library programs.*
- *Job Search Coach Rebecca Mazin is available each Tuesday evening 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, honing interview skills and completing follow ups. Attendance and sessions per month have been increasing.*
- *Fall Civic/Citizenship classes continue with immigration attorney Sonica Dixon: Zoom sessions on Thursdays @ 7pm. Register on the NRPL website/calendar. Classes run through November.*
- *Fall 2022 ESL in-person classes, with Westchester Community College, continue at NRPL. Day and evening sessions are full and attendance is robust. Fall session times have been posted on the NRPL calendar.*
- *New ESL Group: English Conversation Club, Tuesday's 6:30-7:30pm, 2nd, floor conference room. Practice conversational English in a relaxed and fun environment. English language learners of all skill levels are encouraged to join this new drop-in program, led by a skilled volunteer educator, Caroline Goldmacher Kern, LCSW-R.*

- *Notary Public services are available at NRPL, with monthly sessions on Thursdays @ 5:30 pm on 10/20, 11/17 & 12/15, in the BTOP 2nd. Floor conference room.*

Rhiannon Navin also shared the Marketing, Communications and Programming reports as created by Lisa Itzkowitz and Tobe Sevush:

### **Marketing/Program Report to Board of Trustees, 10/13/22**

#### ***Programs/Events***

#### ***September/October***

#### **General**

- ***Friday Night Concert Series, 9/9 - We kicked off with Bill Steely and Where's Dave Band. 51 attendees***
- ***NRPL Film Series, 9/17: Screened 2 Western films to an intimate audience of 10***
- ***Westchester Sandbox Theatre Workshops, 9/17: We started our first of 4 children's workshops. Our maximum allowed in the class was 20. Average attendance/session, 18 (with the lowest attendance on the long weekend of Rosh Hashanah.-***
- ***New Rochelle Street Fair, 9/18: Engaged with an estimated 500 visitors with program information, give-a-ways, and library card sign ups (29). Big push for Family Fair***
- ***Knitting Workshops, 9/20 & 22: Held two knitting workshops to gauge interest. It was a success and we will be continuing with 2 workshops a month, October – December; 8 attendees/session***
- ***Yoga and Meditative Arts, 9/15: 6 attendees; 9/29: 6 attendees; 10/6: 13 attendees***
- ***Family Fair, 10/2 (details below in Marketing/Community engagement)***
- ***Adult Art Workshop: Themed Collage, 10/6: First in a new series of art workshops led by well-known Westchester artists. 3 attendees***
- ***Chair Yoga, Mondays & Wednesdays, classes average 10 - 14 participants/session***

#### **Hispanic Heritage Month**

- ***Celebrate Mexican Muralists (Virtual), 9/15: Discussion of the great Mexican muralists David Alfaro Siqueiros, Jose Clemente Orozco, and others who inspired Jackson Pollock. 6 attendees***
- ***Dialogos Duo Concert, 9/24: Canceled due to illness; rescheduled for March 2023***
- ***Carlos Pavan Concert, 10/7: Guitar concert, well received by an intimate group. 15 attendees***

#### **Indigenous Peoples Week**

- ***Lenape Technologies, 10/1: Demonstration of early life and technology of Native Americans who lived along the Hudson River Valley. Grant funded through WLS. 7 attendees***
- ***Oil and Water - Honoring Indigenous Futures with Storytelling, 10/8: Brooklyn Demme, filmmaker, actor (and son of Jonathan Demme) presented 3 short films on***

*Indigenous People that he and his father made. He and a guest had a Q & A following the screening. Very engaged audience. 8 attendees*

### **Virtual Programs, September/October**

*Exploring virtual program options with partner libraries. Programs are low cost or free. (Note: Precise NRPL attendance numbers are difficult to determine, given programs are a joint effort of multiple libraries.)*

- ***Discovery of a Masterpiece***, 9/14: 3 attendees
- ***Mexican Muralists***, 9/15: 6 attendees
- ***The Whys and Whens of Car Maintenance***, with Chaya Milchtein, Mechanic Shop Femme  
9/20: 4 attendees
- ***Can Sustainable Food Systems Save the Climate?*** 9/21, 2 attendees
- ***How the Heck Do You Buy a Used Car***, 9/29, 4 attendees
- ***Women and Money Roundtable***, 10/12, 5 attendees

### ***Coming Up....***

- ***Counterpoint a Cappella Group***, 10/14: Second performance in new Friday night concert series
- ***New Rochelle Plays Hollywood Films Series***, Series kicks off on Sunday, 10/16 with the screening of *The Naked City*. Film aficionado, Les Srager, will introduce film and lead post screening discussion. Series will run one Sunday/month, through January, 2023
- ***Brown Bag Book Club***, 10/18: Return of NRPL book club, beginning with a discussion of *Z: A Novel of Zelda Fitzgerald*. The Club will meet every other month through the spring, and will be moderated by Librarian Annick Rodriguez.
- **ArtsFest at NRPL**
  - ***Music from Copland House***, 10/20: A concert saluting the city's rich musical legacy featuring the World Premiere of a new commission by award-winning composer Steven Snowden that musicalizes the algorithms of traffic signals at Center and Huguenot Avenues and explores New Rochelle's culture and history.
  - ***Bridge Records Concert and Exhibit***, 10/21: Steven Beck will perform music by George Walker and more.
  - ***TheaterWorksUSA***, 10/22: *Up in Arms, Tortoise and Hare's Race to Health*. A children's Puppet Performance.
  - ***Rock and Roll with New Rochelle Art Association***, 10/22 (at HCL)  
New Rochelle Art Association artist and educator Marisa Boan will lead two fun and creative activities for children.
  - ***NRAA Rocks! Scavenger Hunt***, 10/23 (Ruby Dee Park at Library Green)  
Participants of all ages will paint rocks with artists from the New Rochelle Art Association and take part in a scavenger hunt for rocks hidden at various



*ArtsFest venues. (One lucky winner will find the “golden Rock” hidden inside the Library and take home a \$50 gift card.)*

- o **Read650: Coming of Age**, 10/23: A spoken word event followed by a reception.
- o **New Rochelle Art Association 107th Open Juried Show**, Exhibit, 10/8 - 11/6; Reception, 10/23: Artwork in 9 categories: Acrylic/Oils, Graphics, Fine Crafts, Sculpture, Photography, Watercolor, Mixed Media, Digital Art and Pastels. (Lumen Winter Gallery)
- **NRPL Film Series**, 10/29: NRPL Librarian and film historian Chris Poggiali will host a Halloween Horror Movie Marathon where he will screen and discuss two horror films, *Halloween III* and *Race with the Devil*.
- **Day of the Dead Celebrations**
  - o **Altar Build and Mariachi Band Performance**, 10/30
  - o **Calpulli Mexican Dance Troupe Performance**, 11/2
- **Red Cross Blood Drive**, 11/1
- **Firey String Sistas!** 11/4. An all-women’s jazz band; Third performance in new Friday night concert series.
- **Sing Your Heart Out Performance**, 11/20: Rehearsals for this adult singing group, a beloved NRPL program, began in early October. Practices take place 2x/week at NRPL.

### **Upcoming Virtual Programs**

- **The Films of Alfred Hitchcock**, 10/13
- **College Admissions Planning**, 10/18
- **Virtual tour of WCC**, 10/25
- **Westchester Breathes**, 10/28 - First of new weekly meditation workshop
- **Another Red Moon**, 11/1
- **Books & Bridles: The Story of the Horseback Librarians**, 11/2
- **Women and Money Roundtable**, 11/9

### **MARKETING/COMMUNITY RELATIONS MISC:**

**Marketing support for all programs listed above**

- **Family Fair, 10/2/2022:** Approximately 500 attendees. Theater filled to capacity for magic show, and all event activities had high engagement (carnival games, video tournament, manga drawing, photos and dancing with Spider-Man, and balloon sculptures.

*Heavy marketing push in weeks leading up to the event including PR, digital promotion and targeted outreach to community partners, 1 Clinton Park, NRPLF, New Rochelle Downtown BID, City of NR, CSDNR, and PTA’s, resulting in inclusion on city kiosks, social media mentions across multiple organizations, and materials sent home with students. Coordinated*

*creation, production and distribution of event banners, yard signs, event schedules, event signage and volunteers. Collected over 250 email addresses through raffle ticket incentive.*

● **Community Relationship Building:**

*Regularly attend community partner gatherings (In September, attended nonprofit gathering coordinated by City of NR and VNY. Reiterated need to collaborate re: reaching out to new buildings/residents.)*

*Maintain contact with NRBID, Chamber of Commerce, City of NY, CSDNR, NRCA, NRPLF, Hispanic Advisory Council, African American Advisory Council to discuss programs and collaboration opportunities.*

*IDA Jazz Festivals, 9/17 and 10/8*

*Chamber of Commerce Halloween Window Painting, 10/18, PAVE students to paint windows on Memorial Highway side of building*

*NRBID Halloween Parade and Treats at Library Green, 10/29*

*Will be reaching out to contacts at downtown buildings provided by Beth Acocella; Creating New Resident Welcome card for distribution to new residents at 1 Clinton Park. Plan to offer to additional buildings as relationships are established.*

● **Yiddish Book Center Grant**

*Received grant from Yiddish Book Center to host Yiddish Book Club. Former Board President, Haina Just-Michael will moderate.*

● **Email marketing:** *Open rates increased to an average of 39%. Continue to grow email list. Current distribution, 8866*

● **Social Media/Graphic Designer Position:** *Working on transition plan given departure of Nikki Fudge on 10/14.*

FINANCE, TREASURY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

POLICY COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE:

No report was made.

PUBLIC TO BE HEARD:

No member of the public asked to speak.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Langlois  
Secretary