

**NEW ROCHELLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
Thursday August 10, 2023**

Whitney Barrat, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS

Whitney Barrat, President
Corey Galloway, Vice President
Lucille Renwick Secretary
Beth Acocella
Rhiannon Navin
Tatiana Infante
Fela Cortes

ADMINISTRATION

Thomas Geoffino
Jean Manning
Yesika Torres
Elizabeth Joseph

WLS REPRESENTATIVE

Francis Okelo

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:30 pm, Whitney Barrat moved that the Library Board convene an Executive Session in order to discuss a personnel matter, seconded by Rhiannon Navin and approved.

At 7:55 pm, Whitney Barrat moved that the Library Board end its Executive Session, seconded by Lucille Renwick and approved.

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING:

The July 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.

WLS held a breakfast meeting with our County and State legislators at the WLS office on Tuesday, August 8, 2023, in order to thank these legislators for their crucial and continuing support, and to update them on the current and planned activities of WLS and the libraries, as well as to exchange views on general matters and other developments affecting the WLS and the libraries. This is an annual event organized by the WLS Executive Director and the Board of Trustees, and attended by the library trustees, library directors and their senior staff. Our New Rochelle Public Library was

represented by the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Ms. Whitney Barrat, the Library Director Tom Geoffino and the WLS representative Francis Okelo. Among the issues discussed at the meeting was the absolute need and importance to maintain and increase financial and other support to the libraries so they can continue to be strong and viable institutions in the community, providing the services the patrons have come to expect and depend on; the need to be on guard against influences that serve to undermine the vitality and effectiveness of the libraries in the community, e.g. book bans and unhelpful attacks on the libraries and their leadership. It was agreed that both sides should continue to work on those issues that still needed to be resolved, such as the reform of the civil service as regards the staffing of the libraries. On the whole, the breakfast meeting was pleasant and productive

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Whitney Barrat made no report.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Tom Geoffino reported on the following issues:

+ Library Operations: Summer 2023 continues to witness a significant activity at both Main and HCL facilities. Staff have characterized high levels of interest and usage in children, teen and adult areas as well as the diverse programming for all ages, especially our children's efforts..

SPECIAL BUSINESS: NY STATE LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION GRANTS APPROVAL:

Tom Geoffino briefed the Library Board about the 2 FY 2023/24 New York State Library Construction grant applications for the Main and HCL facilities.

The Main Library Noise Abatement Phase 2/ Library Wayfinding Project grant application is proposing to reduce the noise level throughout every floor of the New Rochelle Public Library as well as install appropriate and uniform wayfinding/signage throughout the facility. The installation of sound absorbing panels will be installed in the following areas: Business Opportunity Center, and Center Stair Well. (Phase 1 witnessed last year's approval of a grant that will address noise issues located in the Lobby - including its 3 atriums- and the Teen Room.) It is estimated that this work will significantly reduce noise reverberation in the building, decreasing echo time by nearly seventy percent. An important feature in this application are the green" components including panels manufactured from certified 60% post-consumer waste (through the use of recycled PET materials such as drink bottles) thus keeping these items out of oceans and landfills. The vendor also uses hydroelectric power from Niagara Falls exclusively – a completely renewable resource producing no waste and no greenhouse gases. Given the now nearly complete scope of interior renovations,

the need to install a system of an appropriate, inclusive and uniform wayfinding/signage system is crucial in order to guide patrons in the most efficient usage of our facility and its multipurpose resources. The accomplishment of this goal will result in improved user experience, greater engagement in library programs and services. Particular recognition for the creation and submission of this grant should be given to Kira Aiello, Elizabeth Joseph and Jean Manning. The entire cost of the project will be \$144,692 with our grant request totaling \$108,519. If successful, we will need to provide a match of \$36,175. We expect to fund this match through our Foundation annual grant award.

The Huguenot Children's Library Restroom Improvement Project grant application is seeking to implement a series of necessary restroom improvements, due to heavy ongoing usage and code modifications, located on the first floor and basement. The changes will constitute a significant upgrade and include installation of new flooring, ADA compliant sinks, toilets and other devices as well as the addition of urinals, improved ventilation, LED lighting and enhanced infant changing spaces. Particular recognition for the creation and submission of this grant should be given to Susan Moorhead, Bobby Simic, Elizabeth Joseph and Jean Manning. The entire cost of the project will be \$64,000 with our grant request totaling \$48,000. If successful, we will need to provide a match of \$16,000. We expect to fund this match through our Foundation annual grant award.

"Next steps" in the grant process will include the online submission of the grant through the New York State Portal. An Ad Hoc Committee of WLS Library Directors will then evaluate and score the grants per NYS and WLS regulations along with WLS staff examining the applications in order to certify the requests meet the requirements of the grant program. Once these efforts have been completed, the WLS Board, at its September meeting, will vote to confirm the award recommendations. Typically, grant award payments will not be issued by NYS until September of the following year.

Relative to our upcoming FY 2023/24 New York State Library Construction Grant application for funding support of the Main Library Noise Abatement Phase 2 / Library Wayfinding Project, the following action was taken:

Motion was made by Whitney Barrat to agree to the assurances as stipulated by the New York State Education Department in relation to the New York State Library Construction Grant applications for the Main Library Noise Abatement / Library Wayfinding Project Phase 2, seconded by Tatiana Infante and approved.

Motion was made by Whitney Barrat to submit the Smart Growth Impact Statement as required by the New York State Education Department in relation to the New York State Library Construction Grant applications for the Main Library Noise Abatement / Library Wayfinding Project Phase 2, seconded by Fela Cortes and approved.

Motion was made by Whitney Barrat to declare that the Main Library Noise Abatement / Library Wayfinding Project Phase 2 qualifies as State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Type II actions thus classifying the proposed restorations and use of the above land as requiring no further review under SEQRA and its implementing regulations, seconded by Lucille Renwick and approved.

Relative to our upcoming FY2023/24 New York State Library Construction Grant Huguenot Children's Library Restroom Improvement Project, the following action was taken:

Motion was made by Whitney Barrat to agree to the assurances as stipulated by the New York State Education Department in relation to the New York State Library Construction Grant applications for the Huguenot Children's Library Restroom Improvement Project seconded by Rhiannon Navin and approved.

Motion was made by Whitney Barrat to submit the Smart Growth Impact Statement as required by the New York State Education Department in relation to the New York State Library Construction Grant applications for the Huguenot Children's Library Restroom Improvement Project, seconded by Corey Galloway and approved.

Motion was made by Whitney Barrat to declare that the Huguenot Children's Library Restroom Improvement Project qualifies as State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Type II actions thus classifying the proposed restorations and use of the above land as requiring no further review under SEQRA and its implementing regulations, seconded by Beth Acocella and approved.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucille Renwick

Secretary