



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**  
**Thursday, December 12, 2024**

**New Rochelle Public Library: Main Library Ossie Davis Theater**

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Lucille Renwick, President  
Corey Galloway, Vice President  
Rhiannon Navin, Secretary  
Fela Cortés  
Tatiana Infante  
Vera Salter  
Nancy Weinberger

**ADMINISTRATION**

Eugenia Schatoff  
Jean Manning  
Yesika Torres  
Dr. David Mener, WLS Representative

NRPL Board President Lucille Renwick called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING

The minutes from the November 14 board meeting were reviewed by the Trustees. Lucille Renwick moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Vera Salter and approved unanimously.

WLS Report

WLS Representative Dr. David Mener provided the following updates from the WLS Director:

The 2025 WLS budget was approved with total expenses budgeted at \$7,958,900.

As part of the budget approval process, WLS approved replacement of all 400 public computers with Office 2024 at member libraries, to be completed by the end of the 1st Quarter of 2025 at an approximate cost of \$346,000.

The Trustee Handbook Book Club met online on 11/22/2024 from 5:00-6:30 pm.

The Library Advocacy Day is on 2/5/2025. If interested, Trustees should contact WLS Executive Director Terry Kirchner for details on busing.

President's Report

Lucille Renwick spoke about the NRPL's winter 2024 newsletter, which is available in the library's lobby. The newsletter gives an update about the library's programs, updates from the Friends and New Rochelle Public Library Foundation, as well as a letter from the new Library Director.

Lucille thanked all Board members who were able to join the annual New Rochelle Thanksgiving Parade.

Lucille spoke about further streamlining the way the Board conducts business by making agendas and minutes available online for the Board to review a week before the Board meeting. This is the second month of implementing this new process. The minutes are also available on the library website. The Board will have standing dates for the committee meetings. There are currently seven committees and each has or will have regular consistent meeting dates and times that will be announced in advance for the public to be aware of and attend. The committee meeting agendas and minutes will be shared on the website.

Lucille thanked the Board members who attended the Board retreat on November 20 as the Board continues to improve processes to support the new Director. A follow-up retreat is scheduled for Monday, December 16.

### Director's Report

Director Eugenia Schatoff reported that the effort to improve the board packet process is ongoing to improve transparency and communication. All materials are shared on the Google drive.

Director Schatoff announced that going forward, any personnel actions will be listed by resolution. One such resolution was included in the Board folder for this meeting.

Director Schatoff enjoyed marching in her first-ever (Thanksgiving) parade and emphasized the opportunity to connect with the community.

Director Schatoff expressed gratitude towards the library's two fundraising arms, the Friends and the New Rochelle Public Library Foundation, who have given the library unwavering support and play a crucial role in helping the library provide its services. Schatoff attended the Friends of the Library's annual meeting the previous day. The Friends operate on a January to December fiscal year and generously agreed to fund \$74,900 worth of library programs. Schatoff attended the New Rochelle Public Library Foundation's fundraising event the previous evening, Cocktails and Conversations with author Ben Yagoda. Schatoff emphasized her gratitude for both organizations' passion and commitment to the library's mission.

Schatoff referred to her written Director's report that was made available as part of the Board meeting packet and asked for any questions.

Rhiannon Navin asked about the upcoming staff development that was mentioned in the report. Director Schatoff explained that staff development is very important, it's an investment in the staff, and that new legislation actually mandates continuing education for librarians to keep their public librarian certification in the state of New York. Schatoff distributed a Google form with open-ended questions to the library staff asking about what kind of training they'd like to see and meetings were held with department heads to learn which kind of training was needed in each individual department. Schatoff received many responses to the survey. The initial push for the training will be health and life safety-focused with the first training being a fire safety drill on January 5th. An active shooter training will also be held. In addition, there will be a number of new policies coming from the policy committee, which will require staff training on procedures on how to implement the policies that are being put in place. Schatoff announced that regular general staff meetings will be held.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Budget Committee** – Chair Rhiannon Navin reported that the budget committee will meet on January 10th at 2pm.

**Buildings & Grounds/CROC Committee** – Chair Corey Galloway reported the

following key points from the Committee's meetings:

#### 1. Financial Outlook and Budget

- Financial assessment for buildings and grounds is underway.
- An accounting firm, Attempt, is being consulted for financial clarity. Finance Committee to lead further financial discussions.

#### 2. DASNY Grant Implementation & RFP

- A DASNY grant (\$250,000) was awarded for a Children's Garden project on library property. Foundation to hire a construction manager; RFP to be posted the following Monday. Follow-up meeting scheduled to finalize project management details.

#### 3. Change Orders & Financial Implications

- Historically, the NRPL has picked up the costs of any needed change orders. The committee discussed how to handle this moving forward, so the library is not burdened with these costs. Concerns were raised about transparency, clear budgeting, and future grants. The committee agreed to improve upfront planning and clear expectations for projects.

#### 4. Project Management & Grant Challenges

- Identified the need for better project management and communication. Library Director Eugenia Schatoff is currently acting as project manager, which is above and beyond her agreed upon scope of work.
- The new Executive Director Nina Robertson is expected to enhance processes.
- Commitment to reviewing project budgets and documenting additional work.

#### 5. Architectural Firm Proposal & State Grants

- Initial courtyard design proposal (\$36,000) lacked detailed plans. More work is needed to determine budgeting and begin the work.

#### 6. Project Prioritization & Funding

- Air handler replacement and garden project prioritized.
- Exploring potential Department of Environmental Conservation grants.  
Adjustments to RFP for the Homestead project discussed.

#### Next Steps

1. Director Eugenia Schatoff to email the Buildings and Grounds Committee about unplanned Foundation work and will follow up with elected officials on DASNY funding and potential reallocation for critical infrastructure.

2. Director Eugenia Schatoff and Trustee Rhiannon Navin have scheduled a January meeting

with Assemblyman Steve Otis regarding HVAC funding.

3. Committee Chair Corey Galloway to add the air handler issue and RFP approval for the Homestead Remodeling project to the next Board meeting agenda.

Committee Chair Corey Galloway presented Resolution #2024-12-12-03, dated 12/12/24, Topic: Awarding of Huguenot Children's Library Bathroom Renovation Project:

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Trustees of the New Rochelle Public Library hereby amends its proceedings and ratifies that the following:

*To award the contract for the renovation of the Huguenot Children's Library to Homestead Remodeling, following a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The contract shall be awarded for an amount not to exceed \$67,400, in accordance with the terms outlined in the proposal.*

*Corey Galloway made a motion for the Board to approve the resolution.*

Vera Salter stressed that an adjustment will need to be made to the original proposal regarding the removal of the bathrooms' urinals with the understanding that this additional work will not exceed the awarded amount of \$67,400.

Rhiannon Navin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Community Relations Committee** – Chair Nancy Weinberger reported that the committee met to discuss its mission. With Director Schatoff's guidance, it was decided to focus on advocacy and outreach. The committee discussed attending Library Advocacy Day on February 5, 2025, and to sign up to be an advocate on the New York Library Association website. The committee will reach out to local leaders and to do outward advocacy to elected officials and other community stakeholders to build relationships. The committee discussed improving Spanish language resources and reaching out to senior centers. A comprehensive calendar will be created to track City events to coordinate library presence. The committee will meet again in January.

**Finance Committee** – Chair Vera Salter reported that the committee met on November 25th and has begun the process of hiring an independent treasurer, together with the personnel committee. A job description has been reviewed by the committee.

**Personnel Committee** – Chair Lucille Renwick reported that the personnel committee will be working with the Finance committee to bring on a treasurer. Lucille introduced a step salary increase for an employee, Dana Peters, a full-time library clerk in the tech services department, who is moving from a step 1 salary of \$45,149 to a step 2 salary of \$46,609, effective as of November 16, 2024. Moving forward, salary increases will be shared in this fashion in the interest of full transparency. Lucille made a motion to approve this salary increase, seconded by Tatiana Infante, and the motion passed unanimously.

The committee met on November 27 and discussed a number of items, including the roles and responsibilities of the committee, as well as the role of the Director, as related to the committee. It discussed the hiring process of the library, current open positions, possible and upcoming retirements, and the importance of all employees being hired through the Civil Services Committee. The committee also discussed staff development trainings, which are a necessary and important part of the continued internal professional development for the library staff and this includes fire drill and active shooter drill trainings. Providing these trainings requires time for

the staff to meet and the committee discussed with the Director to hold time for these trainings one Wednesday morning per month. On this one Wednesday per month, the library will open later to the public, at noon.

Lucille introduced a resolution for the Board to approve the monthly late opening schedule for staff development in 2025 and going forward:

*Whereas, the Library Board recognizes the need for committed staff development time and trainings for continued professional development for NRPL staff and to comply with New York State standards; and*

*Whereas, the Library has not previously had an opportunity to have dedicated time for consistent monthly staff development; and*

*Whereas, the Library Director has presented a proposed schedule to hold one Wednesday morning per month for staff development training; and*

*Whereas, such dedicated training requires delaying the Library opening to noon to hold these monthly staff development trainings;*

*Be it resolved that the NRPL Board of Trustees hereby approves the implementation of the new opening hour of 12 noon **one Wednesday per month**, effective January 15, 2025, as outlined in the Library Director's proposal.*

Rhiannon Navin asked if the trainings will always be held on the same Wednesday of the month and how the new opening hours will be communicated to the public. Director Schatoff explained that Wednesdays were strategically chosen for the trainings because those are already the late opening days so this will minimize the impact on residents. The trainings will be held on different Wednesdays of the month to accommodate rotating staff schedules. The marketing team will communicate the dates of the first delayed opening in the new year and signs will be placed out-and inside the building.

Fela Cortés asked if the Huguenot Children's Library staff will be included in the trainings and Director Schatoff confirmed that they will and that the HCL will also have a delayed opening.

Lucille Renwick made a motion to pass the resolution, Corey Galloway seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Policy Committee** – Chair Fela Cortés reported that the Policy Committee held two meetings on October 22 and November 7. The Committee is continuing its review of the library's full scope of policies and is identifying additional policy needs. During the October 22nd meeting, the committee discussed the broader classification of policies, including financial, regulatory, operational and By-Laws. The committee determined that it will utilize a two track process, one that allows them to be responsive to immediate needs and a longer-term track for monitoring policies.

Director Schatoff requested that the committee review the financial policies and identify if they should be updated or developed. These policies include cash handling, budget, capital fund, investment, expense management, audit/financial reporting, procurement, reserve fund, etc. Director Schatoff also requested that the committee review policies including the Whistleblower Policy, due to updates to legislation, payroll/timesheet, safety training, hiring and a larger professional development policy.

During the November 7 meeting, the committee reviewed the Credit Card Policy, the Children's Room Policy and the Sexual Harassment Policy.

The committee updated the **New Rochelle Public Library (NRPL) Policy Regarding Adults in Children's Room & the Huguenot Children's Library (HCL)**. The updated policy was shared with the Board prior to this evening's Board meeting and will be presented for adoption.

The Policy Committee proposes that the Board vote to approve the following:

*The NRPL Children's Room and Huguenot Children's Library (including their technology and restrooms) are intended solely for children (ages 0-12 years) with their caregivers. Adults and teenagers are only allowed in the children's area and HCL when they are accompanying a child or actively accessing the collections in these areas.*

*The library reserves the right to ask adults and teens to move to other areas of the building or to leave the Library if they are not assisting children, not accessing children's materials in order to assist children in their care, or if they are in violation of the Library's Code of Conduct Policy.*

A reference is hyperlinked, which is the Code of Conduct Policy: [Code-of-Conduct-Policy-Final-2017.pdf \(nrpl.org\)](#)

Fela Cortés made a motion for the Board to approve the **New Rochelle Public Library (NRPL) Policy Regarding Adults in Children's Room & the Huguenot Children's Library (HCL)**. Corey Galloway seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The committee's next meeting date will be announced shortly.

**Special Projects Committee** – Chair Tatiana Infante had nothing to report.

**PUBLIC TO BE HEARD** – No public to be heard.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m., with a motion by Corey Galloway, seconded by Fela Cortés and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rhiannon Navin, Secretary

**A recording of the meeting can be found on the library's website: [www.nrpl.org](http://www.nrpl.org).**