



BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, February 13, 2024
New Rochelle Public Library: Main Library Ossie Davis Theater

NRPL Board President Lucille Renwick called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

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

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING

The minutes from the January 9th Board meeting as well as the January 31st Special Board Meeting were shared ahead of the meeting and reviewed by the Trustees. Lucille Renwick made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 9th Board meeting, seconded by Tatiana Infante and approved unanimously. Lucille Renwick made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 31st Special Board meeting, seconded by Corey Galloway and approved unanimously.

WLS Report

WLS Board Committees were finalized and approved for the 2025 calendar year.

Election of Officers:

President: Nishat Hydari
Vice President Anthony Amiano
Secretary: Diane Tabakman
Treasurer (Appointed): Maureen LeBlanc

Review of 2025 budget, which has been discussed in prior WLS reports. Pertinent to member libraries, member library fees are projected to be 2.5% above the 2024 budget.

Trustee Handbook Book Club Sessions (counts towards Trustee Continuing Education):

- April 30, 2025, 5:00 PM-6:30 PM – Trustee Handbook Book Club – Board Development: Recruitment, Orientation, Education and Evaluation
- July 15, 2025, 5:00 PM-6:30 PM – Trustee Handbook Book Club: Recruiting & Retaining Quality Staff

- November 18, 2025, 5:00 PM-6:30 PM – Trustee Handbook Book Club – Next Level Trusteeship: Building an Effective and Impactful Board Culture
- To register, go to the Handbook Book Club website at <https://midhudson.org/trusteebookclub/>.

Fela Cortés asked when the next WLS meeting will be. Dr. Mener confirmed that it will be on February 25th.

President's Report

Board President Lucille Renwick provided a recap on the Library Advocacy Day.

Lucille recalled the Credit Card policy that was passed at the previous meeting. The policy requires a usage agreement signed by every employee using the library's credit card. Lucille made a motion to approve the credit card usage agreement for the following employees: Library Director, Eugenia Schatoff, Head Custodian, Robert Florin, Head of Marketing and Communication, Lisa Itzkowitz, Administrative Assistant to the Library Director, Jean Manning, and Head of Adult Services. Kira Aiello. The motion was seconded by Fela Cortés and approved unanimously.

Director's Report

Director Eugenia Schatoff drew attention to the fact that in the Director's Report, the list of meetings, trainings, discussions don't even begin to fully cover the scope of the ongoing work. Some highlights since the last report: the first two staff development trainings were held. These trainings begin with a full staff meeting and then flow into pertinent staff trainings. In the coming months, the NR Fire Department and Police Department will come in for staff trainings.

There will be programming around Black History Month, concerts, African Dance Class, etc.

The tax assistance program through AARP is currently ongoing and extremely popular with patrons.

With the retirement of the Library's Head of Technology, the administrative office has absorbed facilitating E-Rate, which are federal funds available to institutions like public libraries for technology monies, specifically for high speed internet, networking, etc.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget Committee – Chair Rhiannon Navin reported that the committee met twice since the last Board meeting, on January 10 and on February 7. The committee reviewed the previous year's budget, looked at actual spending of the fiscal year to date, and discussed adjustments to resource allocations. The committee began the planning process for the 2026/26 fiscal year budget with the goal to present the committee's budget recommendation at the March 13 Board meeting.

Buildings & Grounds/CROC Committee – Chair Corey Galloway reported that the committee met on February 7 and discussed the status of the ARPA grant and MOU with the Foundation.

The MOU for the ARPA grant outlines the way we work on this project with the Foundation. It highlights the roles and responsibilities between Foundation, Library, General Contractor and Architect. The goal is to get away from the Library handling the Foundation's responsibilities as the Foundation is the financing arm of the project, will cut checks to vendors, etc. Rod

Roled, Foundation CO-President, is the Foundation's contact on this project. One of the objectives is to manage Eugenia Schatoff's workload. The MOU puts protections on her time.

The contract with the construction company includes deliverables that will lessen Eugenia and her office's workload, such as providing weekly written updates, provide back office support, etc.

Eugenia has started interviewing for the building supervisor position. There were 130+ applicants for this position with a high quality of candidates. It is the hope that this new hire can be on site soon to handle this project daily. This project involvement would serve as a good evaluation tool for this new hire.

The start date for the ARPA grant project is believed to be as early as April.

The Finance Committee passed three motions at their last meeting: To open an account with NYLA, to deposit \$94k in reimbursement money from a grant to redo circulation desk areas into this account, and to designate this amount of money to pay for upcoming building studies.

The status of the planned studies is as follows:

- For the roofing study, Eugenia solicited five proposals and received four written proposals (the fifth solicited company was unable to provide a proposal due to a death.) The company selected for the first portion for the assessment will initially conduct a previous condition study and make recommendations to the committee. This initial phase is budgeted at \$4k. There might be additional costs, such as full asbestos testing, etc.
- The windows study has been done in full with an actual inventory in 2010, but is now already outdated. Eugenia approached the original company and asked for a proposal, explaining that it is typically cheaper to update the study rather than start fresh. The company's estimate for an update was \$18K.
- Facility use study: An RFP has been completed and shared with the committee in November. Due to the facts that a high level of public engagement would be required and that it would be a big time commitment for Committee and Library staff, it will be important to determine a reasonable timeline for putting it out for a bid.

The HVAC system is still functioning and grant monies were received to repair the chiller and one of the air handlers. The system is not efficient, there is a huge waste of energy, and the climate within the building is not ideal, but to redo the HVAC completely is a multi-million-dollar project. The committee will continue to monitor the situation and will address after the completion of the facility use study.

Community Relations Committee – Chair Nancy Weinberger reported that the committee met on January 29 and discussed the upcoming Library Advocacy Day. The committee discussed the need to have a comprehensive and technology-based approach to community outreach and engagement with the goal to target specifically seniors and the Spanish-speaking patrons. The committee also discussed creating an advocacy toolkit to support this year's budget proposal.

Nancy attended the Library Advocacy Day on February 5 in Albany together with librarians and other library advocates from WLS to lobby Westchester State Representatives on four budget bills concerning library operating aid, construction aid, materials aid, and aid for subscriber resources. Advocates also lobbied for other policy initiatives: The Freedom to Read Act and the Open Shelves Act. They advocated for a new licensing reform for e-books as well as more media literacy for librarians in NYS.

Finance Committee – Chair Vera Salter reported that the committee met on January 22. In addition to committee members and the Library Director, the meeting was attended by NYLA (New York Liquid Asset Fund) Representative Michael Marino.

The committee discussed the continuing recruitment of an interim treasurer.

The committee discussed the need to fund the three needed building studies, the roof study, windows study, and facility use study. The committee recommended three resolutions. Vera moved to pass each resolution separately:

1. Vera moved that the Board of Trustees of the NRPL shall establish a NYLA account. The motion was seconded by Nancy Weinberger and unanimously approved.
2. Vera moved that the \$94,000 received by the NRPL as reimbursements for completed work by the New York Dormitory Authority be placed in the established NYLA Account as a capital fund. The motion was seconded by Corey Galloway and unanimously approved.
3. Vera moved that the funds shall be primarily designated for professional roof, window, and facility use studies. The motion was seconded by Tatiana Infante and unanimously approved.

Personnel Committee – Committee Chair Lucille Renwick made a motion to approve a raise for employee Yvonne Pierson Collier, who is a part-time library Clerk and will be moving from step 3 to a step 4 increase, from \$23.48 to \$24.34 per hour. The motion was seconded by Vera Salter and unanimously approved.

Lucille reported that the committee met twice since the last Board meeting, as well as once before the last Board meeting in late December to discuss paid family and medical leave, a benefit provided to library staff. The committee recognized that this is an important opportunity for the library. The committee met on January 21 to continue this conversation and determined that the benefit of paid family and medical leave was an important enough benefit for library employees to warrant payment by the library for this service. Lucille presented a resolution for the Board's consideration and approval:

NRPL Paid Family Medical Leave Resolution

WHEREAS the Library desires to provide an Employee Assistance Plan ("EAP") to all employees; and

WHEREAS the EAP program selected by the Library requires employees to have both Paid Family Medical Leave insurance and Disability insurance; and

WHEREAS the New Rochelle Public Library, as a public employer, is not required to offer

such coverages, but wishes to offer a comprehensive array of supports to employees; and

WHEREAS the Library has now obtained such coverages in anticipation of putting the EAP plan into effect for all employees; and

WHEREAS to offer Paid Family Medical Leave coverage to employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement requires consent of the bargaining unit; and

WHEREAS the Board wants to ensure an orderly implementation that is well-communicated to employees;

BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the Director and other duly authorized representative of the Library are authorized to work with the Union to confirm that Paid Family Medical Leave Coverage and Disability coverage shall be offered per the current Agreement for the remaining duration of the current contract without charge to employees or reduction or change to any current contractually assured benefit; and

2. That pending completion of “1” above, the Director and other duly authorized representative of the Library shall file and submit all the required notices to implement Paid Family Medical Leave Coverage to all employees, to be effective no later than July 1, 2025 (at the start of the Fiscal Year); and

3. That pending the finalization of items “1” and “2” above, the board adopts the following policies:

Employee Assistance Plan Policy (“EAP”)
Paid Family Medical Leave Policy
Disability Leave Policy

4. That pending the finalization of items “1” “2” and “3” above, the board directs use and maintenance of a “NRPL Employee Sick Leave and Family Leave FAQ” to provide simple and plain-language guidance on how employees may utilize the different types of EAP, leave, and insurance coverages available.

5. That this board confirms its understanding that the Union is entitled to reject the provision of Paid Family Medical Leave insurance benefits either now, or in a future contract, but directs its representative to seek mutual gains for the benefit of the Library and the workforce.

Lucille made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Rhiannon Navin and unanimously approved.

Policy Committee – Committee Chair Fela Cortés reported that the policy committee met on January 27 and February 3. The committee worked on several policies and advanced three

policies at the Special Board meeting on January 31: the Immigration Authority and Law Enforcement Visits to the Library and Requests for Documents Policy, the Whistleblower Protection Policy, and the Family and Medical Leave Act Policy. The Policy Committee also discussed the Conflict of Interest Policy and agreed to present it at tonight's meeting for consideration and approval. The Board members have received and reviewed the policy ahead of the meeting. Fela made a motion to approve the Conflict of Interest policy. The motion was seconded by Vera Salter and unanimously approved.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for February 24.

Special Projects Committee – Committee Chair Tatiana Infante reported that the Special Projects Committee is meeting with the Policy Committee to assist.

PUBLIC TO BE HEARD – No public to be heard.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m., with a motion by Lucille Renwick, seconded by Corey Galloway and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Rhiannon Navin, Secretary

A recording of the meeting can be found on the library's website: www.nrpl.org.