

YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD MEETING
GRINTON I. WILL LIBRARY
MARCH 21, 2024

ATTENDANCE

TRUSTEES:	Joseph Puglia Stephen Jannetti Patricia Phelan John A. Daily Jr. Ofunne Edoziem
LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	Jesse Montero
ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR:	Shauna Porteus
BUSINESS MANAGER:	Vivian Presedo
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY:	James Hackett
WLS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:	Trustee Phelan
UNION REPRESENTATIVE:	Brandon Neider
GUESTS:	Jay Chawla

The Board Meeting began at 7:06 pm.

Vice President Puglia chaired the meeting in the absence of President Maron.

MINUTES

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded by Trustee Daily and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the Meeting of February 15, 2024.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Director Montero announced that YPL received from the Westchester County Board of Legislators \$18,000 in funding for health, fitness and nutrition programming and \$11,000 in technology programming. The money would fund popular programs like the Summer STEM camps at Riverfront and Will libraries. He also expected another \$10,000 from the Board of Legislators in arts programming and was proud to note that YPL was one of only three libraries in the county to receive this kind of funding.

Director Montero updated the Board on the Seed Library. YPL received \$10,000 in funding from Con Edison to fund the program's third year. The Seed Library will again feature thousands of branded flower and vegetable seed packets stored in old card catalog cabinets for distribution to the public, and will also feature a new hydroponic garden station. Supplies of packets at Will Library were immediately exhausted and the success of the program has led YPL to nominate it for an award at the American Library Association conference (ALA). YPL intends to hold further discussions with Con Edison on funding for additional sustainability and green programming.

Trustee Edoziem arrived at 7:09 pm.

Director Montero discussed the Community Mental Health Promotion and Support Program (COMHPS). The New York State Department of Health program is composed of bilingual community outreach workers from Family Services of Westchester (FSW) that provide anonymous counseling services and referrals every Friday at Riverfront Library. He believed it was a valuable service in light of an ongoing crisis of mental health among many library patrons, particularly at Riverfront and among teens, and discussed additional collaborations with the Yonkers Police Department, YMCA and SNUG to combat the problem.

Director Montero reported a large donation of \$25,000 to the Foundation for Yonkers Public Library from the Castle family. The family of Irving Castle, who passed away in 2007, made the donation in honor of his frequent patronage of the Will Library for many years following the execution of his philanthropic estate. YPL will recognize the generous gift with a plaque memorializing him in the New Books section at Will. The donation prompted management to revise the existing naming policy from 1991, which Director Montero announced he will present to the Board for their approval later in the meeting.

Director Montero updated the Board on staff news. He reported that Anthony Ortiz was recently hired as a full-time custodial worker at Will after serving in the same capacity at Crestwood Library on a part-time basis. Tara Somersall was permanently appointed as Branch Administrator of Will Library after serving in the position on an interim basis for the last six months following the retirement of Aurora Cruz. Riverfront Branch Administrator Sandy Amoyaw was recently honored by the Mayor for his leadership in the Ghanaian community at its independence day celebration. Riverfront Childrens' Department Head Oz Coto-Chang and his wife Marisol welcomed their second child, daughter Mila Rose Coto-Santos, on February 15th, while Riverfront Reference Librarian Trainee Erik Malave and his wife welcomed their first child, Willow Esperanza Malave, on February 27th.

The Board and management discussed the crisis of mental health among many library patrons at length, its causes and potential solutions and additional services the library may be able to provide.

UNION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Representative Neider noted the memorandum of agreement (MOA) regarding snow removal on the agenda for the Board's approval later in the meeting. He disagreed with management's position that an MOA was required because the contract did not

specifically address snow removal and, while he was happy custodial workers would be fairly compensated for snow removal, he believed it would set a precedent of custodians being afraid to perform duties that require overtime. Director Montero believed it was important to have such provisions in the contract and encouraged the union to reach out if there was any question about what work qualified for overtime and at which rate.

WLS REPORT

WLS Representative Phelan reported she was successfully appointed to the WLS Board of Trustees at their last meeting and shared with trustees literature she received at the meeting. She promised to be an advocate for YPL and look for additional funding opportunities.

PERSONNEL REPORT

On motion of Trustee Jannetti, seconded by Trustee Phelan and unanimously carried, the Board ratified the following appointments:

Ortiz, Anthony; Permanent Custodial Worker, \$50,674.00/yr, eff. 3/1/2024

Somersall, Tara; Permanent Librarian IV, \$118,854.69/yr, eff. 3/18/2024

Acknowledged the following termination:

Jacob, Hepsibah; Junior Clerk (PT), \$16.00/hour, eff. 1/18/2024

Minozzi, Maryann; Librarian II, \$88,026.00/year, eff. 1/30/2024 (retired)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance, Budget and Planning- Trustee Jannetti (chair)

Chairman Jannetti asked Business Manager Presedo to discuss the library's contributions account. Ms. Presedo explained that while most library accounts are funded by the City, the contributions account is funded by the Foundation, small donations and grants with specific purposes, such as 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten and homework helper programs. She noted that expenses are still subject to the same Board approval process as other expenses and pointed out where it is in their monthly reports.

Fundraising- Trustee Jannetti (chair)

Foundation Update: Chairman Jannetti forwarded correspondence from Trustee Maron. Invitations for the gala have been sent out and distributed extra copies to the trustees. He noted that sales have gone well so far and reminded trustees that "early bird" pricing is set to expire on April 8. He also reported that the Foundation is looking for donations for the live auction at the gala.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

On motion of Trustee Daily, seconded by Trustee Jannetti and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment of bills as listed on Schedule #861.

NEW BUSINESS

Director Montero discussed snow removal procedures and custodial worker compensation with the Board and presented a Memorandum of Agreement with SEIU 704B formalizing their compensation at a rate of double time for snow removal performed during snow days and/or outside of their normal shift. He recommended the Board ratify it. On motion of Trustee Phelan, seconded by Trustee Jannetti and unanimously approved, the Board ratified the Memorandum of Agreement with SEIU 704B regarding snow removal procedures.

Director Montero presented the proposed Naming Policy found in the Board Report. The policy was in response to the large donation received from the Castle family and was the product of research by the Foundation for Yonkers Public Library. The Board discussed the policy at length and supported the structure and purpose of it but agreed some language in the duration and change of use section needed to be modified and they would discuss it again at the next meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Vice President Puglia motioned the Board into Executive Session at 7:56 pm to discuss the employment history and status of a particular employee and asked Director Montero, Assistant Director Porteus and Business Manager Presedo to join them.

The Executive Session ended at 8:15 pm.

NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE –Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 7:00pm at Riverfront Library.

On motion of Trustee Daily, seconded by Trustee Jannetti and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned the Meeting at 8:16 pm.

Jesse Montero
Library Director & Secretary