

YONKERS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD MEETING  
GRINTON I. WILL LIBRARY  
JULY 24, 2024

**ATTENDANCE**

TRUSTEES:	Nancy Maron Joseph Puglia Michael Sabatino Patricia Phelan John Daily Jr.
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:	Mary Robison, Zahra Baird, Jacqueline Leone

The Board Meeting began at 7:04 pm.

**MINUTES**

On motion of Trustee Puglia, seconded by Trustee Daily and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the Meeting of June 13, 2024.

**MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Director Montero reported that YPL has had a busy summer so far, with all three libraries experiencing the largest number of patrons since the pandemic. The popular Summer Reading Buddies program began on July 9 at Riverfront and while the building was very busy, it was also orderly and smoother than in previous years thanks in part to more planning in advance. Riverfront also began distributing summer meals in partnership with Yonkers Public Schools and average about 300 meals per day, with more during Reading Buddies.

Director Montero discussed the numerous summer camps that YPL is hosting. Riverfront and Will Library is hosting several weekly STEM camps on topics such as coding,

animation, minecraft and digital media. The camps are in its third consecutive year and is funded in part by the Westchester County Board of Legislators. Riverfront is also hosting an afternoon art camp with local artist Eddy Grigg, camps with Sister to Sister International and Environmental Leaders of Color, and Sensory Friendly Movies with autistic students from the extended year program at Yonkers Montessori Academy.

Director Montero reported that YPL staff is working with Evan Bishop of 320 Arts to produce a series of events around the art and culture of comic books and cosplay, such as learning to draw, costume design and comic book publishing. The series will culminate in a comic convention Riverfront on October 5.

Director Montero reported that YPL hosted its annual Yonkers Future Stars talent show at the Riverfront Auditorium on July 12. The event was a success, with 15 contestants participating and 250 attending. Winners received gift cards, purchased with funding from the Foundation for Yonkers Public Library. YPL staff Arnaldo Torres and Elyse Schreiber were also recognized for their work producing the annual event and community outreach.

Director Montero reported on the expansion of YPL's partnership with Feeding Westchester at Riverfront. The program has expanded beyond the distribution of child nutrition bags last year to include full pantry service where patrons in need can take the items they need. The expansion has reduced food waste due to unused items in the nutrition bags and is very popular during Reading Buddies.

Director Montero announced that YPL was awarded a \$4,315 archival grant from the Metropolitan New York Library Council. The grant will fund the digitization of the local Yonkers Home News, which was published between 1941-1946 by the Alexander Smith and Sons Carpet Company for Yonkers residents serving overseas during World War II. The newspaper will be viewable and searchable online. The project was being led by Head of Riverfront Reference and Adult Services Mary Robison.

Assistant Library Director Porteus announced that YPL was awarded a \$7,500 grant from the United Way of Westchester and Putnam's Pepsi x Mary J. Blige Strength of a Woman community fund. The funding will support a new Culinary Career Pathways apprenticeship, where 5 women will receive 35 hours of paid professional training at the local Yonkers restaurant Off the Hook, access to a career coach, entrepreneurship workshops and certification in food safety and handling.

Assistant Library Director Porteus updated the Board on the search for a new Manager of Marketing and Public Relations. She announced that YPL hired Patricia Ricardo-Ortiz for the position and will begin in August. Ms. Ricardo-Ortiz specializes in brand awareness and public and media relations, is bilingual and comes to YPL from one of the largest private health clinics in the Bronx. She also has media experience with NBC Universal Telemundo and studied in the Dominican Republic and Spain. Assistant Director Porteus was pleased with Ms. Ricardo-Ortiz's familiarity with Yonkers and new ideas during her interview.

The Board was excited about the success of the STEM camp and discussed ideas for expansion. Director Montero added that they also hold camps during winter and spring breaks as well, which are also popular and well-attended.

Trustee Daily inquired about the timeline for the digitization of the Yonkers Home News. Ms. Robison discussed the project in more detail and hoped it would be completed in August. The Board discussed ideas on raising awareness of the service once completed.

President Maron inquired about the status of the Born to Read program. Director Montero discussed the program in more detail. The program is the product of an ongoing partnership with St. John's Riverside Hospital where the library will prepare care packages for newborns in an effort to encourage parents to connect with the library and read to their children early in their development. Over 400 packages, funded by the Foundation for YPL, will be prepared for the launch of the program on September 12.

## **UNION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT**

There was no Union Representative's report.

## **WLS REPORT**

Trustee Phelan reported there would be no WLS Board meetings in July or August, but noted that WLS IT Director Wilson Arana announced at the last meeting that many PCs at member libraries were in need of new software and as a result all libraries would receive upgraded PCs over the summer but she cautioned there were a lot of libraries and the project would take a while. She also reported that she attended an award ceremony recognizing WLS Director Terry Kirchener and discussed his speech about the changes in library service in an increasingly polarized society still suffering from economic hardships and the traumas of the pandemic and the value of libraries engaging their communities.

## **PERSONNEL REPORT**

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

Lucchese, Tinamarie; Permanent Clerk II, \$56,997/yr, effective 6/21/2024

Daglawi, Manal; Page (P/T), \$16.00/hr, effective 7/1/2024

Guzman, Randy; Page (P/T), \$16.00/hr, effective 7/6/2024

Acknowledged the following resignation:

Benedetti, Christopher; Custodial Worker, \$60,306/yr, effective 6/7/2024

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

There were no committee reports or updates, however President Maron announced that Trustees Puglia and Jannetti, whose terms were held over by the Board of Education following their expirations last year, were formally reappointed to full five year terms at the last Board of Education meeting in June. Trustees Puglia and Jannetti were congratulated and thanked for their continued service.

## **PAYMENT OF BILLS**

On motion of Trustee Daily, seconded by Trustee Phelan and unanimously carried, the Board approved payment of bills as listed on Schedule #865.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Director Montero presented the updated Code of Conduct. He believed the updates were necessary to set expectations for patrons and give staff the support and tools they need to serve the public in light of changes in patron behavior. Director Montero gave an overview of the policy, which was last updated 9 years ago, and discussed several of the changes and new language. He asked the Board to approve the Code of Conduct as included in their reports, with an added stipulation that extreme odor and/or an unhygienic state constitutes disruptive behavior according to section 5 (item f). The Board discussed the process and the new changes at length. On motion of Trustee Daily, seconded by Trustee Puglia and unanimously carried, the Board approved the updated Code of Conduct as presented in their report with the added amendment.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE** – Thursday, September 19, 2024 at 7:00pm at Riverfront Library.

On motion of Trustee Sabatino, seconded by Trustee Phelan and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned the Meeting at 8:12 pm.

Jesse Montero  
Library Director & Secretary