

**WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
**Trustee Meeting**  
**February 22, 2022 – Approved March 29, 2022**

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Karen Zevin, President, at 6:03 p.m. and held via Zoom. The quorum requirement was met with the following people in attendance at both meetings of the WLS Board of Trustees:

Board Members present: Andrea Bober, Cathy Draper, Nishat Hydari, Wes Iwanski, Karen Kelley, Jennifer Kothari, Jonathan Marshall, Denise Matthews-Serra, Julie Mills-Worthey, Susan Morduch, Francis Okelo, Edris Scherer, Karen Zevin

Board Members absent: Maureen LeBlanc, Joseph Puglia

Also present from WLS were: Terry Kirchner, Patricia Brigham, Rob Caluori, Joe Maurantonio, Elise Burke

Public Library Director Association (PLDA) Representative: Yvonne Cech, Director, John C. Hart Memorial Library & PLDA Second Vice President

Ms. Zevin noted that there would be a slight change in format to the board meetings with a hearing of the public following all business. Those interested will be allowed three minutes to speak, and the WLS Board may or may not choose to respond. The Zoom chat feature will be turned off. Those speaking were asked to turn on their video. WLS Board Committee meetings will follow the same format.

## **MINUTES**

The minutes of the regular meeting of January 25, 2022, were approved as submitted on a motion by Ms. Draper and seconded by Mr. Iwanski. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

The pre-audit financial report through January 2022 was presented by Mr. Caluori, who noted that the balance sheet had a new format. The reports were reviewed in detail and accepted on a motion by Ms. Scherer and seconded by Mr. Marshall. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **ACTION ITEM**

***Variance Requests for New York State Minimum Standards:*** Each year the New York State Library Division of Library Development verifies that all libraries meet the Minimum Standards. This information is supplied by the libraries in their Annual Reports. If a library does not meet the Minimum Standards, the payment of the Local Library Services Aid can be withheld, and ultimately their charter can be revoked, if no action is taken to come into compliance.

As of 12/31/2020, all WLS member libraries are recorded as being in compliance, with the following exceptions: New Rochelle Public Library did not meet Standard #2 (Has a board-approved, written long-range plan of service) and Yonkers Public Library did not meet Standard #3 (Presents an annual report to the community on the library's progress in meeting its goals and objectives). Both libraries

submitted the required Variance Request Forms stating the current status and plan for compliance (see attached).

The Board approved the Variance Forms for New Rochelle Public Library and Yonkers Public Library as submitted on a motion by Ms. Draper and seconded by Ms. Scherer. The motion passed unanimously.

***WLS Bank Account Signature Cards:*** Mr. Caluori reported that WLS currently uses TD Bank to service accounts for operating, payroll and reserves. The WLS Board Officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) as well as the Executive Director are signatories on the accounts. To remove the signatories from the previous year and add this year's signatories, TD Bank is now requiring board approval of their Government Entity Certificate of Resolution form to process new signature cards. The Resolution was distributed to the WLS Trustees prior to the meeting.

The Board approved the TD Bank Resolution on a motion by Ms. Scherer and seconded by Mr. Marshall. The Chief Financial Officer will ensure execution of the cards and form for submission to the bank.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Ms. Zevin noted that the next meeting may be held in person or Zoom, depending on the Governor's decision. Ms. Zevin was interviewed as part of the WLS Digital Equity and Inclusion (DEI) audit taking place and looks forward to seeing the final report. WLS Trustees were thanked for responding to the Committee assignments. Committees will be asked to complete meeting minutes that will be included in the board mailings. Ms. Zevin reminded all about the Advocacy Meeting scheduled for February 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 30 people have already signed up for the event. This will be an opportunity for all member library trustees to meet each other and discuss subjects relevant and important to libraries in general. This year's Library Advocacy Day will be held virtually on March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9 a.m.

Ms. Zevin noted that she will step down as Chair of the Nominating & Board Development Committee, transfer this role to another board member, and will help the new chair get started.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

***Governance Committee:*** Ms. Draper will continue as Chair. This Committee will start by reviewing the WLS Bylaws and policies and Committee members were encouraged to become familiar with the current documents that are posted on the WLS website. The next Committee meeting will be scheduled in a few weeks mainly to review the WLS Bylaws, which need to have the WLS mission and vision statements updated, and to revise the Whistleblower policy. Ms. Draper is willing to draft a revision based on current changes in the law; but any Committee member or WLS staff member who is willing to assist with drafting revisions should let Ms. Draper know.

***Finance Committee:*** Ms. Scherer reported on behalf of Chair Ms. LeBlanc, who is away. The Committee met on February 14<sup>th</sup> and reviewed the financials prior to the Board Meeting.

***Budget Committee:*** A small group will be meeting shortly to set up a calendar of meetings for 2022. Ms. LeBlanc did a great job of setting up a calendar for the Finance Committee.

***Audit Committee:*** The first meeting will be held on March 14<sup>th</sup> and Wes Iwanski has agreed to be the Chair.

**Strategy Committee:** Mr. Okelo noted that he will also be interviewed as part of the DEI audit and reminded the New Rochelle Public Library Board of the advocacy events. After seven meetings, the Committee is in the final stages of their charge. The mission and vision statements were updated, and the Committee is formulating concrete, measurable goals for WLS and reviewing communications in general to create a smooth flow of information and receipt of feedback. The next meeting is scheduled for March 7<sup>th</sup>. A full report will be presented to the board.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

A copy of the Executive Director's Report was mailed in advance of the meeting.

Dr. Kirchner reported that most of his energies were focused on Mount Vernon Public Library's registration issues. WLS received official notice on February 15<sup>th</sup> from NYS Board of Regents regarding an action to remove the Mount Vernon Public Library board, which cited the following reasons:

- Failure to complete their registration application;
- Failure to complete the 2020 NYS Annual Report financial sections;
- Failure to maintain accurate financial records for spending.

Dr. Kirchner and Ms. Burke are working with the library to continue to complete the NYS Annual Report as well as the registration application. Because the financial sections of their NYS 2020 Annual Report were not accepted by DLD, the incomplete report has triggered a Maintenance of Effort deficiency at the State level. Not meeting this requirement may cause WLS to have a 25% reduction in Central Library Aid for the next two years, which would be approximately \$86,000-\$90,000 lost each year. Dr. Kirchner noted several approaches to address these issues:

- Work with the Library to get their 2020 NYS Annual Report completed by the State's 3/31/2022 deadline.
- Complete the Waiver for the Maintenance of Effort deficiency.
- Pursue switching the Central Library designation for 2 years of the Waiver period as a strategy for future compliance and to allow time for Mount Vernon Public Library to restructure, with a formal review in year 3.

With the next WLS Board Meeting scheduled for March 29<sup>th</sup>, completion of the Waiver makes the most sense to pursue. If the Waiver is approved, WLS will not lose funds. Discussion followed that included these topics:

- What would happen if the board members are removed – the Board of Regents will appoint new trustees until the next library election takes place.
- What impacts would this have – Kanopy and Hoopla platforms used by all 38 member libraries are funded with Central Library funds.
- Recommendation for support of Mount Vernon Public Library administrative staff to create a model for what has to be done by the Board to prevent a possible decrease in Maintenance of Effort from happening again and to better understand the structure of financial reporting and efficient operational practices.

- Whether library has ample help to set up documentation of systems in place.
- Procedures for how an interim Central Library appointment be made – Dr. Kirchner would inquire who would meet requirements and WLS Board would vote on it.
- The importance of the Central Library status to Mount Vernon Public Library and helping them not to lose this role they fought so hard to keep.
- Central Library services as a central function versus one location – current regulations do not allow a digital or non-physical place.

Ms. Zevin called for the Board to support Dr. Kirchner’s continuation of work with Mount Vernon as well as pursuit of another library to serve as interim central library. After some discussion, the following motion was made:

The Board will support Dr. Kirchner’s continuation of work with Mount Vernon Public Library to complete the NYS Annual Report and registration application and of investigation of alternate libraries to serve as an interim Central Library with regard to the submission of the Maintenance of Effort Waiver’s two-year period, with a formal review opportunity for restoration of Mount Vernon Public Library as Central Library in Year 3.

The Board approved the above on a motion by Ms. Zevin and seconded by Ms. Mills-Worthey. The motion passed unanimously. [Ms. Scherer not present for vote.]

Ms. Cech noted that the issues at Mount Vernon Public Library were discussed at the PLDA meeting, and the directors are very concerned about the loss of funding for the electronic content and how that would be managed. However, they are comfortable with the strategies recommended by Dr. Kirchner.

Dr. Kirchner also reported that the Diversity Equity Audit is underway and a report will be completed by March/April. The WLS financial audit is underway, and he thanked Mr. Iwanski for chairing the Audit Committee. The Trustee Advocacy Event on February 23<sup>rd</sup> will start at 7 p.m and cover the New York Library Association (NYLA) messaging from a Westchester perspective as well as other legislative issues to help trustees understand issues and their impact on library operations in today’s world. Virtual Library Advocacy Day is scheduled for March 2<sup>nd</sup> from 9-10 a.m. Those interested can sign up on the WLS Evanced calendar. *Westchester Breathes* won a Westchester County’s Dr. Harold Keltz Distinguished Public Health Service Award for the program’s extraordinary contribution that helped so many people deal with stress and other issues throughout the pandemic.

### **PLDA LIAISON’S REPORT**

Ms. Cech was not able to attend the February PLDA meeting but reported from their minutes. PLDA President Jennifer Brown led the meeting, where the following topics were discussed:

- The Bylaws Committee is reviewing their Bylaws and examining each article; a revised draft is expected to be distributed at the next meeting.
- WLS IT report covered the following: the Windows 10 setup was halted due to issues that surfaced after the installation at Greenburgh Public Library and is being worked through before

the project continues; the new wireless equipment has been deployed that improves network speeds.

- The Technology Committee reported that the new data dashboard for statistics seems to be very helpful in providing Evergreen and wireless statistics and development continues for training library directors and staff on this new tool.
- The ILS Committee expressed some frustration using the Capira app and Mr. Arana is working with the vendor. A redesign is expected by Summer that will hopefully fix the issue.
- The Finance Committee had discussions focused on what role PLDA had in the matter of the issues that have arisen and WLS's fees. A suggestion was made that the PLDA Bylaws Committee review PLDA's role as an advisory body regarding WLS's services prior to the next meeting.
- Mount Vernon Public Library's role as Central Library, as discussed previously.
- Two announcements were made: the retirement of Elizabeth Hobson, Director of Dobbs Ferry Public Library, and Chappaqua Library will be holding a Centennial celebration on June 27<sup>th</sup>.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Margaret Mager asked a question regarding the Central Library and how a replacement would be determined and what funding is available for a library to take on that role. Andrew Farber thanked the WLS Board for their support for Dr. Kirchner, who has been working very hard to support Mount Vernon Public Library's staff efforts to complete their registration application.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned its meeting at 7:30 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Iwanski and seconded by Ms. Kothari that passed unanimously. [Ms. Mills-Worthey not present for vote.]

Respectfully submitted,

*/s/ Andrea Zuckerman Bober*

Andrea Zuckerman Bober  
Secretary

# Variance Request Form

Commissioner's Regulation 90.2 - Standards for Registration of Public, Free Association and Indian Libraries Instructions:

1. Library Information (Name of library, contact person, phone number)

**New Rochelle Public Library ; Thomas Geoffino ; 914-632-7879**

2a. Request for Variance from Standard Number:   2  

b. What is current status? (Please attach explanation.)

**New Rochelle Public Library has nearly completed its New York State mandated Long Range Plan of Service. The draft version is complete and is currently under final review by Library Board members and library staff. We are confident that this document will be approved by the Board of Library Trustees at its March 10th meeting. Once approved, our plan is to widely disseminate the Long Range Plan (and /or highlights) to the New Rochelle community via press releases, our web site, electronic newsletter, social media platforms and in-house paper copies.**

3. Circumstances Over Which the Library Has No Control That Are Barriers to Compliance. Explain in detail on a separate sheet the circumstances that prevent the library from meeting this standard of service as set forward in Commissioner's Regulations 90.2. Attach documentation to demonstrate that the library has no control over the circumstances.

**Unfortunately, the chaos created by the pandemic (New Rochelle was at the epicenter of COVID in its early months) required a pause in planning and implementing the process of developing our Long Range Plan of Service. Our library had contracted with a highly respected consultant to assist in this effort but we felt the most appropriate approach in achieving success in this goal was to place a hold on moving forward until our circumstances were more normalized. Accordingly, we restarted the process in May 2021.**

4. Plan for Compliance. Describe in detail on a separate sheet the library's plan for meeting this requirement before December 31st of this year. (Please attach documentation.)

**Per our response to Question 2b, we are in the process of finalizing the draft of our Long Range Plan of Service, and we fully expect that it will be approved by the Board of Library Trustees at its March 10th meeting.**

Return this form by email to  
the New York State Library at:  
[MINSTAN@nysed.gov](mailto:MINSTAN@nysed.gov)

## Variance Request Form



### Commissioner's Regulation 90.2 - Standards for Registration of Public, Free Association and Indian Libraries

**Instructions:** Use this form to request a variance from the requirements of Commissioner's Regulations 90.2, Standards for Registration of Public, Free Association and Indian Libraries (effective January 29, 1999). **If the library is not in compliance with one or more of these Standards, request a variance on a separate form for each standard with which the library fails to comply.** The Library Director, the Library Board President, the System Director and the System Board President sign each variance request form. Attach any information that will strengthen the request. The library system submits all variance request forms to Library Development. No variance granted by Library Development shall be deemed to relieve a public, free association or Indian library of any obligation imposed by any other provision of federal or state law.

1. **Library Information** (Name of library, contact person, phone number)
  
- 2a. **Request for Variance from Standard Number:** \_\_\_\_\_  
b. **What is current status? (Please attach explanation.)**
  
3. **Circumstances Over Which the Library Has No Control That Are Barriers to Compliance.** Explain in detail on a separate sheet the circumstances that prevent the library from meeting this standard of service as set forward in *Commissioner's Regulations 90.2*. Attach documentation to demonstrate that the library has no control over the circumstances.
  
4. **Plan for Compliance.** Describe in detail on a separate sheet the library's plan for meeting this requirement before December 31st of this year. **(Please attach documentation.)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Library Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Library Board President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**System Comment and Review:** Variance request

\_\_\_\_\_ may be approvable \_\_\_\_\_ may not be approvable  
**(Please include explanation.)**

This variance request was reviewed at the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting of the Board of Trustees of  
the \_\_\_\_\_  
(Month/Day)

\_\_\_\_\_  
System.

\_\_\_\_\_  
System Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
System Board President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

FOR SED USE ONLY: \_\_\_ Variance request is approvable; Variance granted until: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Month/Day/Year)



\_\_\_ Variance request is not approvable because:

Reviewed By: \_\_\_\_\_

### MINIMUM PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS

Commissioner's Regulation 90.2 Standards for registration of public, free association and Indian libraries. (c)Variances. If circumstances over which any public, free association or Indian library has no control prevent it from meeting one or more of the standards of service set forward in subdivision (a) of this section, such library may apply for a variance for such standard(s). The application for such variance shall be submitted for such library by the public library system of which such library is a member, in a form prescribed by the commissioner. No variance granted pursuant to this subdivision shall be deemed to relieve a public, free association or Indian library of any obligation imposed by any other provision of federal or state law.

Listed in the table below are descriptions of each standard and the schedule for compliance as outlined in Commissioner's Regulation 90.2.

STANDARD NUMBER	MINIMUM PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS DESCRIPTION																
1	Is governed by written bylaws which outline the responsibilities and procedures of the library board of trustees;																
2	Has a board-approved, written long-range plan of service;																
3	Presents an annual report to the community on the library's progress in meeting its goals and objectives;																
4	Has board-approved written policies for the operation of the library;																
5	Presents annually to appropriate funding agencies a written budget which would enable the library to meet or exceed these standards and to carry out its long-range plan of service;																
6	Periodically evaluates the effectiveness of the library's collection and services in meeting community needs;																
7	Is open the following scheduled hours: <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Population</u></th> <th><u>Minimum Weekly Hours Open</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Up to 500</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>500 - 2,499</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2,500 - 4,999</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5,000 - 14,999</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15,000 - 24,999</td> <td>40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25,000 - 99,999</td> <td>55</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100,000 and above</td> <td>60</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Minimum Weekly Hours Open</u>	Up to 500	12	500 - 2,499	20	2,500 - 4,999	25	5,000 - 14,999	35	15,000 - 24,999	40	25,000 - 99,999	55	100,000 and above	60
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100,000 and above	60																
8	Maintains a facility to meet community needs, including adequate space, lighting, shelving, seating, and restroom;																
9	Provides equipment and connections to meet community needs including, but not limited to telephone, photocopier, tele-facsimile capability, and microcomputer or terminal with printer to provide access to other library catalogs and other electronic information;																
10	Distributes printed information listing the library's hours open, borrowing rules, services, location and phone number;																
11	Employs a paid director in accordance with the provisions of Commissioner's Regulation 90.8.																

Return this form by email to  
the New York State Library at:  
[MINSTAN@nysed.gov](mailto:MINSTAN@nysed.gov)

## Variance Request Form



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**1. Library Information** (Name of library, contact person, phone number)

Yonkers Public Library  
James Hackett  
914-375-7950

**2a. Request for Variance from Standard Number:**   3  

**b. What is current status? (Please attach explanation.)**

**3. Circumstances Over Which the Library Has No Control That Are Barriers to Compliance.** Explain in detail on a separate sheet the circumstances that prevent the library from meeting this standard of service as set forward in *Commissioner's Regulations 90.2*. Attach documentation to demonstrate that the library has no control over the circumstances.

**4. Plan for Compliance.** Describe in detail on a separate sheet the library's plan for meeting this requirement before December 31st of this year. **(Please attach documentation.)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Library Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Library Board President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**System Comment and Review:** Variance request

\_\_\_\_\_ may be approvable      \_\_\_\_\_ may not be approvable  
**(Please include explanation.)**

This variance request was reviewed at the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting of the Board of Trustees of  
(Month/Day)  
the \_\_\_\_\_ System.

\_\_\_\_\_  
System Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
System Board President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

FOR SED USE ONLY: \_\_\_ Variance request is approvable; Variance granted until: \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_ Variance request is not approvable because:

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11	Employs a paid director in accordance with the provisions of Commissioner's Regulation 90.8.																

**2a. Request for Variance from Standard Number:   3**

**b. What is current status? (Please attach explanation.)**

Yonkers Public Library did not complete an annual report for the year 2019 in 2020.

**3. Circumstances Over Which the Library Has No Control That Are Barriers to Compliance.**

Yonkers Public Library was unable to complete an annual report for 2019 in 2020 due to disruptions caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and administrative changes. Many personnel and key performance metrics, statistics and information were not available or properly understood throughout the year while the library changed administration and prepared a new service model to better meet the needs of its community.

**4. Plan for Compliance.**

Yonkers Public Library has completed an annual report for the year 2020 (attached). This annual report, as well as previous reports, is available to the community on our website and a printed copy is available for reference at several of our libraries' public service desks. Additional copies are also available upon request.

# 2020 Annual Report



*Y*ONKERS  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY



## **LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Nancy L. Maron, President  
Josephine Ilarraza, Vice President  
Stephen Jannetti, Treasurer  
Stephan Giuffrida, M.D., Trustee  
Joseph J. Puglia, Trustee  
Darryl J. Mack, Sr., Trustee  
Michael Sabatino, Trustee  
John Saraceno, Trustee

Jesse Montero, Library Director



## BOARD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

From the start, we knew that 2020 would be a year of change.

Following the retirement of the outstanding Ed Falcone, incoming Director Jesse Montero was set to begin work at the end of March. With Acting Director Susan Thaler skillfully guiding the organization, we all imagined a moment of carefully planned transition and a chance to consider the future of YPL. And then the world shut down.

All carefully made plans went out the window... and YPL got to work. Acting Director Thaler marshalled the staff through strategy sessions; incoming Director Montero reported to work weeks early, to quickly get up to speed. And throughout it all, YPL staff demonstrated creativity, passion, and a flexibility that should make all Yonkersites proud.

As you will see in this report, the YPL virtually overnight was able to pivot to become an organization that delivered on its vision – to be the community's place for discovery, engagement, and personal growth – even when that "place" was a Zoom meeting or a livestream.

As in-person events begin again, we hope you will continue to enjoy all the library has to offer, whether at our buildings, at your school, in your home, or online. You can be sure that whatever form it takes, YPL will continue to change lives every day.

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Nancy".

President, Board of Trustees  
Yonkers Public Library

## LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the staff I am pleased to submit the 2020 Annual Report for Yonkers Public Library (YPL).



It's a cliché to call 2020 "unprecedented," but that's what it was: the disruption caused by COVID-19 was unparalleled in our collective memory. Although nothing can make up for the loss of life and health, the pandemic forced YPL to adapt and innovate in ways that kept it relevant to the city it serves.

In March 2020, YPL closed its buildings following the direction of Yonkers Public Schools and other local libraries. Almost immediately, the library began developing a remote Plan of Service. IT staff busily distributed phones and laptops and established call forwarding so that YPL patrons could easily contact library staff through phone and email. Within the first week of closure, YPL launched its first ever virtual programs through Zoom and Facebook Live. Librarians pivoted their collection budgets toward eBooks and other digital materials. All the while, staff prepared a plan for a safe reopening of libraries. This required rethinking everything from policies to floorplans. In July, YPL was the first large library in the county to welcome patrons back into the library, and gradually reintroduced public computer access and other services.

Throughout the year YPL remained responsive to changes in the pandemic, always seeking to offer the most access consistent with health and safety practices. Even as buildings reopened, virtual programming continued to evolve and reach new audiences. By year's end, YPL had offered over 1,000 virtual programs with a combined attendance of over 15,000.

2020 also marked my first year at YPL. As a newcomer to YPL and Yonkers, the courage, creativity and commitment to public service exhibited by the library staff amazed me. I was profoundly moved by the Yonkers community's kindness and love for its library. It was also my pleasure to overlap my tenure with Deputy Director Susan Thaler, who served as YPL Interim Director in early 2020 and retired in early 2021. I want to thank her for the advice and support she gave me, as well as her crucial leadership as Interim Director during the early months of 2020.

  
Library Director



# 2020 BY THE NUMBERS



**473,325**

Total Items  
Circulated

**351,787**

Physical  
Checkouts

**117,091**

Digital  
Checkouts



**264,745**  
Library Visits

**114,832**

Customer  
Questions

**46,583**  
Computer Use

**34,142**  
Wifi Sessions



**2,411**  
Total  
Programs

**42,531**  
Total  
Attendees

In-person Library Programs

**900**  
programs

**13,069**  
attendees

Virtual Library Programs

**1,114**  
programs

**17,796**  
attendees

Community Programs

**397**  
Programs

**11,666**  
Attendees

# “The Before Times”

**Prior to Mid-March 2020, Yonkers Public Library was enjoying a very successful start to 2020. Some of the highlights included:**

- **RECEIVING** a prestigious Mellon Foundation Public Humanities Grant with Sarah Lawrence College.
- **KICKING** off its “AT&T Code Heroes” grant program, a STEAM education program designed to educate the community on the effects of cyberbullying through teaching tweens how to code.
- **ACCEPTING** a generous \$25,000 grant from Assemblyman Nader Sayegh for a space study on improvements to the Will Library.
- **PROMOTING** Aurora Cruz, manager of Riverfront Library Reference Department, to become the Branch Administrator at the Grinton I. Will Library.

# The COVID-19 Pivot

## Buildings Close, but the Library Remains

- On March 14, YPL closed its buildings and shifted to a remote service plan.
- Within a week of shutting down YPL offered its first ever virtual program.
- Virtual programs offered through Zoom, Facebook Live, and YouTube Live formed the centerpiece of a remote service plan. In 2020, YPL conducted more than 1,000 virtual programs with a combined attendance of over 15,000.

## Safely Reopening our Buildings

- The library invested in MERV-13 air filters and electrostatic sprayers, installed Plexi-glass partitions, and reorganized the library floor plan to facilitate social distancing. New processes were developed for handling and quarantining materials safely.
- The entire YPL Code of Conduct was rewritten to ensure the safety of YPL staff and visitors.
- YPL instituted "contact free pickup" service in June 2020, shortly after New York State authorized it in their reopening plan. About a month later, YPL reopened its doors to limited browsing - the first large library in the region to do so.

## Library Outreach Helps Yonkers 2020 Census Count

- The City of Yonkers engaged YPL for its Yonkers Counts census campaign.
- YPL staff performed extensive outreach and assisted in the counting of 337 households (with a combined 953 household members).
- It's estimated that by helping nearly 1,000 "hard to count" residents complete their census questionnaires, Yonkers will receive an additional \$2.3 million in federal funds each year over the next decade for everything from transportation to housing to educational assistance.

## Yonkers News Archive Goes Digital

- YPL partnered with Newspapers.com, a subsidiary of Ancestry.com, to digitize its extensive local newspaper microfilm collection.
- Nearly 1,000 reels of microfilm, including the entire run of the *Yonkers Herald Statesman*, *Yonkers Herald*, *Yonkers Examiner*, and *Yonkers Statesman* to the company's digitization labs. A portal was developed so visitors can search, print and download over 1.2 million pages of digitized newsprint for free.

## 2020 Election Early Voting at YPL

- YPL hosted early voting at the Riverfront Library and the Grinton I. Will Library, the only two early voting sites in the entire city of Yonkers.
- Nearly 20,000 voters participated in early voting at both library locations



## **Yonkers Public Library**

### **Crestwood Library**

16 Thompson Street  
Yonkers, NY 10707

### **Grinton I. Will Library**

1500 Central Park Avenue  
Yonkers, NY 10710

### **Riverfront Library**

One Larkin Center  
Yonkers, NY 10701

