

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM
Trustee Meeting
June 28, 2022 – Approved November 29, 2022

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Karen Zevin, President, at 6:04 p.m. and held in-person at the WLS Headquarters in Elmsford. The quorum requirement was met with the following people in attendance:

Board Members present: Andrea Bober, Cathy Draper, Maureen LeBlanc, Jonathan Marshall, Julie Mills-Worthey, Susan Morduch, Joseph Puglia, Edris Scherer, Karen Zevin

Board Members absent: Nishat Hydari, Wes Iwanski, Karen Kelley, Jennifer Kothari, Denise Matthews-Serra, Francis Okelo

Also present from WLS were: Terry Kirchner, Wilson Arana, Patricia Brigham, Rob Caluori, Joe Maurantonio

Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) Representative: Yvonne Cech, Director, John C. Hart Memorial Library

Guest: Diane Tabakman, Trustee, White Plains Public Library

Ms. Zevin reviewed the public comment guidelines.

MINUTES

The following revisions of the minutes of the regular meeting of May 31, 2022, were recommended:

On Page 3, in the paragraph regarding the Data Dashboard project, the following sentences should read as follows:

The Data Dashboard will also incorporate electronic material statistics from outside vendors such as OverDrive; but many smaller companies do not have the Application Programming Interface (API) for ~~the data to communicate~~ **ion necessary** to generate automated reports. In addition, the team is looking to ~~adding~~ wireless usage and WLS Helpdesk data into the system.

The Board approved the minutes with the above-mentioned corrections on a motion by Ms. Zevin and seconded by Ms. Draper. The motion was approved unanimously. [Ms. Mills-Worthey was not present for vote.]

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The financial report through May 2022 was presented by Mr. Caluori and an overview of the check signing and voucher/payment process was provided. The Board accepted the financial report on a motion by Ms. Scherer and seconded by Ms. Morduch. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Brigham provided an update on WLS fundraising from 2018-2022. Prior to 2018, WLS fundraising focused on supporting library services offered through outreach initiatives. Through those services, such as Family and Adult Literacy, Mini-Grants for member libraries and Senior Programs, WLS gained wider recognition with community and funding leaders. In 2019, this

recognition led to WLS and the member libraries playing a crucial role for the US Census 2020 and the county-wide Resilience program. The onset of Covid-19 in 2020 had its own challenges, and focus switched to maintaining operational flexibility as well as stability, realignment of the WLS mission and vision statements and growing community relationships. Funding received supported digital equity & inclusion efforts to meet the needs uncovered by the pandemic. Mini-grants to libraries were offered to help local libraries meet their specific challenges brought on by Covid-19; and WLS purchased additional online resources. In 2023-2024, WLS fundraising will look to sustain these equity initiatives to advance the following goals: digital literacy job skills; news and information literacy (e.g. promotion of voting procedures); workforce development; and staff professional development/train-the-trainer programs. In addition, WLS will see to strengthen internal security and infrastructure, development upgrades, and broadband for operational efficiency. Future corporate and community efforts will look to increase impact visibility to advance WLS as a viable partner and identify opportunities by monitoring the funding ecosystem. Individual giving has had a slower growth, which is typical. With higher visibility and modeling of direct giving, WLS should see greater potential.

INFORMATION ITEM

Ms. Draper, Chair of the Governance Committee, noted that the Committee met on June 7th to review the recommendations made by the Finance Committee for the following policies: Exempt & Non-Exempt Employee Pay (Policy #5), Investment of Funds (Policy #12), Purchasing (Policy #13). The draft revisions of these three policies are attached.

Per regular procedure, these revisions are being presented one meeting in advance as an Information Item with official approval to be sought at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting in September.

ACTION ITEM

Extension of WLS Current Borrowing Facility: Mr. Caluori reviewed the purpose of the existing Line of Credit with TD (Toronto Dominion) Bank, which allows WLS to borrow up to \$500,000 unsecured for a period of one year, and there are neither facility fees nor covenants for this loan agreement. The current facility expires on August 31, 2022. During the prior year, there were no borrowings under the facility. If borrowed against, the interest rate would be based on WSJ (Wall Street Journal) Prime + 50 bps (base percentage points), with a Floor of 3.75% and would need to be paid back within a year. At this time, the need to borrow under this facility is not foreseen for the coming year.

The Board approved the extension of the WLS current borrowing facility on a motion by Ms. Edris and seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. The motion was approved unanimously.

WLS VDI Terminal/Access Point Replacement Request: Mr. Arana reported that the WLS IT requested funds to upgrade the VDI infrastructure to provide Windows 10 for libraries. Part of that request was for replacement of the local user terminals. At the time of the request, there was a concern about the number of participating libraries who would continue to use WLS IT services in the future. Therefore, a conservative number of terminals was purchased to prevent wasting resources and funds. Replacing the VDI terminals was on the agenda for 2022.

Since the pandemic and the implementation of the Service Level Agreement (SLA), the interest in VDI has stayed positive. The flexibility to access a remote station has been invaluable to library

staff. The replacement of the old terminals progressed well and the current inventory of hardware is nearly depleted. The recommendation is to complete the conversion of all VDI terminals to the new hardware to better service participating libraries with an investment of an additional \$160,000 to replace all older generation VDI terminals at the libraries by the end of the summer.

The Board approved the completion of the conversion of all older generation VDI terminals as recommended on a motion by Ms. Bober and seconded by Mr. Marshall. The motion was approved unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Zevin announced the Intellectual Freedom and Zoom training on June 30th. The first Legislative Breakfast is being held on Tuesday, July 13th and will be hosted at the Croton Free Library. Trustees are encouraged to register for and attend this or any of the other upcoming Legislative Breakfasts. WLS report was very informative and showcased mission, vision & strategy as the framework. Board retreat in early September, perhaps a dinner or a more social type of event will be held.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Governance Committee: Ms. Draper, Chair, noted that the WLS Employee Handbook needs to be updated. A few revisions are needed to the Sexual Harassment Policy due to changes in the law. Hybrid meeting policy needs to be updated to reflect the current law as well. The Videoconference Policy/Hybrid Policy will also need to be revised. It is expected to cost of \$25,000-\$35,000 for equipment and storage and laptops for trustees and a handler for the meetings. There is a concern regarding a loss of camaraderie if all meetings are held remotely. A member of the public did note that a hybrid would be helpful. Ms. Zevin recommended putting the Hybrid policy on the radar for review next June.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

Open Meetings Law – Recent Changes: New York State Governor Kathy Hochul signed Executive Order (EO) 11.7 on June 14th, which declared a disaster emergency in the State of New York. With EO 11.7, library boards have the option to host a 100% virtual board meeting through Thursday, July 14, 2022. Library boards still have the option to meet in person and are not required to host an online/virtual meeting.

On April 9, 2022, Governor Hochul signed Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2022, which included an amendment to the Open Meetings Law (OML) to make permanent until July 1, 2024, the expanded use of videoconferencing by public bodies to conduct open meetings under extraordinary circumstances regardless of a declaration of emergency. The Committee on Open Government created a Questions and Answers document to provide an overview of the law. The new law is not intended to change or limit what was required of public bodies complying with OML. The law was intended to expand, *only in extraordinary circumstances*, the ability of public bodies to meet in a hybrid (in-person and online) environment. Library boards planning to host a hybrid meeting in accordance with the new law are strongly encouraged to review the Questions and Answers document.

Public Library Collection Management: Based on requests from public libraries across the state, the Empire State Library Network (ESLN) and the Public Library Systems Directors Organization (PULISDO) have partnered on the creation of a "Collection Management Policy Template & Guide" to help public libraries confirm that their policies are ready for materials challenges. This resource clarifies and emphasizes not only the law underlying collection management issues, but the very different roles of trustees and directors in the collection management process. Information on how to access the resource was shared with the member library directors.

Access to Justice Initiative (AJI): The Access to Justice Initiative (AJI) is identifying public libraries within the 9th Judicial District (Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland and Westchester Counties) interested in hosting virtual meeting spaces for individuals working through civil law related activities.

The New York State 9th Judicial District Supreme Court Law Libraries will host a webinar for public libraries on June 29th at 2 p.m. to showcase the Supreme Court Law Libraries' resources, and services that are available for free to the public. The webinar will also include information covering services and legal information typically provided by AJI sites for litigants who represent themselves in their court cases. Resources discussed will include those available in the district as well as online information services and resources available statewide. Member library staff were encouraged to register for this free event and a recording of this workshop will be made available.

Central Library Update: The Field Library (Peekskill) has been officially recognized as the Central Library of the Westchester Library System and this change has been reflected in the System's 2022-2026 Plan of Service. The Maintenance of Effort waiver, the request to restore full funding of Central Library Aid, was filed with the Division of Library Development; and WLS has received notice that with there will not be a reduction in Central Library Aid this year.

The Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) Central Library Funding Committee (formerly the Central Library/E-Content Committee) has started the review process of potential services and products to be funded through Central Library Aid as part of the 2023 WLS Budget. The current membership in this committee includes:

Jennifer Brown, Director, Field Library/Peekskill;
Yvonne Cech, Director, John C. Hart Memorial Library/Yorktown;
Jennifer Coulter, Director, Pound Ridge Library;
Jennifer Daddio, Director, Somers Library;
Timur Davis, Director, Mount Vernon Public Library;
Mary Kane, Director, Katonah Village Library;
Terry Kirchner, Executive Director, WLS [nonvoting member];
Allison Midgley, Senior Technology Trainer, WLS [nonvoting member];
Jesse Montero, Director, Yonkers Public Library; and
Christina Ryan-Linder, Director, Greenburgh Public Library (Chair).

This committee will continue to meet over the summer and bring forward recommendations to PLDA at their September 2022.

WLS Trustee Institutes/Advocacy Events: Trustees were reminded that several trustee and advocacy events are scheduled for July and August. The next event, entitled, *Incorporating Community Aspirations in Your Long-Range/Strategic Planning Process*, will be held both in-person and via Zoom at the following dates and times:

July 7th – In-person/WLS Conference Room: 6-7 PM light supper, 7-8:30 PM program

July 21st – Online/Zoom: 6-7:30 PM

Elena Falcone, Director of WLS Public Innovation & Engagement, will be the presenter regarding the timing and planning for a long-range/strategic plan and techniques on how to discover who is living in the community and what aspirations they have and how to help more voices, especially those that have often been silenced, to be heard.

Advocacy Events: Trustees were encouraged to attend one of the Legislator Breakfasts being hosted throughout the County. These meet and greet events will be an opportunity to learn more about the WLS Digital Equity Initiative and thank our County and State Legislators and local government figures for their support of libraries. Light refreshments will be served, and registration is appreciated. All Breakfasts will be held from 9-9:45 a.m.

Wednesday, July 13th

Croton Free Library
171 Cleveland Drive
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520

Wednesday July 27th

Somers Library
Route 139 - Reis Park
Somers, NY 10589

Wednesday, August 10th

Harrison Public Library
Bruce Avenue
Harrison, NY 10528

Wednesday, August 24th

Yonkers Public Library: Grinton I. Will
Branch
1500 Central Park Avenue
Yonkers, NY 1071

Public Library Construction Aid Program: With the state-wide allocation of \$34 million to support the FY 2022/2023 Public Library Construction Aid Program, WLS was notified by NYS Library Division of Library Development (DLD) that \$1,605,184 will be available for approved public library and public library system construction projects within Westchester County. This is an increase of \$14,716 in funding from last year. Workshops regarding the Construction Aid application process are currently being scheduled. This year's deadline for submission of project applications to WLS is Tuesday, August 23rd.

PLDA LIAISON'S REPORT

Ms. Cech reported on the June PLDA meeting where the following was discussed:

- The Central Library Funding Committee is working on a survey to be sent to the member libraries.
- Summary of the work of the Civil Service Committee; County versus State requirements; solutions to overcome barriers/restrictions.
- Continuation of the review of the PLDA bylaws.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned its meeting at 7:46 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Draper and seconded by Ms. Scherer that passed unanimously. The September 27th WLS Board Meeting will take place in person at the WLS Headquarters at 6 p.m., and all should be prepared to wear a mask if needed.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Andrea Zuckerman Bober

Andrea Zuckerman Bober
Secretary