

**Call to Meeting  
November 28, 2023**

The **64th Annual Meeting** of the Westchester Library System (WLS) is Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. The **WLS Regular Board Meeting** will immediately follow the Annual Meeting at approximately 6:20 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE: This meeting will take place at the WLS Headquarters, 570 Taxter Rd, Ste 400, Elmsford, NY 10523. (Masks may be required.)

***Annual Meeting Agenda***

**Welcome**

**Overview of Annual Activities**

**Minutes:** November 29, 2022

**Election of WLS Trustees**

District IV: [Lewisboro (South Salem), North Salem, Somers]  
Barbara Tepper (To a full term ending December 31, 2028)

District VIII: [Larchmont, Mamaroneck, Scarsdale]  
Maureen LeBlanc (To a full term ending December 31, 2028)

District XIV: [New Rochelle]  
David Mener (To a full term ending December 31, 2028)

***Regular Meeting Agenda***

**Minutes:** October 24, 2023

**Finances**

**Action Item**

Action Item #1: WLS 2024 Operating Budget

**President's Report**

**WLS Committee Reports**

**Executive Director's Report**

**PLDA Report** – Yvonne Cech, Director, John C. Hart Memorial Library (Yorktown)

**Public Comment** – Members of the public will have an opportunity to address the Board after the business of the meeting is completed. Speakers will be limited to 3 minutes each. If there are questions, the Board may or may not choose to answer them at the time of the Board meeting. Whether or not and when to answer any question is at the sole and absolute discretion of the Board.

**Other**

**NEXT MEETING:** The next Regular Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 30, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

**WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
**Annual & Trustee Meeting**  
**November 29, 2022 –Approval Pending**

**ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Karen Zevin, President, at 6:10 p.m. The quorum requirement was met with the following people in attendance:

Board Members present: Cathy Draper, Nishat Hydari, Wes Iwanski, Maureen LeBlanc, Julie Mills-Worthey, Susan Morduch, Diane Tabakman, Francis Okelo, Edris Scherer, Karen Zevin

Board Members absent: Andrea Bober, Karen Kelley, Jonathan Marshall, Joseph Puglia

Also present from WLS were: Terry Kirchner, Rob Calouri, Patricia Brigham, Joe Maurantonio, Kate Meyer

Dr. Kirchner welcomed all who attended. He noted that it is through WLS' partnerships with the member libraries, government organizations, service organizations community members, Westchester County, and others that WLS can assist them in their efforts to create and grow welcoming, inclusive services and programs for all residents of their community and the County. WLS does its work with a disciplined focus on equity, diversity and inclusion, which gives our outreach programs and member library activities the broadest reach and relevance.

Dr. Kirchner also noted the development of strategic partnerships outside of just libraries; one example included a vast group of materials added to the WLS catalog from the National Maritime Historical Society in Peekskill. This large project, which was completed in the fall, facilitates access to about 4,200 volumes, some of which date back to the nineteenth century. Hendrick Hudson Free Library was also a valued partner, acting as the hub for shipping the materials, processing the books (i.e. adding spine labels) and searching the WLS catalog to find and set aside whatever few works might already be cataloged. Throughout the year WLS updated and improved infrastructure, with Wi-Fi upgrades at participating member libraries, Local Area Network (LAN) rebuild, and the Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) upgrade and enhancement.

The business portion of the Annual Meeting was called to order at 6:20 p.m. by Ms. Zevin, who introduced each of the WLS Trustees and the Districts they represent.

ELECTION OF NEW TRUSTEES: Mr. Okelo, Vice Chair of the WLS Nominating & Board Development Committee, proposed the following slate of trustees who were nominated by their represented libraries and are willing to serve:

District II [Briarcliff Manor, Ossining, Tarrytown]  
Matthew Weiss (to a full term ending December 31, 2027)

District VIII [Bronxville Eastchester, Pelham, Tuckahoe]  
Robert Cartolano (to a full term ending December 31, 2027)

District XII [Peekskill]  
Karen Kelley (to a full term ending December 31, 2027)

There being no nominations from the floor, the above Trustees were elected to the WLS Board of Trustees on a motion by Karen Zevin and seconded by Edris Scherer. The motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES OF THE 2021 ANNUAL MEETING: The minutes of the Annual Meeting of November 30, 2021, were approved on a motion by Francis Okelo and seconded by Edris Sherer. The motion passed unanimously.

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned the business portion of the meeting at 6:25 p.m. on a motion by Edris Scherer and seconded by Susan Morduch. The motion passed unanimously.

## **REGULAR MEETING**

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Karen Zevin, President, at 6:25 p.m. The quorum requirement was met with the following people in attendance:

Cathy Draper, Nishat Hydari, Wes Iwanski, Maureen LeBlanc, Julie Mills-Worthey, Susan Morduch, Diane Tabakman, Francis Okelo, Edris Scherer, Karen Zevin

Board Members absent: Andrea Bober, Karen Kelley, Jonathan Marshall, Joseph Puglia

Also present from WLS were: Terry Kirchner, Rob Calouri, Patricia Brigham, Joe Maurantonio, Kate Meyer

## **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings of June 28, 2022, September 27, 2022, and October 25, 2022 were approved as submitted on a motion by Ms. Zevin and seconded by Ms. Scherer. The motion passed unanimously.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

The financial report through October 2022 was presented by Mr. Caluori and reviewed by the board in detail. The Board accepted the October 2022 finances on a motion by Ms. Scherer and seconded by Ms. Draper. The motion passed unanimously.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

***New WLS Collection Development Policy & Revisions to Workplace Violence, Board Meetings, and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policies:*** The WLS Governance Committee does an annual review of WLS policies. Several recent changes in New York State law and New York State Labor Law indicated a review for compliance to these changes. The proposed WLS Collection Development Policy & Revisions to the Workplace Violence, Board Meetings, and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policies was approved by the board as submitted (see attached) on a motion by Ms. Draper and seconded by Ms. Scherer. The motion passed unanimously.

***Library Materials Discovery Tool:*** Mr. Arana, Director of Information Technology for WLS, presented The Aspen Discovery Tool, which will provide library users with a more robust and integrated discovery experience for both print and digital materials including those from Hoopla, Overdrive and Kanopy.

The proposed Library Materials Discovery Tool was approved by the board as submitted (see attached) on a motion by Ms. Mills-Worthy and seconded by Ms. Draper. The motion passed unanimously.

***WLS 2023 Operating Budget:*** The WLS Budget Committee met on October 6th, October 12th, and October 17th to review several options in order to arrive at a budget proposal for the 2023 fiscal year. Mr. Caluori reviewed the budget, which was developed in alignment with WLS's strategic vision and to support WLS's mission to empower lives and communities by connecting people in Westchester County with the resources, services and programs available through WLS and the member libraries.

Revenues from all sources include approximately \$7.5 million, which is an increase of roughly \$893,800 over 2022. These revenues assume no increase in funding from New York State and a reduction in IT fees of approximately 2.4% less than 2022. Westchester County funding initially assumed a slight increase over 2022 for the same activities, but also included an additional \$525,000 request for a special Digital Equity Community Engagement project. Mr. Caluori noted that the project was not funded, the revenue and expenses were equal and isolated, so they were removed and have no impact on the bottom line of the budget. Mr. Caluori personally thanked the Budget Committee for all their hard work.

The Proposed WLS 2023 Operating Budget was approved by the board as submitted (see attached) on a motion by Ms. Scherer and seconded by Ms. Morduch. The motion passed unanimously.

***NYS Minimum Standard Variance Request Forms:*** On the New York State Annual Report, libraries answer whether they meet New York State Minimum Standards as of December 31, 2022. All WLS member libraries are in compliance with the exception of Bedford Free Library, Irvington Public Library and Warner Library. Variance Request Forms were submitted for these three libraries, who are currently working toward completing their long-range plans.

The proposed Variance Request Forms for Bedford Free Library, Irvington Public Library and Warner Library were approved by the board as submitted (see attached) on a motion by Ms. Mills-Worthy and seconded by Ms. Scherer. The motion passed unanimously. All forms will be submitted to the NYS Library Division of Library Development.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Ms. Zevin thanked Cathy Draper for all her hard work as a WLS board member and for her leadership as chair of the Governance Committee.

Ms. Zevin reminded board members that committees should be formed as of January 31, 2023, and information regarding such will be sent to board members beforehand. Ms. Zevin also noted that all board members in officer positions (2-year term) have asked to remain in their roles.

Ms. Zevin noted that the annual performance review for the Executive Director is underway, and this process will conclude in January with an Executive Committee session.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

***Finance Committee:*** Ms. LeBlanc noted that the committee reviewed a report that shows cash flow over several years. The report reveals that WLS's cash balances are predictably cyclic with having the least

cash on hand in the early summer, followed by the most cash on hand later that summer and into the early fall. Ms. LeBlanc also noted that the balance in the operating account at its lowest amount has been increasingly larger year-over-year and so the committee reviewed ways to move money from the operating account so that it can be used to build additional interest.

***Nominating Committee:*** Dr. Kirchner noted that in January the committee will be searching for a new trustee to fill District V (Armonk, Bedford Village, Mount Pleasant, Pound Ridge).

***Trustee Training:*** Dr. Kirchner stated beginning January 1, 2023, each trustee, elected or appointed, of a public library, association library or Indian Library will be required to complete a minimum of two hours of trustee education annually (*Education Law 260-d added by Chapter 468 of the Laws of 2021*).

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Dr. Kirchner noted that the Mount Vernon Public Library has not yet provided all the required documents to complete the registration review process or to complete the 2020 and 2021 New York State Annual Reports. Recently Oscar Davis, Jr. has resigned from the Mount Vernon Board of Trustees, and two new trustees have been appointed by the Regents: Ron Hood and James Carlos. Ms. Mills-Worthy recognized the hard work Dr. Kirchner contributes to Mount Vernon and recognized how challenging it has been.

## **PLDA LIASON'S REPORT**

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

- Ms. Cech and the PLDA members thanked Ms. Burke for all her work compiling the Annual Statistics report.
- There was further discussion regarding potential amnesty programs for library patrons fines and fees. This discussion focuses on the viability of forgiving fines for lost books in addition to late fees.
- Two new Directors were introduced: Robert Conrad (Chappaqua Library), Cathleen Sulli (Ruth Keeler Memorial Library).

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Having completed its agenda, the Board Adjourned its meeting at 7:23 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Morduch and seconded by Ms. Draper that passed unanimously. The January 31<sup>st</sup> 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,

Kate Meyer  
Recording Secretary

**WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
**Trustee Meeting**  
**October 24, 2023 – Approval Pending**

**REGULAR MEETING**

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Karen Zevin at 6:00 p.m. The quorum requirement was met with the following people in attendance:

Board members present: Anthony Amiano, Andrea Bober, Robert Cartolano, Nishat Hydari, Wes Iwanski, Alice Joselow, Karen Kelley, Maureen LeBlanc, Julie Mills-Worthey, Susan Morduch, Francis Okelo, Joseph Puglia, Edris Scherer, Diane Tabakman, Karen Zevin

Also present from WLS were Terry Kirchner, Rob Caluori, Pat Brigham, Wilson Arana, Kate Meyer

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

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the September 26, 2023, meeting was approved as submitted on a motion by Mr. Amiano and seconded by Mr. Puglia. The motion passed unanimously. [Mr. Cartolano and Ms. Mills-Worthey were not present for the vote.]

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

The financial report through September 2023 was presented by Mr. Caluori in detail. The presentation included end-of-year projections for revenues and expenditures as well as an updated statement for Temporarily Restricted Net Assets in addition to the regular monthly financial statements and notes. The monthly check registers were also distributed, and Mr. Caluori made note of several voided and reissued checks that were related to an issue with the bank's Positive Pay system. The Board accepted the financial report on a motion by Ms. Scherer and seconded by Ms. Morduch. The motion was accepted unanimously. [Mr. Cartolano was not present for the vote.]

**INFORMATION ITEM**

***WLS 2024 Operating Budget:*** The WLS Budget Committee met on September 21<sup>st</sup>, October 3<sup>rd</sup> and October 19<sup>th</sup> to review a number of options in order to arrive at a budget proposal for the 2024 fiscal year. Mr. Caluori was thanked for his efforts in working with the Committee during the budget process, and all comments received were given serious consideration.

An updated copy of the proposed 2024 Operating Budget was distributed. Mr. Caluori made note that while the figures in the budget were not materially different from the distributed Board Materials, the text of the Executive Summary had undergone revision to include how the budget aligns with the WLS Strategic Goals. In the review of the budget the following were discussed in detail: (1) anticipated revenues of \$7.3 million, (2) estimated expenditures of \$7.9 million, (3) use of reserve funds to meet the anticipated gap between revenues and expenditures, (4) a pay rate increase of 4% for all employees, except those that received mid-year adjustments in 2023, (5) a continuation of the current model for

employee contributions to health care, and (6) no anticipated special projects outside of the operating budget. There was also discussion of specific projects included in the Operating Budget that may or may not be implemented as planned based funding levels from Westchester County.

The 2024 Operating Budget will be resubmitted to the Board as an Action Item at the November 2023 meeting.

## **ACTION ITEM**

***Employee Handbook and Policy Updates:*** Ms. Morduch, Chair of the Governance Committee, reviewed the employee handbook and policy process with the Board. The Committee met on August 22, 2023, to review the newly revised WLS Employee Handbook and four policies: #4 Electronic Data; #13 Purchasing; #14 Credit Card Usage; #15 Gift Acceptance, and one new policy: #22 ADA/ADAAA. All items were approved on a motion by Ms. Morduch and seconded by Mr. Iwanski. The motion passed unanimously.

## **PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

Ms. Zevin reminded Board members to review the list of Board Committees to decide which they may be interested in joining for the coming year. She also noted that committees should be formed as of January 31, 2024, and information regarding such will be sent to Board members beforehand. Ms. Zevin also noted that new officer positions have been slated as follows: Ms. Morduch, President; Ms. Hydari, Vice President; Mr. Amiano, Secretary; the Board will appoint the Treasurer at the January 2024 meeting, Ms. LeBlanc is slated to fill the role.

Ms. Zevin asked all Board members to save the date for Library Advocacy Day, February 7, 2024.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

***Nominating & Board Education:*** Ms. Kelley, Chair, stated that the committee met before the Board Meeting to review the resumes of the candidates slated to fill vacancies for District IV: Lewisboro (South Salem), North Salem, Somers, Barbara Tepper, to replace Ms. Scherer and District XIV: New Rochelle, David Mener, to replace Frances Okelo. The committee voted unanimously to bring them on to the Board. They will be voted on at the November 28, 2024, meeting.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

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

Dr. Kirchner discussed Battle of the Books which was held on October 21, 2023, at Ossining High School, and noted that the event was a huge success. Ms. Joselow, Ms. LeBlanc, and Barbara Tepper were in attendance. The goal for next year’s event is to get more libraries to participate.

Dr. Kirchner stated that February 7, 2024, is Library Advocacy Day, and WLS is working with Ramapo-Catskill Library System (RCLS) and Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS) to collectively hire bus service to Albany. WLS, RCLS and MHLS will work together to present issues that are relevant to all three systems.

Ms. Brigham introduced Connect Westchester; a Westchester County funded Digital Equity Initiative. This collaborative partnership with The STEM Alliance, Westchester Library System, Westchester County Association, and the County targets underserved and unserved County residents who lack Internet connection, devices, and/or basic digital skills supporting workforce development. This program, in addition to providing information on Affordable Connectivity Program (reduced cost high speed internet for qualifying households), will provide an opportunity for 10 libraries to offer a 15-hour digital skill training program, with device ownership and hotspots if needed for their patrons.

Mr. Arana reported that most of the libraries have submitted their Service Level Agreements for 2024 (SLA), noting that some libraries were delayed in signing their agreements. He also noted that the email migration project is in full swing, and libraries should have moved to their own email domains by the end of the year, 12 libraires have chosen to remain housed under the WLS tenant.

### **PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTORS' ASSOCIATION (PLDA) LIASON REPORT**

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

- PLDA's October meeting was virtual. The November meeting will be hybrid and held at the Ossining Public Library on November 16, 2023.
- The PLDA Nominating Committee is putting together a slate of officers for 2024. They are reaching out to potential candidates and will have a slate by their November meeting.
- WLS is working with John C. Hart Memorial Library on a laptop project which will allow employees to work more efficiently.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned its meeting at 8:27 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Mills-Worthey and seconded by Ms. Kelley that passed unanimously.

Respectively submitted,

Andrea Zuckerman Bober  
Secretary



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# WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS WITH NOTES – OCTOBER 2023

### SUMMARY

All of the figures in the accompanying notes are approximated to the nearest \$100 or 1%. The figures in the financial statements are rounded to the nearest dollar and percentages are to two decimal places.

The December 2022 figures included in this statement are now consistent with the audited financial statements. This reflects adjusting entries from the audit process as well as the application of ASC 842 (Accounting Standards Codification) which changes the way the lease for WLS's office space is recorded.

WLS is in the final stages of implementing Sage Intacct, a new financial management system. Go-live on the new system went as planned on 8/1/2023 and the final phases, which includes the implementation of paper-less and automated processes are still in progress and expected to be completed in November.

An Income Statement with Projections is included with the financial reports. This report, based on activity through October and factoring in anticipated future activity, currently projects that the year will end with revenues and expenses before depreciation essentially in line with each other. This is a significant positive variance from the original budget which called for a \$338,000 deficit.

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## BALANCE SHEET – OCTOBER 2023

The Balance Sheet shows comparative figures for the period from month-ending (ME) September 2023 thru ME October 2023. The key changes for the period are a decrease in WLS's *operating cash and cash equivalents*, which is lower by \$118,800 and a decrease in *deferred revenue*. Details are discussed below.

### ASSETS:

*This section indicates the organization's liquidity by showing what assets WLS holds in cash and what assets will be available in cash in the near future.*

The chart to the right illustrates WLS's assets.

*Operating Cash & Cash Equivalents* (This shows the cash in WLS's operating and payroll bank accounts and petty cash): In October, WLS's

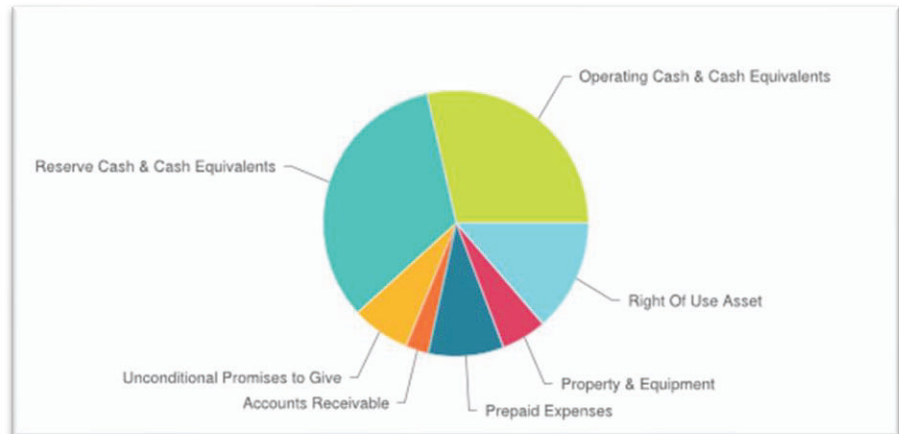
operating cash decreased by \$118,800. With \$423,500 in receipts, activity included \$326,000 from Westchester County for the third quarter of 2023, \$55,400 from member libraries for IT Services, and \$15,000 from the Thomas and Agnes Carvel Foundation to support the Reconnect with Tech program in 2024. Notable expenditures aside from rent, payroll and benefits, Internet, and delivery to libraries include \$88,700 to Crown Castle for Internet services for the fourth quarter of 2023, and \$16,500 to Long Island University to support the Palmer School Program,

*Unconditional Promises* (These are promises to give money to WLS without any restrictions attached.): The figure in this line decreased by \$172,900 in the period. This is the result of recording \$160,200 in receivable revenue from New York State and Westchester County which was offset by the receipt of \$333,100 in revenues received from New York State and Westchester County.

### LIABILITIES:

*This section shows WLS's near-term obligations.*

*Deferred Revenue* (Funds received which have not yet been earned): This figure decreased by \$354,100, the result of recognizing \$390,500 in revenues from New York State, IT services, eContent group purchases, eRate and movie licensing against the deferral of \$36,400 in monies from the Long Island University Palmer School Program and fourth quarter revenues from member libraries on quarterly invoicing for IT services which will be recognized over the remaining months of 2023.



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## STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES COMPARISON TO BUDGET WITH PREVIOUS YEARS TO DATE – OCTOBER 2023

Net revenue before depreciation was more than budgeted for October (\$40,400) and for the year-to-date (YTD) (\$341,500). Expense figures include all expenses including those associated with special projects. Noteworthy variances discussed below.

### REVENUES:

Total revenue was essentially in-line with the budget for October and the YTD. In October, this was driven by small offsetting variances across several revenue lines. For the YTD, the total revenue distribution is more significantly impacted by offsetting variances in *Interest* and *Other Revenues with Restrictions* and is discussed in greater details below.

*Interest* for October was significantly higher than budgeted. At the time the budget was created, interest rates were beginning to rise but could not be fully anticipated. Interest earned on WLS's cash balances is based on the excess balance, which is the average collected balance less minimum balance requirements.

*Federal Revenues without Restrictions* came in \$8,500 less than budgeted. WLS received less than expected through the Federal E-Rate program, which reimburses schools and libraries for a portion of their eligible telecommunications costs. WLS's eligible costs were lower than the previous reimbursement period, which drove a smaller reimbursement. The line is now expected to end the year at \$131,000 in total revenue from the program, falling \$34,000 short of the budget.

*Other Revenues with Restrictions* ended the month exceeding the budgeted goal driven mainly by the receipt of a \$15,000 grant from The Thomas and Agnes Carvel Foundation to support the Reconnect with Tech program in 2024 and the recording of revenues from the Long Island University Palmer School Program.

### EXPENSES:

Total spending in October was less than revenues by \$12,300 and \$29,800 less than the monthly budget. Significant positive and negative variances are discussed below,

*Library Materials* came in \$21,500 more than budgeted, which was driven by activity in pay-per-use electronic content by patrons. The line is currently \$120,200 over budget for the YTD and is anticipated to come in over budget for the year due to the increased activity from patrons.

*Professional Development* – This line came in \$10,400 over budget driven by a \$16,500 payment to Long Island University for the Palmer School Program tuition for the fall. The line is \$33,600 under budget for the YTD and is anticipated to end the year under budget.

*Salaries* – The figure for October was less than budgeted and was driven primarily by the following factors: (1) the one open position in the Cataloging department, which will be filled as of the end of November and (2) the staffing changes in the Outreach department driven by a staff retirement.

*Fringe Benefits* came in under budget for the month and the YTD driven primarily by lower than anticipated health insurance costs. Costs, which began the year slightly lower than anticipated, were further lowered when NYSHIP (New York State Health Insurance Program) issued a mid-year reduction in costs starting in June.

*Travel* – This line came in slightly more than budget for the month (\$1,200), but is essentially in line with the budget for the YTD. Activity within the month included travel for staff to attend the NYLA (New York Library Association) and NCAN (National College Attainment Network) conferences. The line is expected to come in on budget for the year.

**Westchester Library System  
Balance Sheet  
As of October 31, 2023**

	Month Ending 10/31/2023 <small>Actual</small>	Month Ending 09/30/2023 <small>Actual</small>	Month Ending 10/31/2023 <small>Period difference</small>	Month Ending 10/31/2023 <small>Period variance</small>	Year Ending 12/31/2022 <small>Actual</small>
<b>Assets</b>					
<b>Current Assets</b>					
Operating Cash & Cash Equivalents	2,432,280	2,551,047	(118,767)	(4.65) %	2,261,909
Reserve Cash & Cash Equivalents	2,836,408	2,832,232	4,177	0.14 %	2,762,472
Unconditional Promises to Give	610,537	783,489	(172,952)	(22.07) %	333,377
Accounts Receivable	232,160	240,046	(7,886)	(3.28) %	126,397
Prepaid Expenses	796,536	824,484	(27,947)	(3.38) %	723,226
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>6,907,922</b>	<b>7,231,297</b>	<b>(323,376)</b>	<b>(4.47) %</b>	<b>6,207,381</b>
<b>Long-Term Assets</b>					
Property & Equipment	470,666	485,160	(14,493)	(2.98) %	616,574
Right Of Use Asset	1,155,488	1,155,488	0	0.00 %	1,155,488
<b>Total Long-Term Assets</b>	<b>1,626,154</b>	<b>1,640,648</b>	<b>(14,493)</b>	<b>(0.88) %</b>	<b>1,772,062</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>8,534,076</b>	<b>8,871,945</b>	<b>(337,869)</b>	<b>(3.80) %</b>	<b>7,979,443</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>					
<b>Short-Term Liabilities</b>					
Accounts Payable	544,763	526,280	18,483	3.51 %	699,492
Deferred Revenue	798,006	1,152,116	(354,110)	(30.73) %	6,685
Short-Term Right of Use	268,208	268,208	0	0.00 %	268,208
<b>Total Short-Term Liabilities</b>	<b>1,610,977</b>	<b>1,946,604</b>	<b>(335,627)</b>	<b>(17.24) %</b>	<b>974,385</b>
<b>Long-Term Liabilities</b>					
Long-Term Right of Use	1,104,346	1,104,346	0	0.00 %	1,104,346
Post-Retirement Benefits Payable	3,856,991	3,856,991	0	0.00 %	3,856,991
<b>Total-Long-Term Liabilities</b>	<b>4,961,337</b>	<b>4,961,337</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>	<b>4,961,337</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>6,572,314</b>	<b>6,907,941</b>	<b>(335,627)</b>	<b>(4.85) %</b>	<b>5,935,722</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>					
Net Assets, Beg Bal	1,964,004	1,916,628	47,375	2.47 %	800,360
Change in Net Assets	(2,242)	47,376	(49,617)	(104.73) %	1,243,361
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>1,961,762</b>	<b>1,964,004</b>	<b>(2,242)</b>	<b>(0.11) %</b>	<b>2,043,721</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>8,534,076</b>	<b>8,871,945</b>	<b>(337,869)</b>	<b>(3.80) %</b>	<b>7,979,443</b>
<b>Net Asset Detail</b>					
Working Capital	5,296,945	5,284,693	12,252	0.23 %	5,232,996
Long-Term Net Assets	(3,335,183)	(3,320,689)	(14,494)	(0.43) %	(3,189,275)
<b>Total Net Asset Detail</b>	<b>1,961,762</b>	<b>1,964,004</b>	<b>(2,242)</b>	<b>(0.11) %</b>	<b>2,043,721</b>

Westchester Library System  
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures  
Comparison to Budget with Previous Years To Date  
As of October 31, 2023

	Month Ending 10/31/2023		Year To Date 10/31/2021		Year To Date 10/31/2022		Year To Date 10/31/2023		Year Ending 12/31/2023	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Total Budget	Variance
<b>Revenue</b>										
State Revenues without Restrictions	206,835	205,921	1,853,253	2,023,564	2,062,801	2,059,208	2,062,801	2,059,208	2,471,050	3,593
County Revenues without Restrictions	109,515	106,008	874,330	1,001,576	1,084,430	1,060,084	1,084,430	1,060,084	1,272,100	24,347
Federal Revenues without Restrictions	5,250	13,750	698,494	334,334	120,543	137,500	120,543	137,500	165,000	(16,957)
Member Technology Fees	220,163	224,833	2,364,097	2,318,609	2,226,803	2,248,333	2,226,803	2,248,333	2,698,000	(21,531)
Fund Raising & Contributions	0	0	1,139	1,049	249	0	249	0	0	249
Interest	9,913	417	2,060	8,870	99,065	4,167	99,065	4,167	5,000	94,899
CCS & Other	2,974	208	7,411	21,505	16,236	2,083	16,236	2,083	2,500	14,152
Government Revenues with Restrictions	19,195	18,959	389,802	187,335	190,510	189,584	190,510	189,584	227,500	926
Other Revenues with Restrictions	21,270	14,416	248,205	303,907	61,687	144,166	61,687	144,166	173,000	(82,479)
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>595,114</b>	<b>584,512</b>	<b>6,438,790</b>	<b>6,200,749</b>	<b>5,862,324</b>	<b>5,845,125</b>	<b>5,862,324</b>	<b>5,845,125</b>	<b>7,014,150</b>	<b>17,199</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>										
Salaries	180,129	197,935	1,910,773	1,960,689	1,792,279	1,979,352	1,792,279	1,979,352	2,375,223	187,074
Fringe Benefits	103,898	112,350	942,445	988,211	980,833	1,123,502	980,833	1,123,502	1,348,202	142,668
Professional Fees	662	4,275	22,998	11,965	16,228	42,750	16,228	42,750	51,300	26,522
Equipment	9,740	15,833	287,302	433,716	108,877	158,334	108,877	158,334	190,000	49,457
Library Materials	80,674	59,202	615,161	583,218	712,227	592,016	712,227	592,016	710,420	(120,210)
Rent and Utilities	31,571	29,656	277,169	301,445	328,421	296,559	328,421	296,559	355,870	(31,864)
Repairs and Maintenance	44,182	46,616	346,017	407,429	526,349	466,166	526,349	466,166	559,400	(60,181)
Supplies	161	3,796	22,234	20,628	3,796	37,959	3,796	37,959	45,550	34,162
Telephone and Internet	35,688	38,925	314,844	355,333	397,862	389,250	397,862	389,250	467,100	(8,612)
Printing and Postage	3,594	6,242	66,244	99,107	44,681	62,416	44,681	62,416	74,900	17,735
Bibliographic Fees	7,273	7,458	66,244	67,071	71,616	74,584	71,616	74,584	89,500	2,968
Professional Development	18,545	8,171	22,007	48,103	48,092	81,708	48,092	81,708	98,050	33,616
Travel	5,449	4,200	1,064	26,816	42,964	42,000	42,964	42,000	50,400	(964)
Memberships	701	2,333	15,371	16,487	17,099	23,333	17,099	23,333	28,000	6,234
Contractual Services	20,356	32,942	258,602	404,812	306,597	329,417	306,597	329,417	395,300	22,820
Delivery Service	36,803	37,583	361,766	403,738	371,475	375,833	371,475	375,833	451,000	4,358
Insurance	2,815	2,917	22,243	25,183	27,578	29,167	27,578	29,167	35,000	1,589
Miscellaneous	621	2,250	5,267	5,652	5,569	22,500	5,569	22,500	27,000	16,931
Total Expenditures	582,862	612,684	5,557,748	6,159,603	5,802,543	6,126,846	5,802,543	6,126,846	7,352,215	324,303
Total Net Revenue Before Depreciation	12,252	(28,172)	881,042	41,146	59,781	(281,721)	59,781	(281,721)	(338,065)	341,502
<b>Non-Cash Activity</b>										
Depreciation	14,494	14,083	158,131	112,207	145,907	140,833	145,907	140,833	169,000	(5,074)
Unrealized Gain/Loss on Investments	0	0	115	(2,660)	(4,168)	0	(4,168)	0	0	4,168
Total Non-Cash Activity	14,494	14,083	158,246	109,547	141,739	140,833	141,739	140,833	169,000	(906)
<b>Total Net Revenue</b>	<b>(2,242)</b>	<b>(42,255)</b>	<b>722,796</b>	<b>(68,401)</b>	<b>(81,956)</b>	<b>(422,554)</b>	<b>(81,956)</b>	<b>(422,554)</b>	<b>(607,065)</b>	<b>340,596</b>

Westchester Library System  
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures  
With Projections  
As of October 31, 2023

	Year Ending	01/01/2023 Through		Current Year	Current Year		Current Year
	12/31/2023	01/01/2023	01/01/2023	Projected	Total Projections	Projected vs. Budget	Variance
	Total Budget	Current YTD Actual	Oct. - Dec.	Projections			
<b>Revenue</b>							
State Revenues without Restrictions	2,471,050	2,062,801	413,743	2,476,544		5,494	
County Revenues without Restrictions	1,272,100	1,084,430	219,575	1,304,005		31,905	
Federal Revenues without Restrictions	165,000	120,543	10,500	131,043		(33,957)	
Member Technology Fees	2,698,000	2,226,803	445,360	2,672,163		(25,837)	
Fund Raising & Contributions	0	249	50	299		299	
Interest	5,000	99,065	19,813	118,878		113,878	
CCS & Other	2,500	16,236	3,247	19,482		16,982	
Government Revenues with Restrictions	227,500	190,510	38,373	228,883		1,383	
Other Revenues with Restrictions	173,000	61,687	23,563	85,250		(87,750)	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>7,014,150</b>	<b>5,862,324</b>	<b>1,174,224</b>	<b>7,036,547</b>		<b>22,397</b>	
<b>Expenditures</b>							
Salaries	2,375,223	1,792,279	378,455	2,170,734		204,489	
Fringe Benefits	1,348,202	980,833	196,167	1,177,000		171,202	
Professional Fees	51,300	16,228	3,246	19,474		31,826	
Equipment	190,000	108,877	21,775	130,652		59,348	
Library Materials	710,420	712,227	142,445	854,672		(144,252)	
Rent and Utilities	355,870	328,421	65,685	394,106		(38,236)	
Repairs and Maintenance	559,400	526,349	105,269	631,618		(72,218)	
Supplies	45,550	3,796	4,260	8,056		37,494	
Telephone and Internet	467,100	397,862	79,572	477,435		(10,335)	
Printing and Postage	74,900	44,681	8,936	53,618		21,282	
Bibliographic Fees	89,500	71,616	14,323	85,939		3,561	
Professional Development	98,050	48,092	9,619	57,710		40,340	
Travel	50,400	42,964	8,593	51,557		(1,157)	
Memberships	28,000	17,099	3,419	20,519		7,481	
Contractual Services	395,300	306,597	71,320	377,917		17,383	
Delivery Service	451,000	371,475	74,295	445,770		5,230	
Insurance	35,000	27,578	5,515	33,093		1,907	
Miscellaneous	27,000	5,569	1,114	6,683		20,317	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>7,352,215</b>	<b>5,802,543</b>	<b>1,194,008</b>	<b>6,996,553</b>		<b>355,662</b>	
<b>Total Net Revenue Before Depreciation</b>	<b>(338,065)</b>	<b>59,781</b>	<b>(19,784)</b>	<b>39,994</b>		<b>378,059</b>	
<b>Non-Cash Activity</b>							
Depreciation	169,000	145,907	29,182	175,089		6,089	
Unrealized Gain/Loss on Investments	0	(4,168)	(834)	(5,001)		(5,001)	
<b>Total Non-Cash Activity</b>	<b>169,000</b>	<b>141,739</b>	<b>28,348</b>	<b>170,088</b>		<b>1,088</b>	
<b>Total Net Revenue</b>	<b>(507,065)</b>	<b>(81,958)</b>	<b>(48,132)</b>	<b>(130,094)</b>		<b>379,147</b>	

**Item:** WLS 2024 Operating Budget

**Background:** The Budget Committee of the Board of Trustees met three times through September and October to review a number of options in order to arrive at a budget proposal for the 2024 fiscal year. Each of the committee's meetings focused on the following:

- September 21
  - Budget process and overview
  - Employee compensation
  - Administration department
  - Information Technology department
- October 3
  - Career Coaching Service department
  - Outreach department
  - Training department
- October 19
  - Cataloging department
  - Delivery department
  - Fund-Raising department
  - Executive Summary

**Status:** Attached is the Executive Summary for the proposed FY 2024 operating budget along with detail spreadsheets and back-up information.

In addition to the work of the Committee input was also sought from the WLS managers and staff.

**Recommended**

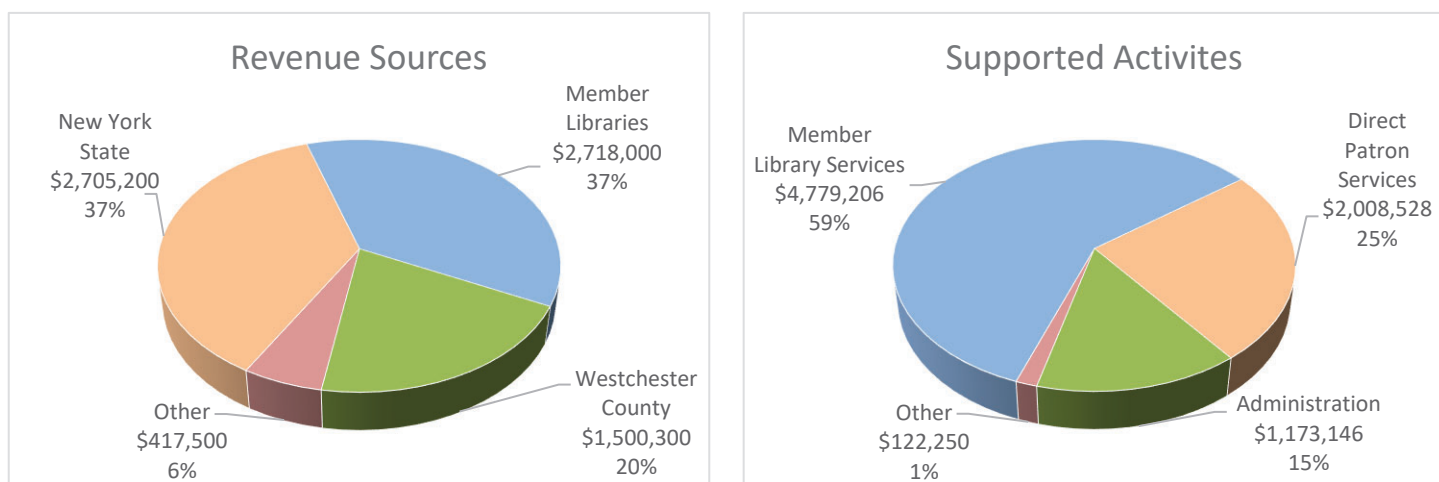
**Action:** The Budget Committee recommends adoption of the FY2024 operations budget as presented.

# Westchester Library System 2024 Proposed Operating Budget

## Executive Summary

This budget has been developed to support the Westchester Library System (WLS) mission to empower lives and communities by connecting people in Westchester County with the resources, services and programs available through WLS and the member libraries.

In preparing the 2024 proposed budget, WLS made the following significant assumptions: (1) no increase in funding from New York State, (2) there is a possibility that funding from Westchester County beyond 2023 levels may not materialize, (3) Technology fees are anticipated to remain essentially flat and, (4) all open positions in 2023 will be filled before the beginning of the new year.



The budget was developed and presented to the Budget Committee over the course of three meetings, each with a deeper focus on department-level data. The committee examined the previous year's actual figures, the current year's budget and the proposed budget at the department level. Considerations were made to the purpose of programs as pertaining to administration, services to member libraries, and direct services to the public.

The budget was designed to specifically support the WLS Strategic Goals:

- Promote equity and access.
- Expand Community / Member Library / Partner Engagement
- Update and improve our infrastructure.

The budget documents include: (1) a top-level summary outlining 2022 actual figures, 2023 budget and projected figures and the 2024 proposed budget; (2) department-level budget details for 2024; (3) line-by-line budget notes; and (4) an analysis of changes to staff allocations by department. Included in this summary are the key points of and significant changes to the budget.



## 2024 Budget Highlights

### Revenue

#### Key Revenue Notes

- ✓ Approximately \$7.3 million from all sources, an increase of \$326,850 (4.7%) over the 2023 budget.
- ✓ County revenues include multiple special projects pending approval.
- ✓ eRate funding of \$130,000 (compared to \$165,000 budgeted for 2023).
- ✓ Central Library revenue (\$376,300) assumed flat over 2023 actual.
- ✓ Member Library Technology fees essentially flat compared to over 2023 budget.

#### Assumptions

- ✓ Allocations from Westchester County include a 17% increase overall.
  - Allocations above flat funding can be excised without significant impact on current operations if not approved.
- ✓ The allocations from New York State as assumed to be flat over 2023 actual funding.
- ✓ Member Library contributions are essentially flat (up 0.7%) compared to 2023 budget.
- ✓ eRate funding is lower due to reduced costs on eligible services.

### Expenses

#### Key Revenue Notes

- ✓ Budgeted expenses exceed revenues by \$568,500 before depreciation (compared to \$338,065 budgeted for 2023).
- ✓ Restricted assets (grants) earned in prior years will be spent in 2024.
- ✓ The Budget Committee recommends that WLS appropriate unrestricted assets to meet its projected expenditures for 2024.
- ✓ WLS currently holds over \$2.8 million in Reserve Cash and Cash Equivalents
- ✓ Projected depreciation of \$176,000 is included in the Operating budget.
- ✓ Member Library Services includes member-funded Technology services, and additionally includes, but is not limited to, cataloging, interlibrary loan, training, and delivery services.

#### Assumptions

- ✓ Specific staff will receive salary adjustments to meet changes in roles and responsibilities, all other staff will receive an increase of 4%
  - Overall salary and hourly costs are assumed to be 3% lower than budgeted for 2023
- ✓ An increase of 18% for the cost of health insurance, employees will contribute as follows:
  - 15% of the cost of individual health insurance.
  - 20% of the cost of family health insurance.
- ✓ Request to Westchester County includes \$225,000 of proposed expenses that can be reduced without significant impact to current operations.
- ✓ Pension costs will be approximately 13% of 2024 salary expenses and is slightly higher than previous years' expenses.
- ✓ Delivery service allocations increased 6% due to contract pricing and anticipated fuel surcharges.

## Operating Highlights

The budget allows for the continuation of current programs and services whose focus is to drive the WLS strategic goals through community engagement and outreach by alignment with the member libraries, governmental agencies, service organizations, community members and Westchester County, including:

- ✓ Engagement with unserved and underserved populations including youth, seniors, and low-literacy adults and justice-impacted individuals.
- ✓ Assist incarcerated persons residing in New York State and Westchester County in accessing library services.
- ✓ Promoting discovery, access and resource sharing through Cataloging, Interlibrary Loan and Delivery.
- ✓ Career Coaching Services for unemployed and underemployed adults.
- ✓ Support technology infrastructure to maintain and improve member library technology services.

The following expense lines in 2024 will have significant changes compared to the 2023 budget:

- ✓ Workforce development portal for new entrepreneurs and small business startups
  - Additional .75FTE position to support this initiative (*Salaries and Fringe Benefits*).
  - Additional \$39,000 budgeted for *Printing and Publicity*.
  - CCS budget increased \$151,900 over 2023.
  - Supports WLS strategic goal to be actively engaged with communities throughout Westchester, especially the unserved and underserved as well as promote equity and access.
- ✓ Increased allocations for *Repairs and Maintenance* in Technology
  - Additional \$130,400 budgeted over 2023.
  - Addresses projected \$83,200 deficit in current year to support services already in place.
  - Provides additional subscriptions to enhanced security software.
  - Supports WLS strategic goal to continuously update and improve the WLS operational and technological infrastructure.
- ✓ Additional \$329,400 in allocations for *Library Materials to serve library patrons*.
  - Funding for this line is from multiple sources.
    - Other sources can be used to address gaps should specific funding not fully materialize.
  - Addresses current year deficit of \$204,100 driven by increased patron activity on pay-per-use services.
  - Additional services for 2024 include:
    - The Shelf – A cost-effective solution to provide interactive and popular Spanish-language content that originates from South America, Mexico and Spain.
    - Mango languages – Driven by member library requests from the PLDA eContent Committee, this service provides language learning program in more than 70 languages, including English as a second language.
  - Supports WLS strategic goal to hold equity and access as core values and advance those values within WLS.

## Banking Services

Approval of the budget will include approval of TD Bank for the purpose of Designation of Depositories, per WLS Policy #12 – Investment of Funds. WLS will continue to use TD Bank for all commercial bank business and TD Wealth for all investment banking business.

## About Supported Activities Charts

The Supported Activities chart on page one identifies expenses as a function of either Member Library Services, Direct Patron Service, Administration, or other.

**Member Library Services** are the services that directly impact the member libraries. This includes information technology, cataloging, interlibrary loan, training, support for NYS annual reports and construction and, fund raising and grant writing support, movie licensing coordination and group purchasing of electronic content for patrons with monies from member libraries.

**Direct patron services** are services where WLS directly serves library patrons, potential patrons and works to drive new library users to the member libraries. This encompasses all outreach services to unserved and underserved populations including, but not limited to seniors, youth, low-literacy populations, justice impacted individuals, and those seeking high-school equivalency (HSE) certification. It also includes career coaching services, and electronic content purchased with funds other than from member libraries such as grants, Central Library, and other NYS funds.

## Conclusion

In 2024, WLS will continue to work to maximize investment and resource allocation to support both its ongoing operations and strategic initiatives. At the same time, WLS will support the needs of the libraries, people and businesses in Westchester by providing services that support the member libraries' efforts to engage with their communities and provide inclusive services and programs for all residents.

Spending will be monitored against the budget on an ongoing basis both through regular reports to the Board and in-depth discussions with the WLS Board Finance Committee. Management will continue to explore cost savings opportunities and additional sources of revenue throughout the year.

Westchester Library System  
2024 Proposed Budget - Summary 2022-2024

Generated 10/18/2023

Item #		2022 Final	2023 Adopted	2023 Projected	2024 Proposed	% change over 2023 Adopted
	<b>REVENUES:</b>					
R-1	General Library Aid	1,669,030	1,669,000	1,672,710	1,672,700	0.2%
R-2	Supplemental Aid	219,857	219,850	220,341	220,300	0.2%
R-3	Local Library Services revenue	277,410	299,300	299,964	299,900	0.2%
R-4	Local Library Services pass-thru payments	206,655	(299,300)	(299,964)	(299,900)	0.2%
R-5	Local Services Support Aid	(277,408)	206,650	207,111	207,100	0.2%
R-6	Grants in Aid	157,084	0	7,111	0	
R-7	Grants in Aid pass-thru payments	(157,084)	0	7,111	0	
R-8	Central Library Services Aid	375,554	375,550	376,382	376,300	0.2%
R-9	Westchester County	1,218,696	1,272,100	1,304,005	1,500,300	17.9%
R-10	Federal Aid	199,250	165,000	165,000	130,000	-21.2%
R-11	Member Library Fees	2,776,739	2,698,000	2,674,286	2,718,000	0.7%
R-12	Contributions (Unrestricted)	1,114	0	373	0	
R-13	Investments/Interest Income	20,746	5,000	111,729	59,500	1090.0%
R-14	CCS, Non-Resident Cards, Misc	26,832	2,500	16,314	2,500	0.0%
R-15	Coordinated Outreach	187,888	187,850	188,302	188,300	0.2%
R-16	Correctional Facilities	39,867	39,650	40,581	40,500	2.1%
R-18	Other revenues with Restrictions	335,044	173,000	41,578	225,500	30.3%
	<b>Total Revenues:</b>	<b>7,277,274</b>	<b>7,014,150</b>	<b>7,032,934</b>	<b>7,341,000</b>	<b>4.7%</b>
	<b>EXPENSES:</b>					
	<b>Personnel</b>					
E-1	Salaries & Hourly Wages	2,395,596	2,375,223	2,161,399	2,301,920	-3.1%
E-2	Employee Benefits	1,052,102	1,072,202	819,431	1,102,310	2.8%
E-3	Retiree Health Benefits	276,358	276,000	355,271	276,000	0.0%
	<b>Subtotal Personnel</b>	<b>3,724,056</b>	<b>3,723,425</b>	<b>3,336,101</b>	<b>3,680,230</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>
	<b>Other Than Personnel</b>					
E-4	Professional Fees	42,837	51,300	21,729	57,000	11.1%
E-5	Equipment	190,999	190,000	144,997	228,000	20.0%
E-6	Library Materials	702,857	710,420	835,764	1,039,850	46.4%
E-7	Rent & Utilities	356,969	355,870	398,746	403,610	13.4%
E-8	Repairs & Maintenance	474,448	559,400	661,704	698,100	24.8%
E-9	Supplies	21,381	45,550	4,739	42,050	-7.7%
E-10	Telephone & Internet	307,116	467,100	486,150	454,340	-2.7%
E-11	Printing & Postage	103,227	74,900	62,314	116,950	56.1%
E-12	Bibliographic Fees	80,898	89,500	85,711	91,870	2.6%
E-13	Professional Development	50,906	98,050	43,387	79,000	-19.4%
E-14	Travel, Conferences & Meetings	37,383	50,400	53,990	64,750	28.5%
E-15	Memberships	19,746	28,000	24,509	28,500	1.8%
E-16	Contractual Services	459,445	395,300	389,654	382,250	-3.3%
E-17	Delivery Service	484,359	451,000	440,408	478,000	6.0%
E-18	Insurance	29,317	35,000	32,887	40,000	14.3%
E-19	Miscellaneous	(3,972)	27,000	6,784	25,000	-7.4%
	<b>Subtotal Other Than Personnel</b>	<b>3,357,916</b>	<b>3,628,790</b>	<b>3,693,473</b>	<b>4,229,270</b>	<b>16.5%</b>
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>7,081,972</b>	<b>7,352,215</b>	<b>7,029,574</b>	<b>7,909,500</b>	<b>7.6%</b>
	<b>Net Revenue before Depreciation</b>	<b>195,302</b>	<b>(338,065)</b>	<b>3,360</b>	<b>(568,500)</b>	
	<b>From Temp. Restd. Assets</b>		<b>6,500</b>		<b>128,700</b>	
	<b>From Reserves</b>		<b>541,400</b>		<b>439,800</b>	<b>-18.8%</b>
	<b>Depreciation &amp; Non-Cash Activity</b>	<b>(1,048,061)</b>	<b>144,250</b>	<b>175,136</b>	<b>176,000</b>	<b>22.0%</b>
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES with Depreciation</b>	<b>6,033,911</b>	<b>7,496,465</b>	<b>7,204,710</b>	<b>8,085,500</b>	
	<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>1,243,363</b>	<b>65,585</b>	<b>(171,776)</b>	<b>(176,000)</b>	

2024 PROPOSED BUDGET BY DEPARTMENT										
Revenues	Admin	Fund Raising	Cataloging	Delivery	Outreach	Training	CCS	Information Technology	TOTAL	
General Library Aid	1,367,850	160,000	101,100	0	43,750	0	0	0	1,672,700	
Supplemental Aid	0	0	99,070	40,170	1,060	80,000	0	0	220,300	
Local Library Services revenue	299,900	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	299,900	
Local Library Services payments	(299,900)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(299,900)	
Local Services Support Aid	0	0	112,700	8,400	86,000	0	0	0	207,100	
Central Library Services Aid	323,800	0	0	0	0	7,500	0	45,000	376,300	
Westchester County	24,000	0	0	475,000	574,600	0	401,700	25,000	1,500,300	
Federal Aid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	130,000	130,000	
Member Library Fees	298,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,420,000	2,718,000	
Contributions (unrestricted)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Investments/Interest Income	55,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,500	59,500	
WEBS, Non-Resident Cards, Misc	2,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,500	
Coordinated Outreach	0	0	0	0	188,300	0	0	0	188,300	
Correctional Facilities	0	0	0	0	40,500	0	0	0	40,500	
Other revenues with Restrictions	20,000	150,000	0	0	27,500	28,000	0	0	225,500	
<b>Total Revenues:</b>	<b>2,091,150</b>	<b>310,000</b>	<b>312,870</b>	<b>523,570</b>	<b>961,710</b>	<b>115,500</b>	<b>401,700</b>	<b>2,624,500</b>	<b>7,341,000</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>										
<b>Personnel:</b>	<b>4.2 FTE</b>	<b>1 FTE</b>	<b>3.5 FTE</b>	<b>0.15 FTE</b>	<b>7 FTE</b>	<b>0.1 FTE</b>	<b>2.25 FTE</b>	<b>9.8 FTE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	
Salaries	428,070	109,200	227,000	33,450	343,000	22,300	157,000	774,670	2,094,690	
Hourly Wages	0	0	29,000	0	107,830	0	30,100	40,300	207,230	
Employee Benefits	249,130	42,700	126,200	10,350	179,050	6,900	80,100	407,880	1,102,310	
Retiree Health Benefits	276,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	276,000	
<b>Subtotal Personnel</b>	<b>953,200</b>	<b>151,900</b>	<b>382,200</b>	<b>43,800</b>	<b>629,880</b>	<b>29,200</b>	<b>267,200</b>	<b>1,222,850</b>	<b>3,680,230</b>	
<b>Other Than Personnel Services (OTPS)</b>										
Professional Fees	32,500	0	0	0	1,000	0	0	23,500	57,000	
Equipment	16,500	2,000	2,000	0	75,000	0	0	132,500	228,000	
Library Materials	980,500	0	0	0	49,350	0	0	10,000	1,039,850	
Rent & Utilities	70,800	11,000	28,560	18,600	63,000	45,800	18,350	147,500	403,610	
Repairs & Maintenance	63,400	1,000	0	0	4,500	0	0	629,200	698,100	
Supplies	12,000	300	750	3,000	15,000	0	2,500	8,500	42,050	
Telephone & Internet	7,100	1,250	3,890	0	8,050	0	2,900	431,150	454,340	
Printing & Postage	16,500	1,000	0	0	56,100	0	40,850	2,500	116,950	
Bibliographic Fees	0	0	58,370	0	33,500	0	0	0	91,870	
Professional Development	8,000	0	0	0	9,000	40,500	500	21,000	79,000	
Travel, Conferences & Meetings	20,000	1,000	4,000	0	9,000	0	3,000	27,750	64,750	
Memberships	17,500	750	500	1,000	7,850	0	400	1,500	28,500	
Contractual Services	55,000	0	1,000	0	101,050	5,000	66,200	154,000	382,250	
Delivery Service	0	0	0	478,000	0	0	0	0	478,000	
Special Events	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Insurance	24,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	16,000	40,000	
Miscellaneous	2,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	22,500	25,000	
<b>Subtotal OTPS:</b>	<b>1,326,300</b>	<b>18,300</b>	<b>99,070</b>	<b>499,600</b>	<b>432,400</b>	<b>91,300</b>	<b>134,700</b>	<b>1,627,600</b>	<b>4,229,270</b>	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>2,279,500</b>	<b>170,200</b>	<b>481,270</b>	<b>543,400</b>	<b>1,062,280</b>	<b>120,500</b>	<b>401,900</b>	<b>2,850,450</b>	<b>7,909,500</b>	
<i>% of overall budget(before depreciation)</i>	<i>28.8%</i>	<i>2.2%</i>	<i>6.1%</i>	<i>6.9%</i>	<i>13.4%</i>	<i>1.5%</i>	<i>5.1%</i>	<i>36.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	
<b>NET REVENUE before Depreciation</b>	<b>(188,350)</b>	<b>139,800</b>	<b>(168,400)</b>	<b>(19,830)</b>	<b>(100,570)</b>	<b>(5,000)</b>	<b>(200)</b>	<b>(225,950)</b>	<b>(568,500)</b>	
From Temp. Restd. Assets	128,700	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	128,700	
From Reserves	59,650	(139,800)	168,400	19,830	100,570	5,000	200	225,950	439,800	
Depreciation	18,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	158,000	176,000	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES with Depreciation</b>	<b>2,297,500</b>	<b>170,200</b>	<b>481,270</b>	<b>543,400</b>	<b>1,062,280</b>	<b>120,500</b>	<b>401,900</b>	<b>3,008,450</b>	<b>8,085,500</b>	
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>(18,000)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(158,000)</b>	<b>(176,000)</b>	

<b>REVENUE #</b>	<b>Budget Item</b>	<b>GENERAL NOTES</b>	<b>2024 BUDGET NOTES</b>
R-1	General Library Aid	Formula aid provided by NYS to WLS in support of services provided to member libraries	Unrestricted monies which may be budgeted for any services provided by WLS. Assumes flat NYS funding over 2023 actual allocations. All State aid figures do not reconcile with audited financial statements and are structured for budgetary comparison.
R-2	Supplemental Aid	Same as General Library Aid	Same as General Library Aid.
R-3	Local Library Services Aid	Direct formula aid to assist individual public libraries in the system	Monies are sent to WLS for distribution to the individual libraries Assumes flat NYS funding over 2023 actual allocations.
R-4	Local Library Services payments	Formula aid distributed to member libraries	Monies sent to WLS are passed through to individual libraries. Allocations are set by the NYS Division of Library Development.
R-5	Local Services Support Aid	Same as General Library Aid	Same as General Library Aid.
R-6 and R-7	Grants in Aid	Additional aid from NYS to WLS and Member Libraries	Funding in this category could be for both WLS and as pass-through to member libraries. While there is always a possibility of additional aid, the 2024 budget assumes that none will be received.
R-8	Central Library Services Aid	Funding to support expenditures for adult non-fiction and foreign language materials	Budget is based on recommendations from the PLDA Central Library/eResources committee. Assumes flat NYS funding over 2023 actual allocations.
R-9	Westchester County Aid	Allocation from Westchester County for programs and services, based on a Statement of Work submitted by WLS	Aid is used to provide career & educational counseling services for adults, consumer education on health and related services for those who are 60+ years of age, general outreach services, cataloging and interlibrary loan, delivery service and electronic content.
R-10	Federal Aid	Any grants or aid received from the Federal Government or subawards of Federal funding. Includes eRate, IMLS or legislative funding.	WLS currently receives reimbursement on 56% of eligible expenses for eRate. 2022 actuals include subawards of federal grants through METRO, but do not include eRate which is netted against E-10. 2023 figures include eRate in the revenue figure.
R-11	Member Library Fees	The figure in this line represents revenue in two departments, IT and Administration. Revenue in IT is driven by services agreed to in the IT Service Level Agreements. Revenue in Administration is to support group purchases of e-content.	Revenue is projected to be 0.7% more than budgeted in 2023. These figures are driven by the selections of services in the IT Service Level Agreements. The amount collected for group purchases of e-content (\$298,000) is assumed to be flat over the 2023 budget.
R-12	Contributions (unrestricted)	Monies raised by Development which may be used for any WLS services	
R-13	Investments/Interest income	Monies earned on as interest from bank accounts and returns on investments.	Despite healthy returns in 2023, this figure is being budgeted conservatively as the volatility in the market could cause dramatic fluctuations in future periods.
R-14	CCS, Non-resident Cards, Misc.	Monies raised for Career Counseling Services, purchase of WLS library cards from non-residents, miscellaneous income	
R-15	Coordinated Outreach	Aid provided to library systems to provide services directly and through member libraries to New Yorkers who are most in need and who often are not regular library users	Family literacy, adult literacy, re-entry services for formerly incarcerated individuals, Vision Labs accessibility services, Senior Law Day (legal & financial workshops for older adults and caregivers) Assumes flat NYS funding over 2023 actual allocations.
R-16	Correctional Facilities	Aid to support libraries for offenders residing in NYS and Westchester County correctional facilities	Support for library services at correctional facilities including interlibrary loan, and purchase of library materials. Assumes flat NYS funding over 2023 actual allocations.

R-18	Other Revenues with Restrictions	Monies raised by Development for specific WLS programs
<b><u>EXPENSES</u></b>		
#	<b>Budget Item</b>	<b>GENERAL NOTES</b>
E-1	Salaries & Hourly Wages	Salaries and hourly wages paid to WLS-employed individuals
E-2	Benefits	(For Active Staff): Social Security & Medicare (employer portion) health insurance, worker's compensation, disability, life insurance, vision insurance, dental insurance, pension
E-3	Retiree Health Benefits	Health insurance for retirees
E-4	Professional Fees	Audit & Legal fees; Payroll Processing Fees, Recruitment Fees
E-5	Equipment	Furniture, computer equipment, equipment rental, copier lease, network hardware
E-6	Library Materials	Books, audio books, e-format materials, periodicals, DVDs/videos, databases
E-7	Rent & Utilities	Rent, utilities, real estate taxes, office cleaning, maintenance
E-8	Repairs & Maintenance	Computer maintenance, equipment maintenance, software & software maintenance
E-9	Supplies	Office & computer supplies, WLS-identified clothing
E-10	Telephone & Internet	Telephones & internet connections
E-11	Printing & Postage	Postage, express mail, printing, publicity
E-12	Bibliographic Fees	Fees to Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), the bibliographic utility that provides shared cataloging records and an automated system for requesting interlibrary loans from participating libraries world-wide
E-13	Professional development	Training & professional development, trustee activities
E-14	Travel, Conferences & Meetings	Travel, registration and related expenses for staff representation at professional conferences and meetings
E-15	Memberships	Institutional membership in professional organizations
E-16	Contractual Services	Services rendered under a formal contract/letter of agreement by outside persons, consultants or contractors
E-17	Delivery Service	Transportation of library materials to & from member libraries
E-18	Insurance	Liability and automobile insurance, Directors & Officers insurance
E-19	Miscellaneous	Automotive Supplies, maintenance & repairs; Miscellaneous expenses; Bank Fees; Contingency
	<b>2024 BUDGET NOTES</b>	See separate illustration of FTE comparison 2023 vs 2024 18% increase in health insurance, 3% increase in dental and vision insurance, 5% increase in life insurance, pension costs equal to approx.
		This line includes computer equipment for most WLS staff to create a more mobile-enable working environment as well as network and computer hardware to support the member libraries.
		Budget is primarily for audio books, e-format materials and databases.
		Maintenance support for Evergreen, ASPEN, mobile printing, PC reservations help desk, thin client management, VMware (virtualization software), help desk software, back-up system, security software, Windows 10/Office 365, and business software
		Internet circuits for all libraries, phone lines and cellular telephones and service.
		ALA, PLA, NYLA, technology and other professional conferences
		Includes memberships in Metro (RRR), Empire Library Delivery to support ILL shipping and receiving with outside institutions, ALA, NYLA, WCA and professional organization memberships for staff.
		Network admin, co-location, WEBS counselors New Rochelle Library's Broadband Technology project, annual actuarial study
		Includes pricing for year 2 of the delivery service contract that began in 2023

Westchester Library System  
2024 Proposed Budget - Headcount: 2023 vs 2024

Generated : 10/18/2023

Department	2023 Budget	2024 Budget	NOTES for 2024 personnel
Administration	5.95	4.20	1 FTE eliminated through attrition 1 FTE moved to Outreach for youth services support 0.25 FTE added for administrative support
Fund Raising	1.00	1.00	No changes
Cataloging	4.00	3.50	0.5 FTE correction from 2023 total
Delivery	0.15	0.15	Admin time from Exec. Dir.
Outreach	6.00	7.00	1 FTE moved from Admin for youth services support 1 FTE eliminated through attrition 1 FTE added in multiple PT roles for various programs
Training	0.10	0.10	Admin time from Exec. Dir.
Career Coaching Services	1.50	2.25	0.75 FTE added for shared support role with Admin
Information Technology	10.80	9.80	1 FTE eliminated
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>29.50</b>	<b>28.00</b>	



## Executive Directors Report November 2023

### 2022 Member Library Statistics

The 2022 Member Library Statistics have been compiled and are in the process of being distributed to the library directors and posted to the WLS website. The 2022 data set does not include information from the Mount Vernon Public Library. Once the Mount Vernon Public Library's annual reports for 2020, 2021 and 2022 are approved by the Division of Library Development (DLD), revised versions of the 2020-, 2021- and 2022-Member Library Statistics will be compiled and made available.

### 2023 Library Trustee Handbooks

New copies of the library trustee handbook will be sent out to libraries in early December. WLS will keep a small number of extra copies on hand should newly elected trustees need a copy. The expectation is that an online version of the handbook will be available later. A print version of the new handbook will be available for WLS trustees at this month's meeting.

### Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley

The [application](#) for Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley winter 2024 session, which will run from January 1, 2024, through March 31, 2024, is now open for library staff in the Hudson Valley.

The program is open to anyone who works at a library that would like to offer Digital Navigator services to their patrons. This cohort is open to both individuals who have previously trained as a Digital Navigator and those who are new to the program.

Digital Navigators are trusted guides who assist community members in accessing and using technology. The formal program will provide participants with the resources needed to offer assistance with obtaining affordable internet access, device acquisition, technical skills, and other related support.

- Visit the Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley [website](#) to view the requirements for the program. Navigators who meet the requirements by March 31, 2024, will receive a \$500 investment incentive that is payable to their organization.
- [Access the application](#) - **Applications are due by Tuesday, December 19th, at 12:00 pm.**

If you have any questions feel free to reach out to Linda Smith, WLS Outreach Manager at [lsmith@wlsmail.org](mailto:lsmith@wlsmail.org) / (914) 231-3244 or to [Carolyn Bennett Glauda](#), Programs and Outreach Manager of the Southeastern NY Library Resources Council.

### **Library Advocacy Day - February 7, 2024**

WLS is working in conjunction with the Ramapo Catskill (RCLS) and Mid-Hudson (MHLS) library systems to coordinate chartered buses to transport people up to Albany for Library Advocacy Day on Wednesday, February 7th. This opportunity will be open to all staff, trustees, and friends of the libraries. Registration will be open soon and RCLS will manage the registration process. There will be three local pick-up options for the buses, the first will be from the WLS Headquarters on Taxter Rd, the second will be a stop in Brewster, and the last will be at the Palisades Mall in West Nyack. To reserve a spot on the buses you will have to register and pay a \$10 fee. Dana Hysell, WLS Outreach Services Specialist, will be sending out more information about the upcoming Library Advocacy Day events.

At the November PLDA meeting, Ms. Hysell led a discussion on a "soft ask" letter for Friends funding to support the Library Advocacy Day bus trip. There is no requirement that a Friends group provide funding, but if a Friends group were willing to provide funding, it will help cover the costs of renting the buses, tipping the bus drivers, and providing snacks and beverages for the advocates traveling to the event.

### **Materials & Programming Challenges Survey**

Given the uptick in challenges in both school and public libraries over the last few years, Ms. Hysell, created a brief survey to track local challenges that limit access to materials and programs. This can be in the form of a challenge to print materials, displays, programs and more.

Challenges can take up a lot of staff time and resources. By tracking these local challenges on a more consistent basis, it will allow WLS to better advocate for more financial support for libraries and to develop focused training opportunities that help staff and boards address these challenges. To access the survey please click [HERE](#). Should you have any questions or need more information please reach out to Dana Hysell at [dhysell@wlsmail.org](mailto:dhysell@wlsmail.org) or (914) 231-3230.

### **2023 Public Library Technology Survey**

Every public library in Westchester is encouraged to participate in the [2023 Public Library Technology Survey](#). The survey deadline is December 16, 2023. The survey gathers data that is used to inform elected officials, the media, and other stakeholders about the valuable services libraries provide. Public libraries' input is critical as more than \$1.4 billion in federal funding will be distributed to support digital equity work in 2024.

The survey's results will support planning and advocacy at the local, regional, and national level. Participation in the survey helps the Public Library Association (PLA) provide data for libraries to understand how they compare to their peers, and for funders, media, and stakeholders to see the scope of valuable services libraries provide to their communities.

Questions about the survey or gaining access to your Benchmark account should be directed to [plabenchmark@ala.org](mailto:plabenchmark@ala.org). More information about the survey is available from <https://www.ala.org/pla/data/plasurveys>.

### **Yonkers Public Library's Summer Reading Buddies Wins the Joseph F. Shubert Award for Library Excellence**

Congratulations to YPL Director Jesse Montero and his staff for being awarded this year's Joseph F. Shubert Award for their partnership with Family Services Society of Yonkers (FSSY) on the Summer Reading Buddies program.

The Joseph F. Shubert Library Excellence Award is given annually to recognize the achievements of small, medium, and large libraries and library consortia in New York State. Named after the late Joseph F. Shubert, former State Librarian, the Award honors libraries, or library consortia that have taken significant steps within the past two years to improve the quality of library service to users.

### **New York State Personal History Initiative**

The New York State Personal History Initiative aims to tell New Yorkers' stories, collecting accounts of their challenges, victories, and lives in relation to wider historical events. These histories are then made available to the public in the NYS Personal History Initiative's Collections.

Every Westchester County public library is invited to join in this initiative by sharing the history of the library, untold stories from the communities served, or one's own history in relation to libraries. This is an opportunity to celebrate unsung library heroes, record origin stories, and share the transformative power of libraries. These histories will be added to the Personal History Initiative digital archives and preserved for future generations as part of the public record.

The New York State Personal History Initiative has created three categories for sharing:

- Local Archives: The history of a library
- Uncataloged: Histories from a library community
- Me, Myself & Library: One's own history in/with libraries

Additional information including graphics, posters, and the online submission form can be found on the Personal History Initiative's [Tell Us About Your Library page](#).

## Career Coaching Services (CCS)

### **Seminar - *Managing Your Career in Changing Times***

Three Seminars were offered in the fall comprised of diverse participants with various professional experiences. There was a great deal of interest, and we were able to accommodate most and provided alternative resources and programs for those whose circumstances did not fit the seminar criteria. For some, we adjusted the seminar schedules to accommodate their needs and created appropriate environments for the groups.

Individual Advisement was active with several people working with the career coaches throughout the fall addressing job search strategy, identifying career paths, and negotiating interview activity.

### **Workshops**

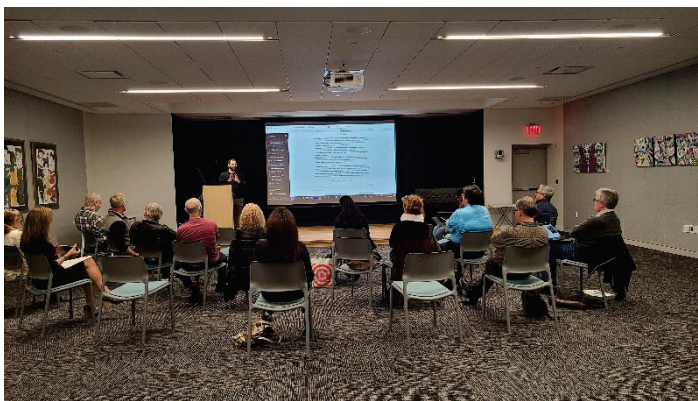
Two in person workshops were offered in November at member libraries. As interest for in person programming is increasing, we have designed new programs that allow for more audience participation. The subjects were selected based on our observation of our clients' consistent inquiries, needs, and struggles.

*Unleashing Career Opportunities Through Networking* - Greenburgh Public Library  
*Fighting Ageism* - Ossining Public Library

### **Speaker Series**

CCS hosts guest professionals to address trending topics as they relate to the employment market.

The latest event was held in October at the Scarsdale Public Library. The topic Using AI for Career Search Resources was presented by Jacob Adler. He is the Metadata/Cataloging Librarian at Bronx Community College Library. The in-person presentation offered an overview



of some of the popular generative systems, demonstrated their capabilities and highlighted the nuances they present when interacting with the systems. Jacob demonstrated practical applications of how generative systems can be used for career research as well as resumes and cover letters. This insightful presentation was very informative and had the audience

engaged in expanding their knowledge on this evolving topic.

## **Workforce & Business Development**

As we continue to explore the needs of small business growth and strengthening talent pipelines we have been conducting needs assessments with library and community based organizations that serve the under-served communities. Our intent is to determine ways to provide guidance to community members who are seeking entrepreneurial endeavors as well as business sustainability to be successful in the long run.



During our listening session with the Community Center of Northern Westchester (CCNW) in Katonah, we discovered that its Community Studio needed new sewing machines for the sewing and design program. The Community Studio is focused on skill building programs for local under-served residents, such as its sewing programs, which help to enhance job opportunities, economic stability, and pathways to self-sufficiency. Its sewing and design program supports home-based businesses to sell their hand-crafted products. Every sale provides economic opportunity to the sewing program participants.

To meet this community need, WLS donated 3 Serger sewing machines and a dress form which



were a significant upgrade to their sewing training program. CCNW's sewing program is expanding and the additional sewing machines will help support the growth. The Community Studio training curriculum also utilizes the University of Fashion which is offered on the WLS website. CCNW and the sewing program participants are very grateful to WLS for the

donations.

## **Cataloging Services**

WLS Cataloging Services will be welcoming a new full-time cataloger, Jenna Caccavale. Ms. Caccavale graduated magna cum laude from Iona University. From working at the libraries of Iona and Pace University, and closer to home at Bronxville Public Library and Mamaroneck Public Library, she has earned experience in reference, outreach, interlibrary loan, and collection development, in addition to cataloging. Ms. Caccavale is scheduled to start on November 20.

WLS is dedicated to promoting equity and access, and this is reflected in the variety of world language materials cataloged by WLS Cataloging Services. During October and November, the

catalogers handled works in Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, French, Japanese, Portuguese, and Spanish.

In addition to books, the WLS catalogers worked on a variety of other materials. For example: portable DVD players (for John C. Hart Memorial Library); board games (for Harrison Public Library and Rye Free Reading Room); videogames (for Ossining Public Library and Yonkers Public Library); and LPs (vinyl records) (for Croton Free Library). Director of Cataloging Douglas Wray continued to catalog New Rochelle Public Library's very large Joseph Albanese Collection (CDs), and the 700 CDs which were donated to Pound Ridge Library. Some of the member libraries assemble educational kits which contain assorted materials. One recent example cataloged by Mr. Wray was a "play and learn" kit titled "Wild Animals." It consists of four children's books in Spanish, four plush animal puppets, four plastic animal figurines and Spanish and English information sheets, all in a backpack. It was assembled by Katonah Village Library.

### **Information Technology (IT)**

#### **Data Center Clean Up Project**

The network upgrade was a critical project that took almost two years to complete due to delays in hardware availability and corresponding sequencing of the necessary configuration changes. With the final installation of the new network hardware in the data center this summer, WLS has a fully redundant network environment. This provides the IT staff with more effective and streamlined methods for administering, securing, and supporting the system-wide network used to support the public libraries. At the data center, virtual servers were replaced, and hardware platforms were consolidated and condensed. WLS Junior Network/Help Desk Administrator Michael Petrocelli served as the project lead with the assistance of the newest team members, WLS Junior Systems Analysts, Blas Jaramillo and Andres O'Connor-Annakie.

#### **Personnel and Departmental Restructuring**

One of the most important changes in the department was personnel reassessment. Some roles were changed, some removed or modified to help allow for better workflow. The addition of Junior Systems Analysts Blas Jaramillo and Andres O'Connor-Annakie allowed other team members to transition to different roles in the department. The IT department is better positioned to be more agile, which has allowed for more timely completion of projects and has introduced more cross-training and backup support for tasks and roles.

#### **Aspen – Patron Search Platform for the Online Catalog/Integrated Library System (ILS)**

From a user perspective, the major change this year has been the deployment of the Aspen patron search platform on Evergreen, the online catalog/ILS. The Aspen integration has improved the search capability and overall use experience for patrons. Systems Librarian Lindsay Stratton and Technology Trainor Allison Pryor, who were assigned to the project, were able effectively engage with public library staff to configure and launch Aspen in a timely and highly effective manner. Ms. Pryor has emerged as our onsite Aspen specialist, and she has

worked with the public libraries to train staff and help them to configure their local Aspen instance so that it best meets their community needs. Aspen is an ever-evolving platform, and we look forward to seeing how it can continue to help libraries to engage with their communities.

## Public Innovation and Engagement | Outreach Services

### **Battle of the Books**

A total of 246 participants (152 across 16 teams in grades 4-7 and 94 across 16 teams grades 6-12) representing 19 libraries: Bedford Free Library, Briarcliff Manor Public Library, Bronxville Public Library, Croton Free Library, Dobbs Ferry Public Library, Eastchester Public Library, The



Field Library (Peekskill), Greenburgh Public Library, Harrison Public Library, Hastings-On-Hudson Library, Hendrick Hudson Free Library, Katonah Village Library, Larchmont Public Library, Mt. Kisco Public Library, Ossining Public Library, Town of Pelham Public Library, Rye Free Reading Room, Somers Library and White Plains Public Library along with almost 80 volunteers from around the County came together to enjoy the 9th Annual Battle of the Books which

took place at Ossining High School on Saturday, October 21. Briarcliff Manor Public Library sent teams in both age groups and came out as the overall winners in both groups, congratulations!

WLS Executive Director Terry Kirchner was in attendance to give the welcome speech, encouraging all to have fun and show good sportsmanship. He also served as a volunteer throughout the day and gave out the awards in the final battle. Dana Hysell served as this year's teen question expert and was also enlisted to emcee both of the final battles. Pam Hoffman, alongside WLS Board Members Alice Joselow and Maureen LeBlanc and Somers Library Board President and proposed WLS Board Member Barbara Tepper also volunteered at the event. Teams, coaches, volunteers, and spectators were all excited to be back in person for the battle. A lot of positive feedback has been conveyed with one participant saying, "the kindness the



teams showed each other was amazing” while another said, “it’s wonderful to see kids able to compete (and even with an audience) on the topic of BOOKS.”

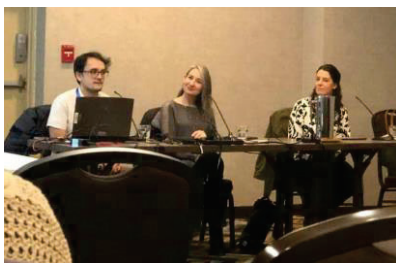
### **Connect Westchester**

WLS collaborates with The STEM Alliance to execute Connect Westchester, a county-funded digital equity initiative. Following the model of our Reconnect with Tech program, this initiative offers a comprehensive 15-hour digital skills training, culminating in the provision of a Chromebook upon completion. Participants are also eligible for assistance in enrolling in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).

Linda Smith, Outreach Manager, spearheads the coordination efforts with member libraries to establish Connect Westchester cohorts across communities. The initial library partnership was formed with New Rochelle Public Library. Starting in October, they hosted two Tech Skills for Success cohorts serving a total of 30 people and giving out 30 devices. The upcoming cohorts are scheduled for 2024 at Bedford Hills Free Library, Port Chester/Rye Brook Library, Ossining Public Library, and several other libraries are actively finalizing their dates.

### **New York Library Association (NYLA) Conference 2023**

The annual NYLA conference is a much-needed opportunity to take a step back from the daily grind of our work, to reconsider the larger mission of our libraries and to learn about what others in NY are doing to advance that mission. The offerings at this year’s conference spoke to the priorities on the minds of library professionals across the state, particularly in the realms of workplace support, work-life balance, and making ourselves visible and valued in the public eye! Coming out of the pandemic’s isolation, seeing waves of book challenges, dealing with tighter budgets and fewer full-time staff, the keynote speaker’s kickoff to the 2023 conference was deceptively simple: *Libraries do good work*. We all know this to be true, but how do we convey the full scope of what a library *means* to a society that feels more divided, socially isolated, and overwhelmed by information than ever. This theme carried through the rest of the conference and absolutely provided some food for thought in terms of our outreach work and the work happening across our member libraries.



Krishna Brodigan, Megan Brown, and Dana Hysell offered a group presentation to share WLS’ process for producing collaborative publications ([like the ones you can find in our publications catalog](#)) with the intention of empowering attendees to reach out to their own community partners to build collaborative information resources! Terry Kirchner’s presentation on revising the employee review process was placed in the same time slot so the team was unable to attend, but we heard great reviews!



Dana Hysell also accepted an appointment as NYLA Youth Services Section (YSS) Conference Director for 2025, meaning the conference will be held in Westchester. This will be a great opportunity to invite more Youth Services staff from our member libraries.

### Library by Mail Pilot Program



Thanks to a generous grant from the Field Hall Foundation, the Outreach team will be piloting a new system-wide *Library by Mail* program in 2024. Modeled after successful programs at neighboring library systems, *Library by Mail* will allow homebound library patrons and their caregivers anywhere in the County to place holds on library materials which will be delivered through USPS. Steering meetings will be conducted with member libraries prior to program launch to ensure that this service will not conflict with any existing homebound services.

*“Library By Mail offers an opportunity for those who are homebound, and their caregivers stay*

*connected to their local library. Large print books, audio books, DVDs, and other materials, including some handheld magnifiers for the vision impaired can be delivered to the patron’s home and returned to the library efficiently through this program. We saw the impact this had at other library systems, and we are thrilled to now have this in Westchester.”*



- Krishna Brodigan, WLS Outreach Director.