

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM
Trustee Meeting
January 30, 2018 – Approved March 27, 2018

ORGANIZATION MEETING

The annual Organization Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Cathy Draper, President, at 6:05 p.m. at WLS Headquarters. The quorum requirement was met with the following people in attendance at both the Organizational and Regular Meetings of the WLS Board of Trustees:

Board Members present: Dave Donelson, Cathy Draper, Hope Furth, Karen Kelley, Jonathan Marshall, Julie Mills-Worthey, Susan Morduch, Sue Neale, Sean Ryan, Edris Scherer, Bernie Seiler, Karen Zevin

Board Members absent: LaRuth Gray, Alex Payan

Also present from WLS were: Terry Kirchner, Patricia Brigham, Francine Feuerman, Rob Caluori, Elise Burke

Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) Representative: Carolyn Reznick, Director of Ruth Keeler Memorial Library (North Salem)

Ms. Draper asked Sue Neale, Chair of the Nominating Committee, to report on the trustees who have agreed to run for office. The following agreed to serve, and with no nominations from the floor, the proposed slate was presented:

President: Sean Ryan
Vice-President: Susan Morduch
Secretary: Bernie Seiler

Ms. Scherer has also agreed to continue as Treasurer. The slate of officers as noted above was approved on a motion by Ms. Neale and seconded by Ms. Scherer. The motion was approved unanimously. The outgoing officers were thanked for their service.

The Oath of Office required by New York State for public library system trustees was administered to the newly-elected trustees Ms. Kelley and Mr. Marshall and re-elected trustee Ms. Draper.

There being no further business, the organizational meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Scherer and seconded by Ms. Neale. The motion was approved unanimously.

REGULAR MEETING

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by incoming President Mr. Ryan at 6:11 p.m.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of November 28, 2017, were accepted with correction to the spelling of Dr. Gray's name on Page 1 under "Financial Reports" on a motion by Ms. Zevin and seconded by Ms. Scherer. The motion was approved unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The pre-audit financial report through December 2017 was presented by Ms. Scherer and was accepted on a motion by Ms. Scherer and seconded by Ms. Draper. Ms. Feuerman noted that the Governor's proposed budget included a cut for Library Aid. The WLS budget projected flat funding. WLS auditors are scheduled to start next week. The check register was distributed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Mills-Worthey shared a letter from J. Gary Pretlow, NYS Assemblymember [89th District] addressed to the WLS Board with regard to the Central Library budget approved at the 11/28/2017 board meeting and the decision to have no funds available to Mount Vernon Public Library for print materials and only \$1,000 for training. The letter raised the concern that supporting only electronic resources would disenfranchise the portion of the community who do not own smart phones. Discussion followed regarding the Central Library budget process and communication procedures with Mount Vernon Public Library. Since Central Library Aid affects all 38 member libraries, a decision on the matter would not be made until the issues raised can be brought to PLDA. A meeting of a smaller group of pertinent parties from WLS and the Mount Vernon Public Library will be coordinated in order to frame a discussion of the issues to bring to PLDA for review.

PRESENTATION

WLS Executive Director Terry Kirchner gave a presentation on WLS's strategic directions for the coming year. He reviewed WLS's mission, vision and values; a brief history; an overview of the strategic process; spoke about recent reports, political updates, the rapid growth of digital data consumption and other trends. He also outlined the shared strategic goal, priorities and objectives formulated in conjunction with PLDA and activities to support these objectives for 2018.

ACTION ITEMS

WLS Procedures for Delinquent Accounts: Ms. Feuerman noted that the WLS Budget Committee met on November 28, 2017, and discussed the issue of delinquent account procedures for invoices issued by WLS for services rendered. Non-profits are being held more accountable for ensuring the use of best practices for internal controls, and the Office of the State Comptroller along with the New York State auditor recommend applying interest and penalties on delinquent accounts according to law to encourage prompt payment. The current terms for WLS invoices including the semi-annual invoices to member libraries for IT fees and all other invoices for services rendered are net 30 days with no late fee. The Budget Committee recommends that beginning February 1, 2018, all WLS invoices that are delinquent by more than 60 days be assessed a late fee of 1% per month. The late fees as submitted was approved on a motion by Ms. Draper and seconded by Mr. Donelson. The motion passed unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Ryan distributed Committee sign-up sheets and noted that there is a need for Development Committee members and several committee chairs. He encouraged all to consider taking on an assignment.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

PLDA LIAISON'S REPORT

Ms. Resnick filled in for Karen LaRocca-Fels, the 2018 1st Vice President and PLDA Board Meeting Representative who was unable to attend the meeting. Discussions at the January PLDA Meeting included:

- The fiscal implications of going fine free, especially for children's materials;
- Creation of a new marketing group;
- Ms. Burke spoke about this year's Library Advocacy Day on February 28th, the NYS Annual Report and WLS salary survey; and
- Mr. Kirchner and Mr. Ryan met with PLDA President Brian Kenney regarding 2018 strategic directions and cooperation between PLDA and WLS.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next regular meeting of the WLS Board is scheduled for February 27th, the day prior to Library Advocacy Day in Albany. It was also suggested to skip the February Meeting and have meetings every other month to give more time in between for review of materials. It was decided by consensus to skip only the February meeting for now, and the next Regular Meeting of the WLS Board will be March 27th.

Ms. Brigham spoke about the 2018 Celebrating Westchester Libraries Breakfast which will be held on April 6th at the Doral Arrowwood. The speaker will be Nancy Silberkleit, co-Chief Executive Officer for Archie Comics, who is an early literacy advocate. Information about the event as well as Save the Date cards were distributed for WLS trustees to promote the event to their own network of friends.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned its meeting at 7:40 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Scherer and seconded by Ms. Neale that passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bernie Seiler
Secretary



J. GARY PRETLOW
Assemblyman 89th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIR
Racing & Wagering

COMMITTEES
Codes
Insurance
Rules
Ways & Means

Assembly Steering Committee

January 29, 2018

Greetings to the Board of the Westchester Library System:

This letter is intended to address the recent decision made by the Westchester Library System (WLS) Board of Trustees that appears to ignore the extensive study by a WLS subcommittee and associated community conversation surrounding the continued role of the Central Library. As you know I have historically and enthusiastically supported New York State libraries, the Westchester Library System and its member libraries. I have consistently voted to extend significant capital improvement funds benefiting member libraries and promoted New York State Library literacy and other important initiatives.

It is from this perspective that I am both concerned and disappointed to learn of the WLS decision to divert all \$351,266 of New York State Central Library Development (CLD) funding entirely to WLS, without any funds allocated for print material, staffing, programming or potential development of the Central Library infrastructure. During the hearing process on removing Central Library status from Mount Vernon, you, the board, stated that this was only a name designation and all funding will remain in place. Subsequently, CLS status remained with Mount Vernon but it appears your true intentions were to remove funding from the Mount Vernon Public Library. This is intolerable.

In past years, the Westchester Central Library had been allocated control of less than 10 % of the state funds to advance its legislative purpose to serve both the public and its member libraries. Funds are now being utilized in part to purchase subscription of electronic fiction materials. As I understand, the NY State regulation of distribution of digital fiction material is not intended to be included within the Central Library budget expenditures.

The decision limits access to only those individuals and families with access to "smart devices". Until WLS can persuasively justify this horrendous level of disenfranchisement that furthers the widening gap between the Westchester County "haves" and the "have nots", this budget decision must be rescinded and reconsidered.

I am a long standing, influential member of the State Assembly and I consider this issue to be significant in its clear disparate impact. The historical support for WLS and the Central Library I have demonstrated on behalf of my constituents should not be rewarded by this lack of consideration and regard to those unable to access digital technology. CLD funds are to

maintain and improve the Central Library's function. The Central Library role as a major reference and information resource cannot be fulfilled by just access to electronic portals.

The two year budget proposed by WLS ignores the present and future need of County residents to access print materials. In addition, I personally oppose WLS control of the entire Central Library budget where credit for the use of these resources goes only to WLS and not the Central Library whose funds are used to acquire same. If left to stand, this situation must be brought to the attention of my colleague DiDi Barrett, Chairperson on the State Assembly Committee on Libraries and Education Technology.

I look forward to hearing that WLS has taken the more prudent course of reconsidering the budget allocation and to include the Central Library and other community stakeholders in the conversation.

Sincerely,

J. Gary Pretlow
Member of NYS Assembly
89th District