

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM
Trustee Meeting
February 27, 2024 – Approved March 26, 2024

REGULAR MEETING

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Susan Morduch at 6:03p.m.

The quorum requirement was met with the following people in attendance:

Board Members present: Anthony Amiano, Andrea Bober, Robert Cartolano, Karen Kelley, Maureen LeBlanc, Julie Mills-Worthey, Susan Morduch, David Mener, Barbara Tepper, Diane Tabakman, Karen Zevin

Board Members absent: Nishat Hydari, Wes Iwanski, Alice Joselow

Also present from WLS were: Wilson Arana, Rob Caluori, Terry Kirchner, Kate Meyer, Allison Midgley

Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) Representative: Jennifer Coulter, Director, Pound Ridge Public Library District

MINUTES

The minutes of the February 27, 2024, meeting was approved as submitted on a motion by Ms. Tabakman and seconded by Ms. Bober. The motion passed unanimously.

The President amended the agenda to allow the Nominating Committee to present a candidate to fill a vacancy. Ms. Kelley introduced Patricia Phelan to the Board. Ms. Phelan has agreed to fill the vacancy for District XV [Yonkers]. The Board approved the appointment of Ms. Phelan on a motion by Ms. Kelley and seconded by Mr. Cartolano. The motion passed unanimously.

The Oath of Office, required by New York State, for public library system trustees was administered to the newly appointed trustee, Ms. Phelan and WLS Trustee Maureen LeBlanc who was elected at the annual meeting to serve a second five-year term ending December 31, 2028.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mr. Caluori presented the check registers and financial reports for January 2024. Mr. Caluori presented the financial statements highlighting significant positive and negative variances. He also noted the report now includes a section for payments over \$50,000 in accordance with the newly revised Board policy. The financial reports for January 2024 were approved on a motion by Ms. LeBlanc and seconded by Mr. Amiano. The motion passed unanimously.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Ms. Morduch gave an overview of the process used for the annual evaluation of the Executive Director. Ms. Morduch and Ms. Zevin met with Dr. Kirchner to discuss the feedback from the Board. Copies of the evaluation are available to the Board as requested. The results of the review were constructive, positive, and well-received. Ms. Morduch and Ms. Zevin thanked the Board for their contributions to the process and Dr. Kirchner for his continued service to Westchester Library System.

Ms. Morduch also made note of the changes to the Executive Director’s report, which now includes symbology for each section indicating its relevance to the WLS strategic plan.

Ms. Morduch discussed upcoming events for trustees including the Trustee Institute on March 6, 2024, at 6:00pm at WLS featuring a discussion led by Stephanie (Cole) Adams on Tools for Transforming Library and Municipality Relationships and a presentation led by Rebekkah Smith Aldrich on Understanding 414 Public Votes. She also made note of the canned food drive led by the United Way of Westchester and Putnam. Donations can be made both in-person at participating libraries and online.

The new online services (Medici.TV, Mango Languages, and The Shelf) were noted as great resources.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee: Ms. LeBlanc, Chair, noted that the Committee is looking for additional members, highlighting the Budget process is especially helpful for new trustees to learn about all that WLS does.

Ms. LeBlanc discussed the outcomes of their most recent meeting, which was held just prior to the Board meeting this evening at 5:00pm. At the meeting the Committee approved amendments to the categorizations of revenue in the Income Statement which will be reflected in the financial statements going forward starting in February 2024.

They also recommended the Governance Committee to amend the by-laws to permanently change the name of the Budget Committee to the Budget/Finance Committee. At Mr. Caluori’s recommendation, the committee will be meeting with a representative of the New York State Liquid Asset Fund (NYLAF) to discuss alternative vehicles that will improve WLS’s returns on investments and maintain compliance with state regulations. All trustees are encouraged to attend their next meeting which will be held at 5:00pm prior to the next Board meeting on March 26, 2024.

Nominating & Board Education: Ms. Kelley, Chair, encouraged all trustees to attend the upcoming Trustee Institutes noting they count to fulfil the trustees’ annual continuing education requirements.

Governance: Ms. Bober, Chair noted the committee has several policies that are scheduled to be reviewed in 2024. The committee will be meeting to discuss and recommend policies for first reading by the Board at the meeting on April 30, 2024. The Board was reminded that policies are given a first reading and then submitted for approval by the Board at the following meeting.

Audit: Mr. Caluori was asked to provide a report for the Audit committee. He noted that the auditors from Dorfman, Abrams, Music LLC, were on-site at WLS on February 21, 2024, for their field work which included, but was not limited to, inspecting financial records, verifying inventory, and conducting interviews with multiple staff members and that the process has been collaborative and positive. At this time, it is expected that the committee will meet in early April to receive the audit reports from Dorfman, Abrams, Music LLC and present them to the Board for approval at their April

30, 2024, meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

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

- Dr. Kirchner mentioned the canned food drive ends on March 1. Donations are being accepted at 20 member libraries or orders can be made on Amazon.com and directed to the program at checkout.
- Save the date for the 2024 WLS Battle of the Books, which will take place on October 26, 2024.
- Dr. Kirchner noted that three member libraries have director vacancies presently, noting the challenges of filling these roles including, but not limited to, civil service and providing competitive salaries to attract candidates.
- The libraries in the Town of Bedford (Bedford Hills Free Library, Bedford Free Library and Katonah Village Library) will be meeting to discuss the potential for a chapter 414 vote for public library funding. Jerry Nichols will be working with the group towards this effort.
- Allison Midgely will be working with the member libraries on compiling the annual reports for New York State. It was noted that Allison is working to standardize how data is collected to help simplify the process of completing the reports.
- Wilson Arana discussed the upcoming clean-up of the patron database in the library management system. At this time, it is expected the process will purge approximately 253,000 records from the database.

Mr. Cartolano made a motion to direct WLS to work with the PLDA to implement a universal online tool to simplify library card renewal for patrons. There was no second to the motion. Mr. Cartolano withdrew the motion.

PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTORS’ ASSOCIATION (PLDA) LIASON REPORT

Ms. Coulter reported on the February PLDA meeting where the following was discussed:

- There will be a speaker at the March PLDA meeting: NYS Librarian Lauren Moore
- Directors have been very busy preparing their NYS Annual Reports – many thanks to Allison Midgely for her assistance and support.
- Updates were given for the Committees:
 1. Technology
 2. E-Content
 3. Finance
 4. Civil Service
 5. Bylaws
 6. Mentorship
 7. Roundtables: municipal libraries, Municipal, Association Libraries, Small Libraries, Urban Libraries
- Library Card Auto Purging – Lindsay’s presentation - we are going to lose about 50% of our cardholders, we have been reaching out to via email to those with email on file and via phone for those who do not have email on file.
- Uses for the PLDA Treasury – Ms. Coulter has been collecting information on group rates for professional development. She sent out a survey to all the Directors - the most popular topics

are De-Escalation Training, Legal Issues, Management, Trustees and Boards, Censorship and Banned Books, AI in libraries.

- Ms. Coulter noted that there is a PLA Conference April 2 - 5 in Columbus, Ohio

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned its meeting at 7:33 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Amiano and seconded by Ms. Zevin that passed unanimously.

Respectively submitted,

Anthony Amiano

Anthony Amiano
Secretary