**WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM**
**Trustee Meeting**
**June 30, 2026 – Approval Pending**



## REGULAR MEETING

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Nishat Hydari at 6:01p.m.

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

Board Members present: Andrea Bober, Robert Cartolano, Ralph Esposito, Nishat Hydari, Karen Kelley, Maureen LeBlanc, David Mener, Susan Morduch, Patricia Phelan, Diane Tabakman, Barbara Tepper, Hudson Trader, Karen Zevin

Board Members absent: Wes Iwanski, Alice Joslow

Also present from WLS: Wilson Arana, Robert Caluori, Terry Kirchner, Pat Brigham, Kate Meyer

## MINUTES

The minutes of the May 26, 2026, Board Meeting were approved as amended (Susan Morduch did not attend the Board Meeting) on a motion by Ms. Tepper and seconded by Mr. Cartolano. The motion passed unanimously.

## FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mr. Caluori presented the financial reports for May 2026. Payment registers for the period were also distributed. The financial reports for May 2026 were approved on a motion by Ms. LeBlanc and seconded by Ms. Bober. The financial reports were accepted unanimously.

## INFORMATION ITEM

***Free Direct Access Plan:*** The Westchester Library System (WLS) is updating its mandatory five-year Plan of Service for 2027–2031 to outline strategic goals, service programs, and operational priorities. A key component, the Free Direct Access Plan, provides guidelines for handling member library closures and monitoring municipal support during increased lending activity.

There are no major changes to the document which will be shared with PLDA after the WLS Board's June 30th meeting.

The proposed draft will be distributed to the member library boards for their review and approval. Once 20 or more member library boards have approved the drafted Plan, it will then be brought before the WLS Board for final approval.

**ACTION ITEM**

***Bylaws, Employee Handbook, Strategic Goals and Policy Updates:*** The WLS Governance Committee reviewed and recommended for approval updates to the bylaws for electronic transfers, the employee handbook's jury duty section, and strategic goals during their May 12, 2026 meeting. Additionally, policies regarding the code of ethics, health emergency plans, and remote work were reviewed and recommended for approval by the committee.

A brief discussion on the potential for conflicts of interest when a WLS trustee also serves on a member library board occurred. As a result, Ms. Zevin and Mr. Mener would like further discussion regarding Policy 7: *Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest*, therefore this Policy was not approved by the Board and will be discussed at a later date. The Bylaws, Employee Handbook, Strategic Goals and Policy Updates apart from Policy 7 were approved on a motion by Mr. Trader and seconded by Ms. LeBlanc. [Mr. Cartolano abstained.]

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Ms. Hydari reminded each Board member to return the Executive Director's evaluation form to her. There is a Legislator Appreciation Supper at WLS headquarters on July 21 at 5:30 pm. She encouraged all Board members to attend. In response to the auditing firm's recommendation that this be discussed at a board meeting, Dr. Kirchner provided the board with a brief overview of the business continuity (succession planning) protocols that the administration staff have in place to address planned and unplanned absences of administrative staff, with a focus on the Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer and Office Manager positions.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

***Finance:*** Ms. LeBlanc noted the committee that the Finance Committee met before the Board meeting and discussed the accounting for the Disconnect 2 Reconnect (D2R) conference. Mr. Caluori added that they discussed how the expenses for the conference were currently recorded between the Special Events and Contractual Services expense lines and that all of the expenses for the conference are more appropriately recorded in the Contractual Services line. It was explained that the Special Events line was used as a placeholder for the conference during the budget process and agreed to combine it with Contractual Services.

***Nominating:*** Dr. Kirchner will send out letters to libraries asking for nominations for District 1 [Croton, Montrose, Yorktown] representative replacing Karen Zevin and District 6 [Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, Greenburgh, Hastings] representative replacing Susan Morduch who have each completed two consecutive terms and are not eligible for reappointment. District 3 [Bedford Hills, Chappaqua, Katonah, Mt Kisco] representative Nishat Hydari has completed her first 5-year term and is willing to serve another term and the libraries in District 3 will be notified of her interest in continuing her service on the WLS Board..

***Governance:*** The committee will discuss Policy 7: *Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest* and report back to the Board.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

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

- Dr. Kirchner noted leadership changes at several libraries. He stated that a total of six libraries have not finished their annual reports to the State.

- Ms. Brigham spoke about Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley, a program that trains local library staff to provide technology assistance for anyone who needs it. The program is administered by Southeastern New York Library Resources Council, Mid-Hudson Library System, Ramapo-Catskill Library System, and Westchester Library System. A Digital Navigators training cohort is being planned for October as part of the Hudson Valley Connected program. More information will be forthcoming, but all library staff are encouraged to take advantage of this professional development opportunity.

- Dr. Kirchner informed the Board that they have been asked by the NYS Division of Library Development to approve the independent auditor selected to conduct the financial audit for Mount Vernon Public Library. As per the June 22, 2026, email that was sent to the Mount Vernon Public Library board by Lauren Moore, Assistant Commissioner for Libraries and State Librarian: *Given ongoing concerns about the accuracy of MVPL's financial reporting, the State Library will now require that all annual financial reports, beginning in 2026, be reviewed and certified by an independent auditor hired by the MVPL Board of Trustees. The auditor must be approved by the Westchester Library System. Failure to comply with the above directives may result in the revocation of MVPL's registration.*

- WLS is in discussions with hoopla to remove the "monthly cap" for WLS-funded hoopla borrows - this would allow every active library card holder to have 2 system-funded borrows (rather than a maximum of 3) per month (hoopla would still honor WLS' $25,000 monthly cap, but no patron would be denied access to their 2 borrows). WLS would like to try this new approach as early as July 1 - in theory it should expand access to content to all patrons.

- Dr. Kirchner reminded board members of the Fun Run event on July 9th and the Battle of the Books on October 24th.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned its meeting at 7:09 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Morduch and seconded by Ms. Bober that passed unanimously.

Respectively submitted,

Diane H. Tabakman
Secretary