

**WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
**Trustee Meeting**  
**February 27, 2007 – Approved March 27, 2007**

**REGULAR MEETING**

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Dave Donelson, President, at 6:05 p.m. at WLS Headquarters. The quorum requirement was met with the following people in attendance:

Board Members present: Mary Amato, Patricia Dohrenwend, Dave Donelson, Deborah Fay, Patricia Fontanella, Barbara Hickernell, Norman Jacknis, Naseem Jamali, Marie Grace Mutino, Sue Neale, and John Sorice

Board members absent: Mary Ellen Forte, Hope Furth, LaRuth Gray, Blanca Lopez

Also present from WLS were: Siobhan Reardon, Rachel Charny, Steven Pisani, Judith Rovenger, John Smith, Elaine Sozzi, Francine Vernon

PLDA Representative: Jane Marino, Director, Bronxville Public Library

Guests: Margot Becker, WLS Development Consultant

**MINUTES**

The minutes were revised on Page 3 to correct the secretary's name for the 2007 slate of officers from Mary Amato to Sue Neale. The minutes of the meeting of January 30, 2007 were approved as amended on a motion by Ms. Amato and seconded by Ms. Hickernell. The motion passed unanimously.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

The Financial Reports for December 2006 and January 2007, as reviewed by Mr. Smith, were approved as submitted on a motion by Dr. Mutino and seconded by Ms. Neale. The motion passed unanimously.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. Donelson administered the Oath of Office required by New York State for public library system trustees to newly elected trustee Naseem Jamali.

Mr. Donelson announced a new addition to the agenda of a monthly report to the Board by the President.

Mr. Donelson gave an update of the status of the Elmsford/Ardsley/Greenburgh Contract. He and Ms. Reardon met with Elmsford and with Ardsley; but nothing has been decided. The need to revise the WLS Code of Service is evident.

Mr. Donelson suggested a more formal working structure to the WLS Board through the creation of several committees. Each trustee was sent a list of suggested committees and was asked to serve on at least two. The following committees were created: Audit; Budget; Governance Issues; Nominating; Events; and Funding. Mr. Donelson will distribute a list of the committee membership.

Mr. Donelson spoke of several upcoming events: Library Lobby Day on March 13; the WLS Book & Author Luncheon on April 19 and the need to start seeking silent auction items; the NYSALB Trustee Institute on May 4-5 in Queens and WLS will reimburse expenses; and the WLS Trustee Institute on Wednesday, March 21 from 7-9:30 pm, place to be determined.

Mr. Donelson noted that WLS will be arranging American Library Association and New York Library Association membership for Trustees.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### ***Literacy Services Grants:***

*Family Literacy Services Grant:* This state funded, competitive grant program provides up to \$300,000 each in years 2007 and 2008 for family literacy library projects. Grants are funded up to \$50,000 per year.

The faces of Westchester residents have changed dramatically over the past decade. Public libraries see more immigrant families who are trying to adjust to life in a very new place and who have no model of free library service. There are also families living in poverty who focus more on meeting basic needs and less on recreational and educational supports for their children as well as parents focusing on improving their own literacy skills. Library staff faces barriers because they have not been trained in methods that can effectively reach and provide appropriate services for these diverse groups. WLS's proposal will develop quality, in-depth training for library staff (including children's and adult librarians, support staff and administrators) who work with these new and potential user families to develop skills in cultural competencies and literacy across age and language groups. Library staff will then use this new knowledge to plan and implement new services in their libraries and develop ongoing relationships with groups and individuals in their service area. Oversight of training and post-training will be coordinated by WLS Outreach/Youth Services Department staff and the Parent Child Home Program at Westchester Jewish Community Services. Four libraries will participate in training and implementation each year of the grant. Year one will include Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, Tarrytown, and Peekskill; year two will include Ossining, Port Chester and the two large branches in Yonkers. The total grant request is \$45,000 per year.

The Board approved WLS's Family Literacy Services Grant as submitted on a motion by Dr. Jacknis and seconded by Ms. Dohrenwend. The motion passed unanimously.

*Adult Literacy Services Grant:* This state aid competitive grant program provides up to \$200,000 each in years 2007 and 2008 for adult literacy library projects. Grants are funded up to \$20,000 per year.

WLS will pilot a project that will focus on comprehensive recruitment and training of volunteers to provide a variety of learning opportunities for immigrant residents in a specific community. The recruitment process would enable volunteers to select a type of service to be performed in their own community that would match their interests and schedule. These volunteer opportunities will include basic ESL tutoring, leading conversation groups for intermediate and advanced learners, and staffing a *Welcome Desk for New Americans* at the library that would offer one-to-one information and referral services for a variety of issues. Recruitment efforts will be supported by the Volunteer Center and WLS, with support from local community agencies, churches and the library serving the target community. Special efforts will be made to recruit volunteers with cultural and linguistic competence in order to optimize connections with clients of limited English proficiency. Volunteer training will be coordinated by Literacy Volunteers of Westchester, based upon its proven *U.S. Civics for Immigrants Curriculum*. Mamaroneck will be the target community for the first year, which will be replicated in Peekskill for the second year. The total request is \$18,880 for year 1 and \$13,800 for year 2.

The Board approved WLS's Adult Literacy Family Services Grant as submitted on a motion by Dr. Jacknis and seconded by Ms. Hickernell. The motion passed unanimously.

***Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy:*** Ms. Reardon explained that in an effort to ensure accountability and legal and ethical behavior, the board should establish policies to guide the board members and staff. Conflict-of-interest policies outline acceptable and unacceptable relationships among an organization, its board members and its staff. Currently, the Westchester Library System does not have a formal Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy. The submitted policy details how board members and staff must put the interests of the organization before their personal and professional interests when acting on behalf of the organization. This includes: disclosure of any conflicts of interest; adherence to the organization's conflict-of-interest policy; avoidance of the use of corporate opportunities for the individual's personal gain or benefit; and nondisclosure of confidential information about the organization.

The Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy was approved as submitted on a motion by Ms. Fontanella and seconded by Dr. Mutino; the motion passed unanimously.

***WLS New York State Annual Report 2006:*** Ms. Reardon reviewed WLS's New York State Annual Report for 2006 and highlighted a number of statistics from the year.

WLS's New York State Annual Report for 2006 was accepted as submitted on a motion by Ms. Neale and seconded by Ms. Hickernell; the motion passed unanimously.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

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

Ms. Reardon updated the board on the situations at the Ossining Public Library and the Town of Pelham Library. The Sirsi migration is on schedule for mid-April, and the system will be down five to ten days as this takes place. Louis Begley has been selected as the fourth author for the Book and Author Luncheon in addition to Dorothea Benton Frank, Marilyn Johnson, and Simon Schama. The new delivery service is working overall.

## **PRESENTATION**

Margot Becker, a consultant for grant opportunities and fundraising, gave a presentation on her findings regarding development strength and weaknesses at WLS.

## **PLDA REPRESENTATIVE**

Ms. Marino noted that due to a lack of a quorum, PLDA could not pass their revised Bylaws. They will look to vote on this at their March meeting. Mr. Hay gave his presentation on Bok o Maten and Turning the Pages. An overview of Sirsi by was given by Ms. Charny. The Teen Plans of Service were greatly appreciated. Ms. Marino gave a "show & tell" of the pants created for the *Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants* display that went to Bronxville, Tuckahoe, and Eastchester & South Salem to coordinate with the release of the book. These jeans were on display at each library; their picture was on the website. Upon completion of the tour, they may be sold on *eBay*.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned its meeting at 7:42 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Neale and seconded by Dr. Jacknis. The motion passed unanimously.

The next regular meeting of the WLS Board of Trustees is scheduled to take place on **Tuesday, March 27, at 6:00 p.m.** at WLS headquarters, 540 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, NY.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Neale, Secretary