

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM
Trustee Meeting
December 9, 2008 – Approved 1/27/2009

REGULAR MEETING

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Patricia Fontanella, 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, Patricia Fontanella, Mary Ellen Forte, Hope Furth, LaRuth Gray, Norman Jacknis, Naseem Jamali, Marie Grace Mutino, Sue Neale, John Sorice

Board members absent: Dave Donelson, Deborah Fay, Barbara Hickernell

Also present from WLS were: Wayne Hay, Robin Osborne, Steven Pisani, Judith Rovenger, John Smith, Elaine Sozzi, Francine Vernon

Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) Representative: Jane Marino, Director, Bronxville Public Library

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of November 3, 2008, were approved as submitted on a motion by Dr. Mutino and seconded by Ms. Amato. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The financial reports through November 2008 were approved as presented on a motion by Dr. Jacknis and seconded by Ms. Neale. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Revision to WLS By-Laws: Ms. Fontanella explained that at the WLS Board Retreat held in September, it was suggested to have the current WLS By-Laws better define the Executive Committee. Therefore the wording under Article III-Section 5 was amended to show the Executive Committee comprised of the four officers of the Board and the immediate Past President.

The Board approved the above revision to the WLS By-Laws as submitted on a motion by Ms. Dohrenwend and seconded by Dr. Mutino. The motion passed unanimously.

Marketing and Communications Services: Mr. Smith explained that the contract with Co-Communications, the vendor assisting WLS with media services, will terminate on

December 31, 2008. The goal of hiring an outside media firm back in June 2007 was to enhance public library, and WLS has been very satisfied with the work Co-Communications has provided. It was recommended to continue the contract with Co-Communications on a month-to-month basis for a three- to six-month time frame. This will allow time for the new Executive Director to review the contract and analyze the benefits of our media program.

The Board approved continuance of the Co-Communications contract on a month-to-month basis not to exceed the rate of \$6,000 per month [60 hours at \$100 per hour] that will be reviewed within three to six months, on a motion by Ms. Furth and seconded by Mr. Jamali. The motion passed unanimously.

WLS Fiscal Year 2009 Budget: Mr. Smith gave a detailed overview of the proposed WLS 2009 budget. The WLS Budget Committee met in October and November. A number of options were looked at and conservative approach in forecasting revenues for FY2009 was taken, because the full impact of the economic environment was unknown during the initial budgeting process.

Ms. Fontanella and Mr. Smith met with County Executive Spano, and the funding level from the County is expected to remain the same. On the contrary, the New York State budget and level of library aid is still unknown. Governor Paterson is expected to release his 2009-10 budget on December 16th. There was some concern that the State situation is worse than the 10% decrease projected in the WLS budget. If a more drastic cut is made by the State, this budget will need to be adjusted.

In general, the proposed FY2009 budget does not reduce the level of service to our members or the community but offsets reductions in revenue by curtailing non service related expenses. The budget was reviewed in detail; and it was noted that PLDA at their 11/20/08 General Membership Meeting also reviewed and recommend approval of this budget.

The Board approved the FY 2009 Budget as submitted (see attached) on a motion by Dr. Gray and seconded by Ms. Dohrenwend. The motion passed with nine in favor and two against. The WLS Budget Committee consisting of Ms. Furth, Chair; Ms. Dohrenwend; Ms. Fontanella; Ms. Neale; Mr. Sorice; and Mr. Donelson were thanked for their hard work.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Fontanella thanked the WLS Trustees for their attendance at the Annual Meeting. There were almost 70 people in attendance and it was a wonderful success. The press conference held beforehand was also well received, and it was great to have County Legislator Ken Jenkins present the County proclamation to WLS. The WLS staff involved in planning the event were recognized and thanked for their efforts.

Ms. Fontanella noted that the structure and membership of the WLS Board Committees will be reviewed in January. Trustees were encouraged to speak with committee chairs to see where they would like to serve.

January will also be the first Board Meeting of our new Executive Director Terry Kirchner. The Board's priorities will be shared with Mr. Kirchner at that time; and trustees were asked to contact Ms. Fontanella with any additional comments.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

WLS Special Events Committee: Ms. Fontanella reported that the Special Events Committee met prior to the Board Meeting. Proceeds from the fundraising events throughout the year were discussed, with the idea that they should go toward shared benefits that can be utilized by all the member libraries, with an emphasis on electronic books and children's books. Trustees were encouraged to share their opinions with the Committee.

The idea of having a gala in this current economic climate was also discussed. The overall consensus was that it was important to have an event; but the type of event still requires some thought. Hospitality Resource Group (HRG) recommended having something outlined by February 2009 in order to allow time to contract with a venue. The board agreed to have the Committee solidify the event details. The next Special Events Committee meeting will be held in January.

Forms for the three awards for service, support and innovation are being developed, and the Trustees will be required to make a commitment to speak with their member library directors and board presidents to be sure they are aware of the awards.

INTERIM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

Mr. Smith reported that the WLS Managers and all staff have done a lot throughout 2008. At the Annual Meeting and in his monthly report, Mr. Smith gave an overview of the WLS's accomplishments, which included the following services: the new Leadership Training Program; introduction of a Gaming Program in more than half the libraries; debut of Poetry Westchester!; completion of our first year of the Health Literacy Initiative; beginning of the WLS Bookmobile; Learning Ambassador program and "*What's the Election Go to Do with ME?*" for young people; Spanish language catalog of only Spanish language material—the first of its kind in New York State; upgrade of the computer network; switch to Overdrive for downloadable audiobooks; installation of GoLibrary; and the extension of WEBS workshops and individual counseling services in six additional libraries.

WLS's purpose is to serve and make a difference; and Mr. Smith thanked everyone at WLS for doing just that.

OTHER

Ms. Forte noted that she had attended a planning meeting for the African-American Literary Tea, at which was discussed the incorporation of WLS's 50th Anniversary theme into the event.

Ms. Fontanella reminded the Trustees that the post-board working meetings will resume in January and will cover the priorities of the Executive Director.

PLDA REPRESENTATIVE

Ms. Marino reported the following topics of discussion at their November meeting: staff abuse of materials; learning how to use the Director's station for circulation statistics and other items; the proposed WLS FY 2009 budget; and setting of new fine on interlibrary loans from out of system to \$2/day with a maximum of \$25. In addition, the following slate of PLDA officers for 2009 was approved: *President:* Patricia Barresi, Director, John C. Hart Memorial Library; *1st Vice President:* Tom Geoffino, Director, New Rochelle Public Library; *2nd Vice President/WLS Board Representative:* Jill Davis, Director, Hendrick Hudson Free Library (Montrose); *Secretary:* Tracy Wright, Director, Eastchester Public Library.

Ms. Marino was thanked for her service for the past two years as the WLS Board Representative.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned its meeting by consensus at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Neale, Secretary