

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM
Trustee Meeting
January 27, 2009 – Approved 2/24/2009

ORGANIZATION MEETING

The annual Organization Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Patricia Fontanella, President, at 6:02 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: Mary Amato, Patricia Dohrenwend, Dave Donelson, Deborah Fay, Patricia Fontanella, Mary Ellen Forte, Hope Furth, LaRuth Gray, Barbara Hickernell, Norman Jacknis, Naseem Jamali, Lawrence Lehman, Marie Grace Mutino, Sue Neale, John Sorice

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

Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) Representative: Jill Davis, Director, Hendrick Hudson Free Library (Montrose)

Guest: Marilyn Johnson, Author

Mary Ellen Forte, Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that the following trustees have agreed to run for office as noted. With no nominations from the floor, the following slate was presented:

President: Patricia Fontanella
Vice-President: Patricia Dohrenwend
Secretary: Sue Neale
Treasurer: Hope Furth

In addition, Lawrence Lehman is being recommended as the trustee to fill the vacancy for District X (Port Chester, Rye Brook, Rye City, Rye Town). This term will end as of 12/31/2010.

The above slate of officers and the new trustee appointment was approved as submitted on a motion by Mr. Sorice and seconded by Ms. Hickernell. The motion passed unanimously.

The Oath of Office required by New York State for public library system trustees was administered to the re-elected trustees and the new appointee for their terms.

There being no further business, the organizational meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Furth and seconded by Dr. Mutino. The motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR MEETING

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Ms. Fontanella,

President, at 6:06 p.m. Ms. Fontanella thanked all for attending and welcomed Terry Kirchner as WLS's new Executive Director as well as Mr. Lehman as WLS's newest trustee. She also thanked everyone for their hard work that contributed to the outstanding year that WLS had in 2008—especially Dave Donelson who chaired the Search Committee and all those who filled in after Siobhan Reardon left—especially John Smith, Interim Director, and Elise Burke, Executive Assistant.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of December 9, 2008, were approved as submitted on a motion by Ms. Dohrenwend and seconded by Ms. Neale. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The pre-audit financial reports through December 2008 were approved as presented on a motion by Mr. Donelson and seconded by Ms. Hickernell. The motion passed unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Fontanella welcomed Larry Lehman as the newest WLS trustee. Mr. Lehman is a trustee of the Rye Free Reading Room; was the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Berger Lehman Associates, PC, consulting engineers; and has experience with the Planning Commission, Traffic & Transportation Commission of Rye, the Historical Society, and the New York State Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors.

Dr. Jacknis was congratulated for being elected as President of the Board for NY Metropolitan Reference & Research Library Agency (METRO); and Dr. Gray is also now on the METRO board. Jill Davis, Director of the Hendrick Hudson Free Library, was welcomed as the new PLDA Representative.

The WLS Committee List was reviewed; new assignments were made; and Dr. Mutino agreed to Chair the Events Committee. Revised lists will be distributed at next month's meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

WLS Events Committee: Dr. Mutino reported on the Events Committee meeting that was held prior to the Board Meeting. Postcards were given out at the African-American Literary Tea with the new web address for WLS's 50th Anniversary. Statistics will be checked to see how many log onto the site. A general timeline for the Service, Support and Innovation Award nominations and submission of applications was drafted; and the application will be finalized shortly. Further discussion on the culminating event took place. It has been decided to hold a Breakfast/Brunch incorporated with the WLS Annual Meeting to take place on a weekend. Because the WLS Annual Meeting occurs in early November, it was suggested to plan it either before or after Election Day. The following dates were suggested: November 1st, November 8th, or

November 15th. The proceeds of the event will go back to the member libraries, and the committee is looking to raise \$50,000. It will be important to find sponsors for the event and someone who could donate the space for the event. Also, finding the right speaker will be critical; and the trustees were encouraged to send any ideas for Westchester-based celebrities to any of the committee members. A fact sheet describing the 50th Anniversary Events was recommended for the WLS Trustees so that they can better share the information with their member library directors and trustees.

The next Events Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, February 24th, at 4:30 p.m.

WLS Audit & Budget Committee: Mr. Smith noted that the auditors have been to WLS and are working on completing the audit. When they send their preliminary figures, a meeting will be set up with the Audit Committee for review. Mr. Smith also noted that the Budget Committee will not meet again until further information is received from New York State regarding the final budget decision. Discussion followed regarding the budget situations that the member libraries are facing as well.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

Dr. Kirchner noted that he has been learning. He met with the staff who report directly to him, and monthly meetings have been scheduled. Monthly meetings with all staff will be held the Wednesday following the Board Meetings to share information of the major events and ideas discussed.

Dr. Kirchner met with County Executive Andy Spano and Bill Ryan, Chair of the County Board of Legislators. This year's County funding remains the same. Dr. Kirchner also began meeting with State Senate and Assembly officials as well as Michael Borges, Executive Director of New York Library Association (NYLA). While there is support for libraries, more effective advocacy needs to be built up for staff and community involvement. This year's Library Lobby Day will be held on Tuesday, March 10th, and trustees were encouraged to attend and invite their member libraries to send representatives as well. Appointments are also being arranged with the Mid-Hudson and Ramapo-Catskill Library Systems.

The African-American Literary Tea was discussed. This year's event brought modest proceeds, but WLS needs more visibility during the course of the event.

The Big Read is holding an event on January 31st at the Mount Vernon, White Plains and Yonkers Public Libraries as well as The Galleria and The Westchester. Dr. Kirchner will be doing a reading of Chapter 2 of *A Lesson Before Dying*, the book selected for this year.

Dr. Kirchner, Ms. Osborne and Ms. Rovenger met with Janet Langsam, Executive Director of Arts Westchester (formerly Westchester Arts Council), regarding the 2010 Big Read application. The participation of all groups and additional details were discussed.

Dr. Kirchner attended a meeting of the Westchester Education Collaborative, which was created by the County in June 2008 to establish a countywide information network to provide resources on the number of existing partnerships among educational, community-based organizations, libraries, etc. A survey will be developed and sent to providers of service to children ages 0 to 6 and obtain baseline quantitative data. They are also attempting to discover if there are service provider training needs that the County should support.

OTHER

Mr. Jamali noted that Supervisor Paul Feiner sent a letter to Dr. Kirchner, which appeared in *The Journal News*, regarding reduced hours and Saturday service due to budget cutbacks. Ms. Davis noted that the letter was discussed at the PLDA meeting in January, and she will address that in her report.

Dr. Gray raised the idea of making a concerted effort to move the library agenda forward via a trustee-driven, strategic planning to delve into the purpose, services and future roles the library system and its member will play. The Executive Committee will look into this idea and make a suggestion on how to address this.

PLDA REPRESENTATIVE

Ms. Davis reported that PLDA met twice since the last WLS Board Meeting. In January, Jim Dress came from the U.S. Census Bureau to discuss the upcoming 2010 census. He thanked the libraries for their assistance in getting the information out to the public for job opportunities and space for training of census takers. WLS will be supplying the circulation statistics for the member library's NYS Annual Reports for the first time. Non-resident library cards for patrons to use public internet computers only were discussed. Paul Feiner's letter was reviewed, and it was decided not to respond to the letter.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned its meeting at 7:25 p.m. on a motion by Dr. Jacknis and seconded by Ms. Neale. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Neale, Secretary