

## WEST NEW YORK LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES - December 07, 2021

*Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the West New York Public Library held via ZOOM at 6:00pm.*

Vice President Adriana Rodriguez called the meeting to order in the absence of President Brito Herrera, followed by reading the Open Public Meeting Notice and roll call.

Roll call was as follows:

**PRESENT:** Wei Lai, Director; Richard Pinal, attorney; Adriana Rodriguez, Amirza Hernandez, Katiana Hernandez, Lidice Solares, Marielka Diaz, Nasrin Alam

**ABSENT:** Luis Baez; Clara Herrera, Barbara Viu

OLD BUSINESS:

Motion to approve previous meeting (November) minutes. Marielka motioned, Lidice Solares seconded. Adriana Rodriguez requested to include the names of the new trustees on the library website. Maurice Guterrez, the town webmaster, said he would do so.

*PUBLIC SESSION*

Danielle Cruz, Bank of America manager, presented to the Board the intent to provide a free series of financial literacy workshops to the community called Better Money Habits. Adriana Rodriguez thanked Danielle, and we went into a closed session.

DETAILS: Multipart workshop provided in person (with social distancing) or via Zoom by Danielle herself and the Hudson County Bank of America team members. Dannielle could schedule sessions in advance and help promote the sessions in her banks.

*CLOSED SESSION*

NEW BUSINESS:

After observations made by Lidice Solares on her visit to the library, she asked the Board about using select groups of High School students to help in the tutoring. Adriana asked Marielka, as she is also a WNY Board of Education trustee, what the "TOMMOROW's TEACHERS program functionality is and who runs it. Marielka would bring this option to Superintendent Clara Herrera and the Board for permission to use the Honors students and Tomorrow's Teacher program to find volunteers for the Library Tutoring Program. Marielka asked for details on the program to better provide information to the Superintendent and the Board. Lidice asked how the children were grouped.

DETAILS: 35 children enlisted; 1 tutor M/TH 3 pm - 5 pm who sees six children a day, three children in an hour session. Walter, the tutor, needs help, says Director Lai. The sessions are separated by age and subject.

Adriana asked for an update on the hiring of a reference librarian. Director Lai says he emailed the Commissioners with the reference librarian job description, salary guidelines, and a reason as to why the position needs to be filled. Adriana asked what kind of credentials are needed to be a reference librarian. Director Lai explained a master's degree in library science. In conversation with the trustees, Adriana Rodriguez mentioned the need to express what the library needs to the Commissioners and the urgency of the reference librarian hire.

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Director Lai asked the trustees to review and confirm the meeting dates for the 2022 year. Adriana asked that we revisit the November date on the 2022 schedule for conflicts with the WNY Board of Education Academic Calendar. Amirza Hernandez motioned to revisit the topic of meeting in the summer months. Marielka Diaz seconded the motion. Adriana Rodriguez said August would be the best month if we were to add one, meaning Tuesday, August 2, 2022, would be added to the schedule of meetings for the West New York Public Library Board of Trustees. Lidice Solares motioned to add August 2, 2022, as a meeting date, with Marielka Diaz seconding

The motion to accept the Bank of America program in the winter of 2022 via zoom was made by Adriana Rodriguez, with Lidice Solares motioning and Marielka seconding. The Board unanimously agreed to add this new program to the services provided by the West New York Library.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Adriana Rodriguez and seconded by Marielka Diaz.

Adriana Rodriguez adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amirza Hernandez

## West New York Public Library Board Meeting

November 9, 2021

**In Attendance:** Adriana Rodriguez, Rita Alam, Amirza Hernandez, Luis Baez (on behalf of the Mayor), Katiana Hernandez, Lidice Solares, Weiliang Lai, Director; Richard Pinal, Attorney,

**Absent:** Barbara Viu, Clara Brito-Herrera, Marielka Diaz

**Old Business:** Motion to approve previous meeting minutes by Rita Alum, seconded by Ms. Rodriguez. Motion to approve Amirza as secretary for the Board was made by Ms. Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Alam. Ms. Rodriguez inquired if a Board subcommittee can come in and receive updates from town regarding the construction and development of the new Library, which the town agreed. Director Lai informed the board that a patron had questions regarding financial aspects of the new library, to which Mr. Diaz offered to directly address any questions with the individual. Director Lai informed the Board that Estela Longo retired and shared this with the town. The board passed a unanimous resolution to honor Estela Longo for her time and commitment to the library.

**New Business:** Director Lai provided several updates via the Director's report. Tutoring programs will start on Tuesday, will be divided into 4 groups. Ms Rodriguez asked Director Lai to resent the library program schedule with board meeting along with the link to new library site. Ms. Rodriguez proposed meeting in December with the Board for a dinner retreat. Ms. Amirza Hernandez offered to have a friend who works in Bank of America to teach a financially literacy course. A motion for the same was made by Ms. Rodriguez and seconded by Ms. Alam. Ms. Hernandez asked for an update on library social media. Maurice Gutierrez, town webmaster, said there was a hold up in integrating new library website into the town, but was pending some open items from the town. A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Rodriguez and seconded by Ms. Alam.

Respectfully, submitted,

Richard Pinal

## West New York Public Library Board Meeting

October 5, 2021

**In Attendance:** Clara Brito-Herrera, President; Adriana Rodriguez, Marielka Diaz, Rita Alam, Amirza Hernandez, Luis Baez (on behalf of the Mayor), Katiana Hernandez, Weiliang Lai, Director; Richard Pinal, Attorney.

Absent: Barbara Viu, Elizabeth Hernandez

**Old Business:** The previous minutes were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Ms. Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Diaz, and passed unanimously. Jonathan Casteneda, Township Administrator, provided an update on the new library construction/plans. Mr. Castaneda indicated that the construction plans are moving forward and the new building will be reality in a few short years. In the interim, the town will continue to work together/seek input from the library board. Ms. Rodriguez presented the issue of absenteeism and moved to escalate to the appointing body any board members who may be impacted by the governing bylaws which mandate escalation after three consecutive unexcused absences. A motion to approve the escalation was made by Ms. Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Diaz, and passed unanimously.

**New Business:** Director Lai presented the 2021-2022 budget to the Board for approval. Director went over the budget, line-by-line, explaining that many of the costs were unchanged (as indicated in the budget), however, few costs increased (also indicated in the budget). Maurice Gutierrez, town webmaster, presented a new messaging app/technology to simplify board attendance in advance. Maurice explained that each board member should respond using the app (“10 to 8”). All responses will come back to Mr. Gutierrez, Director Lai, and a few board members (TBD), who can assist. A motion to approve the new technology was made by Ms. Rodriguez and seconded by Ms. Diaz. which passed unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made by made by Mr. Rodriguez and seconded by Ms. Diaz.

Respectfully, submitted,

Richard Pinal (on behalf of Estela Longo)

## West New York Public Library Board Meeting

May 4, 2021

**In Attendance:** Clara Brito-Herrera, President; Adriana Rodriguez, Marielka Diaz, Rita Alam, Amirza Hernandez, Luis Baez, Weiliang Lai, Director; Richard Pinal, Attorney,

Absent: Barbara Viu, Elizabeth Hernandez

**Old Business:** The previous minutes were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Ms. Rodriguez and seconded by Ms. Diaz. Director Lai presented a project update on the new library. Director Lai explained that the architecture firm visited the library. They are working on the architecture plan and blueprints which are part of the conditional items necessary for approval. Specifically, there are a variety of requirements such as energy and efficiency standards, American with Disability Act ("ADA") compliance, and relevant certifications which must be met in the new building. These standards and others were provided by the State of New Jersey in an application memo sent earlier this year. Attorney Pinal further explained that the town/library must disclose any /all uses of prospective state funds to avoid conflict of interest and ensure compliance with governing guidelines attached to the grant. Finally, Director Lai explained that the town of West New York passed a resolution to match the state funds.

**New Business:** Ms. Hernandez asked for an update on the library social media and website build. Maurice Gutierrez, the town webmaster, indicated it was a priority and it is being worked on. Mr. Baez updated the board on the state of Covid for West New York and indicated that town employees would be returning to work on Monday.

Adriana Rodriguez reminded the library board of the critical need to meet attendance obligations. Specifically, Adriana outlined the heightened future commitment required of trustees to advice, guide, and oversee the new library slated to be completed in the next few years. To this end, it was critical to re-evaluate absenteeism, and it was stressed that action and appropriate escalation would be taken if necessary.

To further the ongoing business of the library, Amirza inquired whether summer meetings were necessary and the board indicated it would take it under consideration.

A motion to adjourn was made by made by Mr. Rodriguez and seconded by Ms. Hernandez.

Respectfully, submitted,

Richard Pinal (in the absence of Estela Longo)

## West New York Public Library Board Meeting

February 2, 2021

**In Attendance:** Weiliang Lai, Director; Clara Brito-Herrera, President; Richard Pinal, Attorney, Adriana Rodriguez, Vice-President, Elizabeth Hernandez, Marielka Diaz, Rita Alam, Amirza Hernandez, Luis Baez.

Absent: Barbara Viu.

**Old Business:** The previous minutes were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Rita Alam and seconded by Marielka Diaz. Director Lai presented a synopsis of his Director's report. Director Lai discussed the general health status of the staff due to a previous positive Covid test, and all remain negative. Director indicated that the library continues to be available virtually and will be some time until it re-opens. Director Lai indicated that pre-recorded programs to be posted on social media must be approved by the Town. Attorney Pinal indicated that the library board member attendance policy was introduced in the last West New York Board of Commissioners meeting and will be voted on in the next, with a 20-day period to follow before implementation if passed.

Virtual program scheduling was discussed – except for the "live" program on Tuesday, parents can otherwise access with one-click, at any time. The program target was reconsidered from an originally broad audience, to more narrow audience to better align with needs and academic levels.

**New Business:** President Herrera discussed the upcoming Read Across America. There will be live-streaming locations from the schools, and President Herrera invited the Library to offer the same to the library patrons by sharing the link. Mr. Baez discussed logistics and specifications on teachers/participants who wish to read along. Mr. Baez discussed that the Library will have its own YouTube channel, and any new content can be uploaded into the channel. Mr. Baez suggested having a ~ 20 new pre-approved titles/books for the first wave of submissions. Ms. Rodriguez noted the progress the Library is making beginning to adopt virtual offering to the community. Ms. Hernandez inquired as to why the Library elected to use Hoopla, and it was explained that Hoopla has technical advantages and allows for multiple books to be checked out at a single time.

A motion to adjourn was made by made by Mr. Rodriguez and seconded by Ms. Hernandez.

Respectfully, submitted,

Richard Pinal (in the absence of Estela Longo)

## West New York Public Library Board Meeting

January 5, 2021

**In Attendance:** Weiliang Lai, Director; Clara Brito-Herrera, President; Richard Pinal, Attorney, Adriana Rodriguez, Elizabeth Hernandez, Marielka Diaz, Rita Alam, Amirza Hernandez, Luis Baez. Also present: Jonathan Castellamo. Absent: Barbara Viu. Director Lai presented the Agenda for the meeting. The previous minutes were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Rita Alam and seconded by Marielka Diaz.

**Old Business:** The issue of absenteeism was brought up for further discussion. Attorney Pinal suggested adopting the new policy from four unexcused absences to three, He is working with the town attorney for approval. An "I forgot" excuse is not acceptable. Confirmation of attendance by members 24 hours prior to the meeting would be required so Director Lai can be alerted in advance as to a quorum.

**New Business:** Director Lai then informed members that a library staff member was infected by the Covid-19 virus. After informing authorities, the staff member was told to remain at home to be monitored by the Health Department. Those in contact with the staff member were tested for the virus and found to be negative.

The next item on the agenda involved virtual children's programs, most of which would take place on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday after school, although pre-recorded programs would last longer. Parents would need to sign up on the library website. A link will be provided. Books will be selected to meet needs of children in the appropriate age groups. Themes will be selected to ensure children will not be subjected to material not in keeping with their age and interests. Parents should know in advance what books will be chosen to ensure a better response.

Marielka Diaz mentioned that Facebook was not working since patrons cannot use their cell phones to connect. An account must be created in order for patrons to access.

Director Lai went on to explain that an updated version in English and Spanish has been completed for the library website with information on how to access children's virtual programs. There are links from the town website with links to the library. When patrons sign up for programs by email, the library will then send them an email so they can sign up. This information can be found on Facebook and Youtube. Marielka Diaz suggested displaying the books on our website. Luis Baez said not all library staff would be expected to work on these programs since not all have the technical expertise or the equipment to do so. The town can take over many of the technical aspects of the programs and the library can provide other materials and support.

Director Lai proceeded to discuss matters dealing with safety issues in the library. Faucets and toilets were changed to operate automatically. Hand sanitizer and paper towel dispensers along with LED lights were installed.

Finally, President Brito-Herrera appreciated the input of ideas by board members. With no further issues to bring up, a motion to adjourn was made by Marielka Diaz with unanimous approval.

The meeting adjourned at 7pm.

Respectfully, submitted,

Estela Longo