

Meeting of the Eastchester Public Library Board of Trustees

July 7, 2021

Eastchester Public Library

Present: Robert Cartolano, Jim Martin, Astra Tudisco, Leslye Dickinson, Patrick Murtagh and Rosetta McArdle (via zoom) and Councilman Luigi Marcoccia.

Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m.

President's Report: Board President Rob Cartolano reported on two national initiatives recently in the news. The New York Public Library received over 12 million dollars to accelerate the library's transition to online platforms. Funds were donated by the Arcadia Fund which has now awarded more than 19 million dollars to NYPL. Secondly, the Knight Foundation is giving 5 million dollars to LYRASIS to build a new eBook platform called the Palace Project in strategic partnership with Digital Public Library of America. The funds will be used to support the mission of public libraries to provide equal access to digital knowledge.

Director's Report: Director Wright asked if the board had seen the new windows installed throughout the library and offered a tour after the meeting. She announced that testing for the water infiltration project will be done this week. The testing will be non-evasive using infrared thermal imaging. Discussion followed on both the water testing and the window installation. Director Wright reported that people are coming back into the building and so far, there have been no problems with the mask mandate. Curbside pick up will continue through the summer. Public computers are now available to the public. Requests to use the Rashkoff Room are starting to come in but the director is unsure of whether we should begin on-site programming again. Most Westchester libraries are holding off on resuming in-house programming or are doing a combination of zoom and outdoor programming. The Westchester Coin Club has asked to return to the library for monthly meetings. Discussion followed concerning prices for renting the Rashkoff Room. Members of the Board feel the prices should be increased and a refundable cleaning deposit should be mandatory. President Cartolano commented on the difference between pre and post COVID cleaning procedures. It was agreed that prices should be raised to cover cleaning and operating costs. Increased COVID numbers were also discussed in relation to allowing outside groups to use the room this fall and the necessity of enforcing a mask mandate for groups using the room.

The news that Overdrive online magazines are now available to WLS patrons was met with enthusiasm by the Board. Over 4,000 titles are available in several languages. The service started July 1st. Our print magazine collection will be reduced now that this service is available to patrons. The library has become a member of the Livable Community. We will be sharing news of interest to seniors in our newsletter. Resumption of the Friday film series was Discussed. The library will have to purchase a license to show films again but Director Wright is waiting until some new films are available that are worth showing.

The Library Board of Trustees was asked to vote to approve the WLS Free Direct Access Plan. Motion was made by President Cartolano and seconded by Jim Martin. The plan was approved unanimously. Director Wright filled the board in on the current situation involving the finance plan between the member libraries and WLS. We will have a 4% increase for the second half of this year and expect a 4% additional increase next year. We will have some additional expenses since WLS will no longer be supporting non-WLS computers.

The Friends have reopened the book sale room. Unfortunately, we will not be hosting in house programming this summer so business has been slow. They are not taking donations right now. The Friends are interested in having a Tag Sale this fall. Sheila Marcotte is also exploring the idea of a Town Tag Sale in our parking lot during Columbus Day weekend. The Friends book sale room will be open that day. The Friends have also agreed to a second Intrepid Pass and will renew most of the museum passes we had before the pandemic. Lastly, the Friends have agreed to fund an online museum pass reservation system.

The Library budget for 2021 was discussed. Director Wright would like to fill both vacant positions at the start of the new year. More details will be available for the Board at the August meeting. Rob asked for board members who would not be able to attend to send in suggestions or questions.

Board Vice President Pat Murtagh asked about the current budget and was assured that the library was in good shape for this time of the year. The only unexpected expense was the repair of the HVAC system. We have now spent 68% of the maintenance budget for 2020. The replacement of the computer that is used to monitor the HVAC was also discussed. Rob suggested that we wait until later in the year to see if funds are available. Director Wright asked the Board for guidance on whether to start a New York State Grant application for the Water Infiltration Project. After discussion, the Board recommended proceeding. Funding was then discussed with Councilman Marcoccia.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Tracy J. Wright