



NEW CITY LIBRARY

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF NEW CITY, CONGERS AND BARDONIA

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
NEW CITY LIBRARY
November 17, 2016**

PRESENT: Victor Berger, President
Joseph Reiter, Vice President
Ralph Sabatini, Treasurer
David Zuckerberg, Secretary
Agin Antony, Trustee
Robert Axelrod, Trustee
Anthony Feliciano, Trustee
Phyllis Morena, Trustee
Jeffrey Sasson, Trustee

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Marianne Silver, Director
Shibu Abraham, Finance/Facilities Manager
Kelly Corrado, Administrative Assistant

GUESTS: Kathy Bachor
Children's Librarian for the "1,000 Books Before Kindergarten" program
Award winners for the "1,000 Books Before Kindergarten" program

I. INTRODUCTORY

a. Meeting Called to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. The *Pledge of Allegiance* was recited.

b. 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten:

Children's Librarian, Kathy Bachor, presented *Certificates of Achievement* to eight young patrons, who completed the *1,000 Books Before Kindergarten* reading program, which encouraged children and parents to read for early literacy. Bachor reported that 77 children participated in the challenge, reading 30,800 books, thus far. Victor Berger congratulated Bachor and the children for a job well done.

c. Public Comments:

Lawrence Abbamonte, Grand Knight, *Knights of Columbus*, requested that the Board permit the Library to display a crèche and a menorah during the holiday season. Abbamonte urged the Board to permit the display, which, he stated, can symbolize solidarity for all Americans. President Berger noted Abbamonte's request and stated that the Board would discuss it at the appropriate time later in the meeting.

Staff Association President Karen Vetrano reported that the Staff Association raised over \$600 at a recent cancer walk; the money was donated to the *Walk for the Cure* cancer awareness campaign through the *Avon Foundation*, which donated matching funds.

Staff Association representative Kathy Bachor, Vice-President of Membership and Community Outreach, reported that \$120 was raised for the *Cup-of-Joe-For-A-Joe Project* benefitting the military. Sixty cups of coffee were purchased by the staff at \$2 per cup. Bachor commented that the staff generously supports this *Project*, which is held approximately twice yearly.

II. REVIEW OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Secretary David Zuckerberg presented the proposed *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of October 20, 2016*, for acceptance.

- Upon motion made by David Zuckerberg and duly seconded by Joseph Reiter, it was:

RESOLVED, *that the Board accept the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of October 20, 2016.*

The Resolution was passed by eight (Phyllis Morena abstained due to her absence at the October 20, 2016, meeting). (RM#1-11/2016)

III. REPORTS

a. Personnel and Finance Committee (R. Sabatini, chair):

i. Personnel:

Ralph Sabatini reported that there were no personnel matters to report.

ii. Financial Report of October 31, 2016, and Warrant #4:

Ralph Sabatini reported that the warrant is at its highest since the fiscal year began due to the expenditures of \$217,000 for the *Parking Lot Paving Project*.

Sabatini presented the *Financial Report of October 31, 2016, and Warrant #4* for approval.

- Upon motion made by Ralph Sabatini and duly seconded by David Zuckerberg, it was:

RESOLVED, *that the Board approve Warrant #4 in the amount of \$632,660.*

The Resolution was passed unanimously. (RM#2-11/2016)

iii. Budget FY2018:

Shibu Abraham distributed to the Board copies of the proposed budget for *Fiscal Year 2018*. The budget vote, as well as the trustee election, will be held at the Library on Wednesday, December 14, 2016.

A general discussion followed regarding the tax cap. Sabatini reiterated that tremendous infrastructure improvements have recently been made to the Library and breaking the tax cap is necessary to replenish the budget due to the amount of capital funds that were spent on those improvements.

Shibu Abraham stated that seeking grants for future projects is on-going.

Phyllis Morena inquired about the increase in the adult programming budget. Marianne Silver stated that programming costs are rising and in order to attract quality performers/presenters, the Library must be able to meet the demand of these increasing fees in order to continue to offer the best library experience and materials to its patrons and exceed patrons' expectations.

- Upon motion made by Ralph Sabatini and duly seconded by David Zuckerberg, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board accept New City Library's proposed 2018 budget as presented.

The Resolution was passed unanimously. (RM#3-11/2016)

b. Building and Grounds Committee (J. Sasson, chair):

Jeffrey Sasson stated that the Committee met to discuss the facility projects that were coming to closure. Sasson further stated that the sidewalk, the large landscaping bed, and nighttime lighting will be addressed in the spring.

i. Long Term Planning:

Jeffrey Sasson stated that now is the time for the Board to begin long term planning for new services and to prepare to engage an architect/engineer to direct the Library on how to best accommodate the new services.

ii. Carpeting Replacement:

Joseph Reiter commented that the previous director selected a poor choice of carpeting since the carpeting must now be replaced due to excessive wear.

Marianne Silver stated that she is researching other flooring options instead of carpeting. Silver further commented that because the book delivery occurs through the front entrance of the Library and because of the heavy

patron traffic in front of the *Circulation Services Desk*, the carpet is excessively wearing down in that area. She suggested creating another service entrance for the sole purpose of deliveries, instead of using the front entrance of the Library. Silver stated that the curb cut issue should be revisited and that a reconfiguration of the *Technical Services Department* may be necessary in order to accommodate a new service entrance. Victor Berger commented that the reconfiguration will be a project to consider.

iii. Patio Paver Fundraiser Project:

Robert Axelrod reported that twenty-one pavers have been purchased and the amount raised has doubled since his last report at the previous board meeting. Axelrod stated the importance of heavily promoting the *Project* and reiterated his suggestion that the Library should hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony this coming spring. Axelrod noted that the Staff Association purchased a premier paver in support of the Library in the amount of \$1,000.

c. Policy and Planning Committee (P. Morena, chair):

The Committee did not meet; therefore, Phyllis Morena had no report to offer. President Berger welcomed Morena back from her absence due to a medical issue.

d. Ad Hoc Committees:

i. Liaison to the Friends of the New City Library (R. Axelrod, chair):

Robert Axelrod reported that the *Friends of the Library* president, Jeff Greenberg, intends to continue his involvement in the *Friends*. Axelrod expressed his and Greenberg's hope that the *FOL* activity will increase soon.

Axelrod suggested that a potential co-sponsored *FOL* project with the community could be *Honor-A-Veteran* to show the Library's support in partnership with the community. Marianne Silver reported that an organizational meeting for adult and teen volunteers is scheduled for January, 2017.

Silver suggested that people may prefer to volunteer for a particular project, rather than for an on-going group membership with the *FOL*, which could be a reason why recruiting new members has been difficult for the *Friends*.

A general discussion followed regarding *Friends'* funds and what methods can be used to increase membership for the *Friends*.

ii. Legal Affairs of the New City Library (J. Reiter, chair):

Joseph Reiter stated that no legal issues were raised this month; therefore, he had no report to offer.

iii. Nominating Committee (J. Reiter, chair):

Joseph Reiter reported that the Board stopped using absentee ballots due to the fear of potential fraud; however, the issue of using absentee ballots should be revisited for next year's vote. Reiter will research the topic of returning the absentee ballot option to the voters for the trustee elections.

Reiter reported that the Board received one petition candidate for the trustee election. Three incumbent candidates and a fourth candidate are running for the three available terms.

e. President (V. Berger):

Victor Berger offered no report.

f. Director (M. Silver):

Marianne Silver had no further comments to add to her *Director's Report*. Silver, however, reminded the Board that the budget hearing will be held at West Nyack Library on Tuesday, November 22, 2016, at 7 p.m.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. RCLS Operating Budget:

Victor Berger presented the *RCLS 2017 Operating Budget* for approval.

- Upon motion made by Ralph Sabatini and duly seconded by Joseph Reiter, it was:

RESOLVED, *that the Board accept the RCLS 2017 Operating Budget.*

The Resolution was passed with eight in favor (David Zuckerberg abstained due to his role as *President* of the *RCLS Board of Trustees*). (RM#4-11/2016)

V. NEW BUSINESS

a. Board Communications:

David Zuckerberg received two board communications regarding the request for a holiday religious display at the Library.

A lengthy discussion followed regarding the public comments made earlier by Lawrence Abbamonte, Grand Knight, *Knights of Columbus*.

Joseph Reiter offered a personal statement in favor of permitting religious displays.

Jeffrey Sasson commented that Abbamonte’s presentation was very well made and that the issue is sensitive and emotional. Sasson raised concerns regarding potential lawsuits and urged the Board to avoid risk.

Robert Axelrod commented that permitting the display will send a positive message—one of co-existence and peace for all.

David Zuckerberg stated that it is personally a painful decision for him and he applauded Abbamonte and the *Knights of Columbus* for their good works in the community and for adhering to their faith; however, Zuckerberg felt that no religious displays should be permitted at the Library during the holidays because any display will be perceived as unfair by some patrons.

- Upon motion made by Joseph Reiter and duly seconded by Robert Axelrod, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board permit the Knights of Columbus to display a manger scene in the Library, along with the menorah and Christmas Tree, and the manger is to be approximately the same size as the menorah.

The Resolution was declined with four in favor (Agin Antony, Robert Axelrod, Anthony Feliciano, and Joseph Reiter) and five against (Victor Berger, Phyllis Morena, Ralph Sabatini, Jeffrey Sasson, and David Zuckerberg). (RM#5-11/2016)

- Upon motion made by Joseph Reiter and duly seconded by Robert Axelrod, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board permit the Library to continue to display a menorah and a Christmas Tree during the holiday season as the Library has done in past years.

The Resolution was declined with three in favor (Agin Antony, Robert Axelrod, and Joseph Reiter) and five against (Anthony Feliciano, Phyllis Morena, Ralph Sabatini, Jeffrey Sasson, and David Zuckerberg) with Victor Berger abstaining. (RM#6-11/2016)

- Upon motion made by Ralph Sabatini and duly seconded by David Zuckerberg, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board not permit religious displays at the Library during the holiday season.

The Resolution was passed with six in favor (Agin Antony, Anthony Feliciano, Phyllis Morena, Ralph Sabatini, Jeffrey Sasson, and David Zuckerberg) and

two against (Robert Axelrod and Joseph Reiter) with Victor Berger abstaining. (RM#7-11/2016)

- Upon motion made by Joseph Reiter and duly seconded by Anthony Feliciano, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board not permit holiday displays of any kind at the Library.

The Resolution was declined with three in favor (Robert Axelrod, Anthony Feliciano, and Joseph Reiter) and five against (Agin Antony, Phyllis Morena, Ralph Sabatini, Jeffrey Sasson, and David Zuckerberg) with Victor Berger abstaining. (RM#8-11/2016)

Phyllis Morena requested staff feedback after the holiday season regarding any public comments received.

Zuckerberg inquired if Abbamonte wanted a written reply to his correspondence. Abbamonte declined a written reply stating that it was not necessary.

b. Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws, Article IV, Section 4(e):

Victor Berger explained that the Board would like to change the period of time when the petition applications for the trustee elections are available, which would offer the petition candidates a longer period of time for which to obtain signatures. Berger presented to the Board a proposed amendment to the Bylaws for acceptance.

- Upon motion made by Ralph Sabatini and duly seconded by Phyllis Morena, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board accept the proposed amendment to Article IV, Section 4(e) of the Bylaws of the New City Free Library to read at the end of the section as follows: "The Library shall have Petition forms available on the Friday following the October board meeting, through and including the Tuesday before the second Wednesday in November. The Petition form shall be available at all Library service desks, as well as on the Library's web site."

The Resolution was passed unanimously by all those present (Joseph Reiter departed early from the meeting; therefore, he was not available to vote). (RM#9-11/2016)

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

A member of the audience suggested temporarily removing the new tables from the patio so that the public can view the space without obstacles, thus offering a better chance of promoting the sale of the pavers for the *Patio Paver Fundraiser Project*.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

- Upon motion made by Ralph Sabatini and duly seconded by David Zuckerberg, it was:

RESOLVED, *that the Board adjourn the meeting.*

The Resolution was passed unanimously by all those present (Robert Axelrod and Joseph Reiter departed the meeting early; therefore, they were not available to vote). (RM#10-11/2016)

Meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Submitted by David Zuckerberg, Secretary
Board of Trustees
NEW CITY LIBRARY
December 7, 2016

DZ/kc

MOTIONS

(RM#1-11/2016) Upon motion made by David Zuckerberg and duly seconded by Joseph Reiter, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board accept the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of October 20, 2016.

The Resolution was passed by eight (Phyllis Morena abstained due to her absence at the October 20, 2016, meeting).

(RM#2-11/2016) Upon motion made by Ralph Sabatini and duly seconded by David Zuckerberg, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board approve Warrant #4 in the amount of \$632,660.

The Resolution was passed unanimously.

(RM#3-11/2016) Upon motion made by Ralph Sabatini and duly seconded by David Zuckerberg, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board accept New City Library's proposed 2018 budget as presented.

The Resolution was passed unanimously.

(RM#4-11/2016) Upon motion made by Ralph Sabatini and duly seconded by Joseph Reiter, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board accept the RCLS 2017 Operating Budget.

The Resolution was passed with eight in favor (David Zuckerberg abstained due to his role as *President* of the *RCLS Board of Trustees*).

(RM#5-11/2016) Upon motion made by Joseph Reiter and duly seconded by Robert Axelrod, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board permit the Knights of Columbus to display a manger scene in the Library, along with the menorah and Christmas

Tree, and the manger is to be approximately the same size as the menorah.

The Resolution was declined with four in favor (Agin Antony, Robert Axelrod, Anthony Feliciano, and Joseph Reiter) and five against (Victor Berger, Phyllis Morena, Ralph Sabatini, Jeffrey Sasson, and David Zuckerberg).

(RM#6-11/2016) Upon motion made by Joseph Reiter and duly seconded by Robert Axelrod, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board permit the Library to continue to display a menorah and a Christmas Tree during the holiday season as the Library has done in past years.

The Resolution was declined with three in favor (Agin Antony, Robert Axelrod, and Joseph Reiter) and five against (Anthony Feliciano, Phyllis Morena, Ralph Sabatini, Jeffrey Sasson, and David Zuckerberg) with Victor Berger abstaining.

(RM#7-11/2016) Upon motion made by Ralph Sabatini and duly seconded by David Zuckerberg, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board not permit religious displays at the Library during the holiday season.

The Resolution was passed with six in favor (Agin Antony, Anthony Feliciano, Phyllis Morena, Ralph Sabatini, Jeffrey Sasson, and David Zuckerberg) and two against (Robert Axelrod and Joseph Reiter) with Victor Berger abstaining.

(RM#8-11/2016) Upon motion made by Joseph Reiter and duly seconded by Anthony Feliciano, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board not permit holiday displays of any kind at the Library.

The Resolution was declined with three in favor (Robert Axelrod, Anthony Feliciano, and Joseph Reiter) and five against (Agin Antony, Phyllis Morena, Ralph Sabatini, Jeffrey Sasson, and David Zuckerberg) with Victor Berger abstaining.

(RM#9-11/2016) Upon motion made by Ralph Sabatini and duly seconded by Phyllis Morena, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board accept the proposed amendment to Article IV, Section 4(e) of the Bylaws of the New City Free Library to read at the end of the section as follows: "The Library shall have Petition forms available on the Friday following the October board meeting, through and including the Tuesday before the second Wednesday in November. The Petition form shall be available at all Library service desks, as well as on the Library's web site."

The Resolution was passed unanimously by all those present (Joseph Reiter departed early from the meeting; therefore, he was not available to vote).

(RM#10-11/2016) Upon motion made by Ralph Sabatini and duly seconded by David Zuckerberg, it was:

RESOLVED, that the Board adjourn the meeting.

The Resolution was passed unanimously by all those present (Robert Axelrod and Joseph Reiter departed the meeting early; therefore, they were not available to vote).