

The Scarsdale Public Library Board has closely followed, thoroughly reviewed, and investigated the complaints made by Robin Stettmisch, a former part-time Library employee, about the termination of her employment in June 2018. We would like to provide a statement of facts to inform the community of the events and what Ms. Stettmisch is requesting from Scarsdale residents.

Why were part-time Library positions eliminated?

In June 2018, the impending renovation required the closure of the Scarsdale Library to the public and its relocation to Supply Field for over two years. Fewer employees could be accommodated at the smaller, temporary location, and as a result the Library made the difficult decision to eliminate all part-time staff positions. As a part-time employee, Ms. Stettmisch was among those whose positions were eliminated. While she had been employed at the Library in various positions since 1988, she was a part-time employee on and off from 2001-2018 working an average of 3.5 hours per week.

How were the workforce reductions conducted?

The decision to reduce the part-time workforce was made after considering the financial consequences on impacted employees as well as the Library's fiduciary obligations. The Library's workforce reductions were made in close consultation with the Library staff's union, the Civil Service Employee Association, and conformed to all Westchester County Civil Service rules. To minimize the potential impact, part-time employees were made aware of the change at least eight months in advance. In addition, Library Director Beth Bermel was instrumental in helping employees secure employment in other local libraries. She provided references for many employees, including Ms. Stettmisch, to assist them in finding new positions, and Ms. Stettmisch is currently employed at the Chappaqua Public Library.

Were part-time staffers promised reemployment or specific returning salaries?

No part-time employee, including Ms. Stettmisch, was promised to be rehired at their previous salary after the completion of the renovations. Despite Ms. Stettmisch's repeated public assertions of a verbal promise from Ms. Bermel, this simply did not happen. Once the renovated Library was reopened, all former part-time employees, including Ms. Stettmisch, were welcome to reapply at locally competitive hourly rates. When the Library began the hiring process in the spring of 2021, Ms. Stettmisch did not apply.

What is Ms. Stettmisch requesting from the Library to cease picketing?

Ms. Stettmisch has demanded from the Library that she will stop picketing in exchange for \$1.8 million (source: Stettmisch email 3/14/22). She has also written that she will not stop picketing unless she is rehired at her previous salary plus a raise, paid retroactively for all of the years that she did not work for the Library, given gas money for her travel to and from picketing, and compensated for the cost of her picket signs (source: Stettmisch email 6/29/22).

The Library Board has heard Ms. Stettmisch's demands and reviewed the elimination of the part-time positions, and concluded that she is not entitled to any position or any of the money she seeks. Therefore, the Library will not agree to her demands, as doing so would be inconsistent with our fiduciary responsibility to the Scarsdale community.

We, the Scarsdale Public Library Board, remain committed to supporting Library Director Beth Bermel's efforts to ensure that the Library remains a valued resource for our community.