OLD WESTBURY GARDENS

Director of Preservation and Operations

Reports to: President & CEO

Position: Full-time, Senior Management

Position Summary

Old Westbury Gardens seeks an experienced professional to lead the preservation, maintenance, and long-term care of its historic buildings, collections, and physical infrastructure. The Director will oversee an integrated department encompassing historic preservation, curatorial and archival functions, and facilities maintenance. Working with established professional staff, a Maintenance Supervisor, and outside specialists, the Director will ensure appropriate preservation standards and effective systems for routine maintenance and major restoration projects. The successful candidate will combine historic preservation knowledge with exceptional organizational, personnel, and project management skills. Priorities include addressing deferred maintenance, establishing comprehensive preventive maintenance, and developing a long-term capital preservation plan.

Preservation and Capital Projects

- Oversee preservation and restoration of Westbury House, its historic interiors, collections, and associated structures.
- Develop and maintain a prioritized, multiyear capital preservation plan.
- Manage restoration and conservation projects involving historic architectural materials, decorative finishes, furnishings, paintings, sculpture, and other significant resources.
- Identify and engage qualified architects, conservators, engineers, and specialized contractors.
- Ensure preservation decisions are informed by historical research and accepted professional standards.

Maintenance and Facilities

- Establish and oversee a calendar-based preventive maintenance program covering buildings, equipment, mechanical systems, and infrastructure.
- Develop a systematic approach to identifying, prioritizing, and addressing deferred maintenance.
- Supervise the Maintenance Supervisor and ensure daily operations support long-term preservation objectives.
- Establish systems for scheduling, documenting, and evaluating maintenance work.
- Oversee maintenance planning for ancillary buildings and facilities.

Collections and Archives

- Provide administrative leadership for the institution’s professional curatorial and archival staff, respecting their specialized expertise.
- Coordinate collections care, conservation planning, and archival research with broader preservation priorities.
- Ensure appropriate specialists are engaged for conservation projects requiring expertise beyond existing staff.

Departmental Leadership and Planning

- Supervise departmental personnel and establish clear priorities, expectations, and accountability.
- Prepare and manage operating and capital budgets, project schedules, and contracts.

- Collaborate with the Development Department to identify projects appropriate for grant funding and provide technical information, project scopes, budgets, timelines, and supporting documentation needed to prepare grant proposals, secure funding, and fulfill grant reporting requirements.
- Identify opportunities to develop in-house maintenance skills through recruitment, mentoring, and structured training.
- Work with the Maintenance Supervisor to develop the next generation of skilled maintenance personnel.
- Provide regular reports to the President & CEO on preservation priorities, maintenance progress, budgets, and capital projects.
- Work with the Preservation Committee of the board of trustees, providing information and professional recommendations to support its advisory role.

Qualifications

- Degree in historic preservation, architecture, architectural history, conservation, facilities management, or a related field, or equivalent professional experience.
- Significant experience managing historic properties, preservation projects, museum facilities, or comparable institutions.
- Demonstrated success supervising personnel, managing contractors, and overseeing complex projects and budgets.
- Strong knowledge of historic building materials, preservation principles, and appropriate conservation practices.
- Experience implementing preventive maintenance programs and long-range capital plans.
- Excellent organizational, communication, and leadership skills; ability to work effectively with curators, archivists, skilled tradespeople, and specialized preservation professionals.
- Advanced education and experience with historic house museums or comparable cultural institutions are desirable.

Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate will be intellectually curious, practical, and highly organized, able to balance preservation principles with the realities of maintaining a complex historic property. This leader will manage people and projects, establish priorities, and carry work through to completion, recognizing that consistent maintenance and careful planning are as essential as major restoration initiatives.