

Onondaga County Public

* Libraries

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MINUTES

OCPL Board of Trustees' Meeting

January 15, 2025

Central Library, Board Room

4:00 p.m.

ATTENDING

M. Bilbo Coughlin	E. Kochian
S. Dyer	M. Mahar
S. Edelstein	T. Mulvey
J. Hurst-Wahl	C. Ondrako

ABSENT

D. Dixie	E. Gonzalez
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ALSO PRESENT

D. Marmor	A. Gregory
R. Battelle	S. Rorer
J. Bleich	T. Walters
D. Dell	Y. Williams
M. Foster	K. Schellinger
R. Gilbert	

WELCOME

Mr. Edelstein called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Kochian moved the consent agenda, which includes the minutes from the December 18, 2024 meeting.

There was a short discussion on the order of a motion, discussion, and voting.

Ms. Hurst-Wahl seconded; motion passed unanimously.

PRE-READS/ COMMENTS

Mr. Edelstein inquired if there were any comments from the Board regarding any of the pre-reads they received.

DISCUSSION

Executive Director Updates

Ms. Marmor shared she will be meeting with Cydney Johnson our new Deputy County Executive for Physical Services every couple of weeks. She is a huge library advocate. She is planning to attend board meetings when her schedule allows and will be coming to Central for a tour and to meet staff. Ms. Marmor would also like to arrange some tours at the Branches as well.

Sandy Miller-Martens from Financial Operations will be meeting with the Administrative team to help with year-end closing and other budget matters.

Mr. Kochian inquired about updating things in the MakerSpace. Ms. Marmor explained that purchases have been made including a new 3D printer.

City and Branch Reports

Mr. Kochian commented on the Branch statistics. He felt the numbers were great. Ms. Hurst-Wahl asked the question, does success mean that the numbers go up? A short discussion regarding numbers vs. impact followed.

Mr. Mulvey commented on a commercial spot for Erie County Library he heard on a broadcast. He wondered how it was funded and thought it would be great for our library. Mr. Walters said he would do some research.

Mr. Mulvey inquired about numbers from Libby/Overdrive. Ms. Hayduke gave a rundown of the numbers for digital circulation. From 2023-2024 there was a 22% increase in digital circulation for Central and Branches. Overall, for the entire system there was an increase of 18% in digital circulation. She gave credit to our Communications Department for this increase. A short discussion followed regarding amount of use in City vs. System and meeting demand with the budgets they must work with.

Library Operations Report

Ms. Hurst-Wahl felt that in the report, accessibility was a goal but didn't seem to be a value. Ms. Gilbert explained that the idea was to include the entire community. She felt it was important to think about accessibility in terms other than the physical things such as ramps and accessibility buttons. Ms. Hurst-Wahl suggested accessible signage with different languages or for people who are color blind. Ms. Gilbert felt that was something worth investigating.

Mr. Edelstein thought it would be interesting to see where we are today regarding a welcoming and safe environment and what isn't welcoming today that we would want to change.

Strategic Pathway Updates

Dr. Dell gave a short presentation on Growing Programs and Services/Expanding Outreach and Partnerships. His group has met three times. They have identified four themes for discussions.

- OCPL's impact on reading and literacy
- OCPL's impact on job readiness and workforce development
- OCPL's expression of diversity, equity and inclusion values
- OCPL's impact on community development

The group discussed these themes and how they spanned across programs, services, outreach, and partnerships. They were looking for thoughts and ideas that came from staff, how OCPL stands in those dimensions. They identified some tactics and compared them to the strategic plan and found a lot of alignment. They

- Found some ways to prioritize
- Organized small working groups aligned with the tactics and objectives
- Identified champions in each group

Key takeaways

- Literacy is a high priority
- Need to talk about how our programs, services, outreach and partnerships lend to our efforts in the literacy community
- Need to talk about what we can do to be more visible in the literacy arena

Other ideas

- Staff see the library as a secondary support to the education system
- Staff wants to focus on the fun of reading
- We want to be the place where people come to get excited about reading
- Do more activities related to reading and literacy
- Support teachers

Mr. Kochian talked about the notes he sent out to the Board regarding interactions from Boston Public Library, Cuyahoga County Public Library and Toledo Ohio Public Library. They are all immersed in early literacy. He feels the NY State Education Department needs to recognize there are better ways to teach reading now that have proven methods. He also spoke about the declining reading statistics in New York state. He feels more needs to be done. Ms. Bilbo Coughlin talked about the

relationship between the library and the schools, putting the libraries in a position to enhance the instruction being taught in the schools. Ms. Gilbert suggested having three set dates a year to visit schools. Ms. Hurst-Wahl mentioned that she's heard from other colleagues that the teachers have the most impact on reading and that students may not get time in the library at school. She felt that there may be other people within the school district that should be targeted. Ms. Bilbo Coughlin suggested those involved in creating curriculum and instruction. Ms. Foster shared that the Syracuse City School District also has their own plan of service and has a Library Media Specialist Coordinator who plans meetings and professional development days. They are going to meet at least once or twice a year with the City Youth Services librarian from each of the branches. Each is being given a list of contacts, a list of libraries, and a list of schools in their service area. Mr. Edelstein thought this would be great for further discussion.

Patron Code of Conduct Policy – 1st Consideration

Ms. Marmor asked the Safety Committee to review the existing Code of Conduct Policy because they review and discuss incidents monthly. She wanted to identify anything in our Code of Conduct Policy that could better impact the incidents we see or how we handle them. She wanted a less punitive tone believing positive language would have a positive impact. The safety of staff and patrons is the most important goal. As a side note, she would like to reconsider the concept of permanent barring. Ms. Hurst-Wahl noted that some wording in the policy could be culturally problematic. In general, when assessing someone's behavior, would all staff views be the same or subjective, then she gave some examples. Mr. Edelstein is interested in having something written that is enforceable. The Safety Committee submitted some suggestions. Ms. Marmor thanked them for doing a great job.

A short discussion followed regarding committing a crime in the library.

Mr. Kochian asked Ms. Bleich to give a recap on the recent CLRC Legislative breakfast she attended. Ms. Bleich shared her experience. She felt there were great conversations around digital access, ebooks and audiobooks. She mentioned NYLA Advocacy Day coming up which she felt would be a follow-up to the legislative breakfast to continue the conversations.

Mr. Walters talked about the 3rd annual Literacy Day at the Crunch. There were sign ups for library cards, Book Buddies attended, books from the Imagination Library were given away, and there were raffles. Everyone had a great time.

Ms. Dyer inquired about the Executive Director search. Mr. Edelstein said the process will be starting by the end of January. Updates will be coming next month.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution: 25-1

Mr. Kochian moved the following resolution:

Resolved, That the OCPL Board of Trustees approves to remove Christina Ondrako, OCPL Board Treasurer effective immediately; and add Timothy Mulvey, OCPL Board Vice President; retain Dawn Marmor, Executive Director; René Battelle, Administrator for Public Services and Special Initiatives; as authorized to sign checks drawn on the Trustees accounts including, the transfer of funds to/from all Trustees accounts.

Ms. Bilbo Coughlin seconded; one abstention; motion passed unanimously.

OTHER

Mr. Edelstein presented Ms. Ondrako with The Library Book. She has completed her term and is departing the Board of Trustees. He congratulated her and thanked her for her service. It was a pleasure to have her on the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Kochian moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Hurst-Wahl seconded.

Mr. Edelstein adjourned the meeting at 5:08p.m.

Respectively Submitted,

Sharon Rorer
Administrative Assistant

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Beauchamp Branch * Betts Branch * Hazard Branch * Mundy Branch
Paine Branch * Petit Branch * Soule Branch * White Branch