

MINUTES
OCPL Board of Trustees' Meeting
Dec. 16, 2020, 4:00 p.m.
Virtual ZOOM meeting

ATTENDING

Jill Hurst-Wahl
Marilyn Tucci
Lynnore Fetyko

Edda Kassis
Rich Engel
Tim Dodge

Christina Ondrako
Babette Morgan-Baker
Sam Edelstein

ABSENT

Ed Kochian

ALSO PRESENT

Christian Zabriskie
Mark Carter
Dawn Marmor
Dane Dell
Aran West
Miranda McDermott
Val Massulik
Jieun Yeon
Amanda Schiavulli

Amanda Perrine
Amanda Travis
Renate Dunsmore
Lauren Cox
Tatiana Sahn
Deb Thorna
Ann Horan
Katie Hayduke
Glenna Wisniewski

Gail Cox
Becky Maguire
Meg Van Patten
Rene Battelle
Jen Milligan
Charles Diede
Amy Thorna
Carol Johnson

Welcome: Jill Hurst-Wahl called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Consent Agenda: Marilyn Tucci moved the consent agenda, which included minutes from the Nov. 18, 2020 meetings. Lynnore Fetyko seconded; motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report: Christian Zabriskie announced that in response to the challenges posed by the increased COVID-19 infections, the County is offering to bring back all furloughed OCPL full-time employees to become case investigators. The County is also offering to bring back some furloughed part-time employees at \$24/hour for 35 hours/week. The part-time employees will be classified as seasonal aides. The County hopes that people will be able to

Central Library located at 447 South Salina Street, Syracuse, NY 13202-2494
Phone 315-435-1900 Fax 315-435-8533 www.onlib.org Christian Zabriskie, Executive Director

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

work from home. If they do not have the correct technology at home, they would be able to work from the Central Library which has enough space for social distancing. Some existing staff are also helping with this effort. Zabriskie believes that OCPL's willingness to do this work helps the organization's reputation within county government.

Edelstein asked about the length of time these employees will be working on COVID project and when they eventually come back to the library. Zabriskie noted that information has not been made available. It is expected that furloughed full-time staff will come back to OCPL after March 31. However, Zabriskie does not know how that might work, given that they could still be doing case investigation work. It is also unknown whether they are done with case investigation before March 31, if they then would they be furloughed again or transition to OCPL early.

On Dec. 2, Soule Branch was a COVID-19 testing location, and they were able to test a couple hundred people. Zabriskie said it was a good use of the space. In the future he can see more testing done at branch libraries, as well as the branches being part of the vaccination network.

OCPL is receive approximately \$46,000 in CARES Act funding. The funding amount was determined by the State Library using a basic award amount for each library system then an additional amount based on population served by that system. The system determined to use the funds on expanding the wifi network at each of the City branch locations, which serve high-needs populations. This could be the start of a community-based wifi network in the area.

Zabriskie said that the branch pod system continues to work well. In terms of system services, he has received good feedback and staff are ensuring that the work gets done.

President's Report and Discussion: Jill Hurst-Wahl reported on her meeting with the Deputy County Executive, Brian Donnelly.

- She made him aware of the 2021 Board meeting dates and extended a standing invitation for him to attend.
- She reminded him of unfilled Board positions, and he acknowledged that the County Executive is aware.
- Regarding the 2021 budget, there was nothing major to discuss.
- They discussed the reopening of the City branches and the support those branches give to their communities. Both the Deputy County Executive and the County Executive understand the need to serve people in the City. They are committed to working toward opening the city branches when it is safe, with a focus on sooner rather than later.
- She informed him that the Board had followed through on its commitment – made early in the search for the new Executive Director – to hire a coach to work with whomever was hired. Zabriskie has selected Heidi Holtz of Stillwork Consulting to work with him. Holtz may attend some of the meeting we have with the Deputy County Executive.

Resolutions:

[20-24] Tim Dodge moved the following motion:

Resolved, That the OCPL Board of Trustees elects Jill Hurst-Wahl to the office of President; Marilyn Tucci to the office of Vice-President; Sam Edelstein to the office of Secretary; and Christina Ondrako to the office of Treasurer of OCPL Board of Trustees for the year 2021.

Lynnore Fetyko seconded, the motion carried unanimously.

[20-25] Christina Ondrako moved the following motion:

Resolved, That the OCPL Board of Trustees approves \$515.00 from the Unrestricted Board Designated Fund for the 2020/2021 CenterState CEO membership.

Lynnore Fetyko seconded. During the discussion, Edelstein asked about the benefit of being a member of CenterState CEO. Ondrako said that CenterState CEO has worked closely with OCPL when there have been security issues around the library facilities. Zabriskie said that being a member connects us the community and the non-profit community. We're also supporting a local organization during a difficult year. The motion carried unanimously.

[20-26] Lynnore Fetyko moved the following motion:

Whereas the OCPL Board of Trustees, is the overseer of library services for Onondaga County in accordance with New York State Education Law;

Whereas the OCPL is obligated to provide services to its 19 member libraries under the terms of their Memorandum of Understanding;

Whereas the OCPL Board of Trustees has determined that some services have been compromised or eliminated due to the furlough of employees with specific skills necessary to provide these services;

Whereas these services include collection management and the cataloging of new library materials; communications services including printing services and social media coordination; delivery of shared materials; and other centralized services;

Resolved, that OCPL Board of Trustees urges Onondaga County to provide funds to reinstate on April 1, 2021, the full-time employees who are furloughed until March 31, 2021. Marilyn Tucci seconded.

The Board had discussed a potential motion in its November meeting and Marilyn Tucci agreed to draft it. Given the budget news we have received since then, the Board discussed the current need for this motion. Do we need to do this and has it been resolved already? Is it necessary to send to the County to advocate? What do we hope to accomplish? There is a concern that there is the potential for things to change relative to the budget. There was a suggested that this motion be put aside and then see if we need it.

Tim Dodge moved that this motion be postponed until the Board's February 2021 meeting. Rich Engel seconded and the subsidiary motion carried unanimously.

OCPL budget: Mark Carter said the budget is going as expected. The 2021 County budget was adopted on Dec. 3. Our adopted budget is our executive budget with no changes, \$11.6 million with is a \$3 million overall reduction from 2020. Direct appropriation was a reduction of \$1.3 million. Salaries and book budget were both reduced (\$1.2 of \$1.3 million). In terms of full-time employees, the budget decreased from 86 funded salaries in 2020 to 68 funded salaries in 2021, plus 2 grant funded salaries. The part-time budget line was not changed. Funding is available to

being back all part-time employees. Indirect charges were reduced \$1.7 million, which is mostly interdepartmental charges and benefits. Marilyn Tucci asked about the disposition of monies appropriated for a library that were not used. She hoped that the monies would go back into the library fund.

Onondaga County System Library Directors: Jen Milligan reference her report and said that the most important item is that many of the suburban libraries are moving back to curbside delivery. Amanda Travis will take over as the leader of this group in January.

Transit/Delivery: Christian Zabriskie noted that the deliver numbers are staying consistent.

MOU Committee: The MOU Committee will be reconvening in January. The Committee wants to see the fiduciary benefits to being a member of the system.

FOCL: Christian Zabriskie said that FOCL wants to be more active as a voice for OCPL in terms of advocacy. Hurst-Wahl said that FOCL hopes to have its spring Lecture Series in person.

Government Relations: Tim Dodge summarized his written report. The Committee discussed messaging for the upcoming budget. We have to be willing to tell stories of the impact our libraries are having on our communities. To that end, the Committee wants to create a repository of the positive messages received from the community about the library system.

The Committee discussed the usefulness of one-on-one meetings with state legislators. Members noted that these meetings can be effective in keeping the library system in front of the legislators. The Committee also discussed the benefit of having informal contacts with County Legislators and City Council members to inform them of what has been occurring during COVID-19.

Board Management, Recruitment & Development: Hurst-Wahl reported on an effort to schedule board training in early 2021, which had been postponed due to the pandemic. Funds for board training were allocated in 2019.

City Libraries Report: Dawn Marmor said pod staff are feeling very appreciated by the public, who have been sending notes of thanks. Patrons are positive about the services that are being provided. She is looking forward to making library facilities available for people, for example, who need to make virtual family court appearances as part of the Access to Justice Project.

Other: Hurst-Wahl asked for update on digital library cards at the next Board meeting. Zabriskie said he will provide those statistics.

Hurst-Wahl Jill and others expressed their appreciation for Rich Engel and Tim Dodge, whose second term on the Board is ending this month.

Adjourned: Tim Doge moved to adjourn the meeting with Rich Engel seconding. Hurst-Wahl adjourned the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Jill Hurst-Wahl
Board President