

MINUTES  
OCPL Board of Trustees' Meeting  
Jan. 13, 2021, 4:00 p.m.  
Virtual Zoom Meeting

**ATTENDING**

Sam Edelstein  
Tim Dodge  
Lynnore Fetyko

Jill Hurst-Wahl  
Edda Kassis  
Ed Kochian

**ABSENT**

Marilyn Tucci

Babette Baker

**ALSO PRESENT**

Christian Zabriskie  
Dawn Marmor  
Dane Dell  
Val Massulik  
Rene Battelle  
Amanda Schiavulli  
Ossie Edwards  
Renate Dunsmore  
Lauren Cox

Linda Ballard  
Deb Thorna  
Tatiana Sahn  
Ann Horan  
Katie Hayduke  
Mark Carter  
Becky Maguire  
Charles Diede  
Aran West

Miranda McDermott  
Amanda Travis  
Jieun Yeon  
Leah Kraus  
Gail Cox  
Meg Van Patten  
Glenna Wisniewski  
Christina Ondrako

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

**Consent Agenda:** Tim Dodge moved, Ed Kochian seconded to approve minutes from December 16, 2020, and one Board absence (Marilyn Tucci). Motion passed unanimously.

**Executive Director's Report:** Christian Zabriskie announced that the library continues to move toward the idea to reopen and is hoping for a February 1 date. He has had discussions with County administration about reopening. Also aware of rising COVID-19 numbers, reopening would be held until the number of infections in the community has reduced.

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

Mundy Library is closed due to an HVAC issue. The fan that moves air through the system is not functioning. No concern around pipes freezing, but it is too cold to operate and have staff in the building. The hope is that within a month the HVAC system is fixed.

Library staff continues to help the County with COVID-19 testing in the community. Staff that are doing testing work are eligible for and getting the vaccine in that capacity. He noted that the Board could advocate for library staff to be moved up in the vaccine roll-out phases. Currently, library staff are not seen as essential workers or as part of education, which would have them being vaccinated now. Zabriskie also said that libraries could serve as vaccination stations. The public sees library staff as trusted individuals and libraries are trusted institutions, and could be a critical part of the vaccine roll out.

OCPL continues to move a lot of materials between all of the libraries in the system, and delivery times remains decent. It could be better, but given the area being covered, Zabriskie noted that the times are reasonable.

Zabriskie has been in the role for one year and noted that he has had his first meeting with his executive coach. His focus remains on safety for staff and flexibility in the role. He makes every effort to be flexible.

Zabriskie says furloughed employees are still due to come back to OCPL in early month. There has been no change in the budget, so funding is still available to bring the furloughed employees back. Some furloughed staff are currently back working for the County in other capacities (i.e., case investigators) to help support the COVID-19 response.

Digital assets are being used more than previously. If there are opportunities to continue use of digital assets, even post-COVID, then the library should. Curbside pickup will also likely continue even once most people are vaccinated. Giving people access to internet and enabling spaces like “Zoom rooms” could be in the future, though that was already happening even pre-COVID.

In response to a question about the transit report, Amanda Schiavulli said the dashboard is still in beta and needs to be updated by the SU iSchool iConsult student team.

Zabriskie says everyone is working hard to give service to suburban libraries. Meetings on MOU are ongoing, but no significant decisions are likely to happen in the near future.

No formal budget update for this month. The Executive Budget was adopted and no change from what was proposed and approved by the board previously.

**President’s Report and Discussion:** Jill Hurst-Wahl said that sustainability (financial), visibility, training were the three main things she wanted to be focused on in her first year as Board President. With COVID-19, much was delayed, so the goals remain. Fiscal sustainability remains just as important as before. For visibility, more decision makers need to understand what the library currently offers, and Government Relations Committee can help. Training is also in

process for this year.

Hurst-Wahl says that the Board has been very paper-based historically. She would like to see us move to an online file system so we have access to our current and historical Board documents. This would also help the Board review library policies. Digital documents could enable more public access to Board information. We would have to review what information could be public facing versus not.

Hurst-Wahl asks that Board members commit to being a liaison to member libraries and will follow-up to get full Board participation. The purpose is to make contact with library director and Board president, and attending at least one board meeting per year.

**Onondaga County System Library Directors:** Amanda Travis (new chair of Onondaga System Library Directors) reports that libraries are interested in reopening to the public and want to consider what metrics to track in informing those decisions. Brewerton will be closed because of a COVID-19 exposure on staff.

Currently there are 10-member libraries that are using in-person services and 11 that are offering just curbside pickup. Hoping for an early-February reopening. The hope is that people can access computers and give people access to computers and expertise around filing taxes. The key question is when and how to reopen safely and offer tax services?

**MOU Committee:** There is a meeting later this week to discuss the MOU with the member libraries.

**Friends of Central Library:** FOCL delivered a \$15,000 contribution to the library system. Zabriskie reports he has been in discussions with FOCL about how to continue a fundraising partnership going forward, given the changing circumstances of library and fundraising organizations.

**Government Relations:** Tim Dodge reported that there will be advocacy allowing library staff to receive the COVID vaccine during one of the early phases. He said that the committee is gathering stories on the positive impact our libraries have had, including with 3D printing PPE. He reported again on the challenge with the government funding.

Hurst-Wahl said that anyone can attend the NYLA virtual advocacy day (February 26, 2021), which will include advocacy around budget. Zabriskie encourages Board and other non-librarians to attend as well.

**Strategic Planning:** Sam Edelstein reported that the desire from the Strategic Planning Committee is less to focus on a 3-5 year strategic plan but instead to help set a decision framework to understand how processes will proceed over the coming months. Given that many things change quickly in the County at this point in time, it is difficult to set a firm plan. Instead, as decisions need to be made, setting expectations around how they get made is important.

Zabriskie expressed concern about focusing on a strategic plan at this point in time. He said, that

given staff commitments, it is difficult to design a strategic plan now, but is willing to take part in discussions with the Board committee. Hurst-Wahl said she would setup a meeting between the Strategic Planning Committee and Zabriskie to continue this conversation.

**Finance Committee:** Christina Ondrako reported that she plans to set up a February meeting with the committee.

**Other:** Zabriskie reported that he had a meeting with Alicia Madden, a member of the Finance Department for the City, about why city libraries were closed. Zabriskie responded with explanation and there has been no follow up.

**Adjourned:** Tim Dodge moves to adjourn, Ed Kochian second. Meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Sam Edelstein  
Board Secretary