

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

ATTENDING

Ginny Biesiada
Tim Dodge
Rich Engel
Jill Hurst-Wahl

Ed Kochian
Christina Ondrako
Marilyn Tucci

ABSENT

Babette Morgan-Baker

Sam Edelstein

ALSO PRESENT

Christian Zabriskie
Mark Carter
Dawn Marmor
Valarie Massulik
Kathy Coffta Sims
Jieun Yeon
Lynnore Fetyko

Amanda Schiavulli
Gail Cox
Jennifer Milligan
Miranda McDermott
Meg Van Patten
Edda Kassis
...and 29 additional attendees

Welcome: Ms. Hurst-Wahl called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

Consent Agenda: Ed Kochian made a motion to approve the consent agenda [September Board Absence (Edelstein) and approval of the August meeting minutes]. Christina Ondrako seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report: Christian Zabriskie reported that the libraries continue to provide no contact services and pick-up services. Feedback has been positive on the "librarian special." Staff are working diligently on getting the doors open, however, there are concerns from the County in terms of the budget for the remainder of 2020, which is why the city branches are still closed. There is much work happening behind the scenes. People have been offered the opportunity to do voluntary furloughs and early retirement is being offered again. Waiting to see how the institution looks after those personnel adjustments are made. He noted that all the

suburban member libraries do have their doors open to some extent. He pointed out that staff are doing virtual programming and working on grants.

Hurst-Wahl acknowledge that we see the news from the County Executive and the many moving parts that affect the budget. She thanked Zabriskie for helping the library move through this period of uncertainty.

Tucci asked if the County Health Department has approved the reopening plan which OCPL submitted. Zabriskie said “yes” with one small change. One potential issue is that the County may want to capture demographic information on library users for contact tracing. There are issues with this in terms of privacy that will need to be considered.

Dodge asked about a timeline about the County’s decision making and Zabriskie said “no.” Zabriskie noted that information on voluntary furloughs and early retirements has been disseminated. He said that the County is now using that information for further decision making. Zabriskie confirmed that the budget he is dealing with is the current fiscal year.

Dodge asked a question about Trace Security. Zabriskie said his preference would be to use UnBEYlievable, but that UnBEYlievable is not a security firm. Our contract with Trace continues for a few more months. Zabriskie is not eager to renew it. He said that County is supportive of OCPL making its own decisions regarding library security.

Tucci asked about s specific clause in the contact concerning the experience level of the Trace employees. Zabriskie is unfamiliar with that specific clause and wonders about the specific levels of experience of the Trace employees at OCPL. He went on to say that OCPL is pulling back on security because staff do not feel safer having them in the branches. This is also a matter of cost.

Hurst-Wahl asked if the County has provided any guidance on how to communicate with furloughed employees. Zabriskie discussed this with HR, who recommended that furloughed employee email accounts be deactivated. He said he would talk with Kathy Coffta Sims about drafting a note to the furloughed part-time employees stating that the library is not in a position to bring them back and that their OCPL email addresses will be deactivated on a specific date.

Valarie Massulik said that the language in the agreement for voluntary and mandatory furloughed employees is that they are not to touch their work email accounts and to not do any work while on furlough. Zabriskie said this will mean a greater awareness of how work is being done if some people are on furlough.

President’s Report and Discussion: Jill Hurst-Wahl noted that the County Legislature voted in two new Board members: Lynnore Fetyko (ending Dec. 31, 2024) and Edda Kassis (ending Dec. 31, 2023, partial term).

At the beginning of the year, Hurst-Wahl said that one of the things she wanted to focus on was sustainability. We need to be aware more than even that putting this library system in a financially sustainable mode is important. She noted that she does not have an answer for how to make the system more financially sustainable, but that it is something we need to think about.

Dodge asked what other systems and libraries are doing around the country. Hurst-Wahl said she does not know how other systems are dealing with this because the financial problems are with the county, state, and federal government. Those backup financial streams are not there. Zabriskie noted that many libraries are focused on resilience, which is how to keep function when your library continues to get financially hit. The profession has turned to survival mode. He said people are seeing services as being de-centralized, rather than pinned to a location. He also noted that the term sustainability is often connected with environmental concerns.

Hurst-Wahl noted that some institutions are focused on not on how to do the same things in a different way, but what should the institutions be doing.

Memorandum of Understanding: No report. Zabriskie said action on this will resume once staffing has stabilized.

Onondaga County System Library Directors: Jennifer Milligan reported on actions at several suburban libraries, including Tully going fine free permanently. She noted that Wendy Scott has retired from the Community Library of DeWitt and Jamesville. The CLD&J board is now searching for a new director. NOPL is implementing a scheduling app for its patrons called MyLibro. Baldwinsville is extending the hours it is open. Manlius and Fayetteville are targeting September 28 for re-opening their buildings to the public.

Transit Report: Amanda Schiavulli provided the July and August transit report. Number of days in transit is impacted by how long items are quarantined. Items are being quarantined seven days, based on the results of the REALM study. She also reported that a new transit reporting system, created by the SU iSchool iConsult group with Dane Dell, will be available soon for people to use. She hopes to show it to the Board in October.

Budget: Mark Carter reported on the County's austerity measures. He noted that Nov. 4 is when the County budget is scheduled to be presented to the County Legislature, with department hearings to follow on Nov. 5-19. The County budget is scheduled to be adopted on Dec. 18.

Carter pointed in the current budget report to the systems revenue. The state aid revenue was estimated from 2019 number at \$1.1 million. He has been hearing of a possible aid cut of 20-22.6%. OCPL has received 80% of its basic aid payment. He is unsure if OCPL will receive the other 20%. Given the state aid cuts, this would leave us short \$244,000 in our systems budget. Looking at the budget forecast, Carter believes we will be okay, given forecasted savings in specific budget lines.

Carter said that he will let us know when the OCPL budget is reviewed. He said that the public hearing date for the overall budget is Dec. 1.

Resolutions:

(Resolution 20-20): Marilyn Tucci made the following motion:

Resolved, that the OCPL Board of Trustees recommends the application for \$445,924 from the New York State \$14 Million Construction Grant Program FY 2020-2023 for the Petit Branch Library for a community room addition.

Ed Kochian seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

(Resolution 20-21): Ed Kochian moved the following motion:

Resolved, that the OCPL Board of Trustees accepts the grant funding from the CNY Community Foundation in the amount of \$24,000 for 2020 Census COVID packs to be distributed to all 32 libraries to distribute to their patrons.

Tim Dodge seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

(Resolution 20-22): Ed Kochian moved the following motion.

Resolved, That the OCPL Board of Trustees approves the grant application submission to M & T Charitable Foundation for up to \$10,000 to support the 2021 Summer Learning Program.

Rich Engel seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

(Resolution 20-23): Ginny Biesiada moved the following motion:

Resolved, That the OCPL Board of Trustees approves the expenditure of up to \$1000 from the Board's Unrestricted Funds for the purchase of books and materials related to the Adirondacks for the OCPL as part of the celebration of the memory of Robert Manning (1946-2020), who served on the OCPL Board of Trustees from June 2008 until July 2020.

Ed Kochian seconded the motion. Ondrako had left the meeting. The motion passed unanimously with the remaining Board members.

(Resolution 20-24): Tim Dodge made the following motion:

Resolved, That the OCPL Board of Trustees approves the 2021 Legal Holiday Calendar as proclaimed by County Executive J. Ryan McMahon II to be observed in accordance with present Federal and New York State Law and Library Closings as follows:

New Year's Day	Friday	January 1
Martin Luther King	Monday	January 18
Lincoln's Birthday*	Friday	February 12
Washington's Birthday	Monday	February 15

Memorial Day	Monday	May 31
Juneteenth	Friday	June 18 (Observed)
Independence Day	Monday	July 5 (Observed)
Labor Day	Monday	September 6
Columbus Day*	Monday	October 11
Veteran's Day	Thursday	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday	November 25
Day After Thanksgiving	Friday	November 26
Christmas Day	Friday	December 24 (Observed)

*Lincoln's Birthday and Columbus Day will be observed as floating holidays for all non-institutional personnel. All county departments will remain open for business on Friday, February 12 and Monday, October 11.

Library Closings

Saturdays

May 29, Memorial Day Weekend
September 4, Labor Day Weekend
December 25, Christmas

Sundays

April 4	Easter
May 30	Memorial Day Weekend
June 20, 27	Summer
July 4, 11, 18, 25	Summer
August 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	Summer
September 5	Labor Day Weekend
December 26	Day after Christmas

Evenings (facilities close at 5 p.m.)

Wednesday, November 24, Thanksgiving Eve

Other

Friday, May 7, Staff Development Day

Marilyn Tucci seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

(Resolution 20-25): Ed Kochian made the following motion:

Resolved, that the OCPL Board of Trustees accepts the grant funding from the CLRC Crisis Technology Grant in the amount of \$3,381.00 to purchase laptops, computer cameras and microphones to support virtual public programming efforts at OCPL Central and Branch Libraries.

Tim Dodge seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

OCPL Board Committee Composition: Jill Hurst-Wahl noted that the Board needs a new secretary, and one person has expressed some interested.

Most of the Board committees do not meet regularly, which brings into question if they are all needed. The Board agreed to review Board committee descriptions in October and November, and decide if any committee should be sunset.

Board Committee Reports: There were no reports from the Board committees.

City Libraries Report: Dawn Marmor added to her written report by noting that OCPL has been donated 21 laptops from Syracuse University's Shaw Center. The plan is to circulate them.

Friends of the Central Library: Ginny Biesiada reported for Kim Schellinger on the fall and spring schedules for FOCL. All fall 2020 authors have been rescheduled to 2021, with the hope that those events can be in-person. One author, Dr. Ibram X. Kendi, will still be speaking this fall in a community dialogue. This event will be free and open to the public. FOCL has raised enough money for this event to cover all expenses and to donate \$5,000 to OCPL. This donation is in addition to FOCL's normal contributions to the library. In addition, when people register for the event, there is an option for them to donate to the library.

Adjournment: Ginny Biesiada moved to adjourn the meeting, with Tim Dodge seconding and the motion passed. Ms. Hurst-Wahl adjourned the meeting at 5:16 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Jill Hurst-Wahl
Board President

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

