

MEETING MINUTES
Olean Public Library Board of Trustees
January 17, 2024
5:30 P.M. – Conference Room

The mission of the Olean Public Library is to assist all people with their educational, informational and recreational needs.

Call to Order by Lanna Waterman at 5:30 P.M. In attendance were trustees J. Mahar, McElfresh, Shumway, Tenglund, Waterman, Whitford, Treasurer Wetherall, Assistant Director K. Mahar, and Director La Voie. Excused: trustee Copella. CCLS Executive Director Jan Dekoff and Business Office Manager Angell were also in attendance.

Dekoff said the governor's budget came out yesterday, and there is an increase in library funding, which opens the doors for the Senate and Assembly to increase it before the budget is finalized. It appears that NovelNY will be secured as well. Library Advocacy Day is at the beginning of February. We should have an official budget from the state in April or May. Dekoff thought the Olean Public Library was in good shape and appreciated the opportunity to visit us.

1. Waive the reading of the minutes of the previous meetings and approve as mailed.
2. Voice of the Public/Correspondence: None
3. Approval of Warrant Sheets for December 21-January 17:
 #945 Operating Fund: \$93,019.44
 #320 Capital Fund:\$700.00

Discussion:

- Wetherell noted there were some nice programs in December that were paid for. Everything else was a routine expenditure.

4. Review of Financial Statements

Discussion:

- Interest was up significantly from last year.
- In 2022, ARPA funds were received (American Rescue Plan), which were not received in 2023.
- Donations were up this year.
- Library charges were down a bit, primarily because of reduced fee collections.
- We used \$37,119 from the fund balance to balance our budget. Last year, we did not need to use fund balance. The fund balance is our reserves. This goes back to eight to ten years of not asking for tax increases. If we would have increased nominally each year, we would have had a balanced budget this year.
- **MOTION (McElfresh, Shumway):** To increase the EBLR reserve fund according to year-end calculations. The motion carried unanimously.

- This fund takes care of vacation days that would need to be paid out in the event employee(s) leave.
- Retirement benefits follow the payroll in terms of increases. State retirements are based on the percentage increases in the retirement system.
- Library materials were down slightly. It was questioned whether we are budgeting too high for books, as once again we did not spend down that budget line. One reason may be due to personnel turnover. We are also shifting more to eBooks. We are spending less, in part, due to these changes. We may also need to review our standing orders to make sure we are still receiving authors and titles that were originally added to those. In the past, it was supply chain issues during the pandemic causing us to underspend, as well as staff turnover. La Voie will look into the book expenditures further.
- The financial reports included a nice summary of grant funds.
- There were several changes on the balance sheet. Entries were made for the auditors according to government accounting standards related to pension benefits and other areas.
- There was an increase in the checking account because funds waiting to be invested (according to a motion from December) were in the account at the end of the month.

MOTION (Whitford, Tenglund): To approve Agenda Items 1, 3, and 4. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Director's Report

2023-2025 Strategic Plan

- La Voie provided a copy of the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan in the board folder for the month to keep it on the radar throughout the year. The board approved the plan in February 2023. Reviewing it early this year to discuss its continuing relevance and whether updates are needed would be a good idea.

Friends of the Library

- Due to a lack of volunteer availability, the Friends have rescheduled the annual beer-tasting fundraiser, FeBREWary, to Friday, February 23. It will run from 7–9:30 P.M. at the Library. Tickets will be on sale soon. The price will be the same as the wine tasting--one for \$25, two for \$40, and \$10 for designated drivers.
- As they do at every event, the Friends requested basket donations for the basket raffle.
- All of the proceeds from these events go to the Library to help pay for presenters, programming supplies, circulating materials, furniture, technology, and many other items.

6. Committee Reports: None

7. Old Business

Library space needs – updates

- This agenda item was discussed in executive session.

Personnel

- The following staff were hired as library pages: Jim Riesdorff (12/13/2023) and Sherri Lothridge (12/18/2023). Unfortunately, Sherri, who has a degree in social work, has since accepted a full-time job elsewhere. Her last day was 1/12/2024. The board should approve these appointments and accept Sherri's resignation.
 - **MOTION (Tenglund, Whitford):** To approve the hiring of library pages: Jim Riesdorff (12/13/2023) and Sherri Lothridge (12/18/2023). The motion carried unanimously.
 - **MOTION (Tenglund, Whitford):** To accept the resignation of Sherri Lothridge on 1/12/2024. The motion carried unanimously.
- We are seeing a changing trend in people seeking full-time employment with benefits. Whereas for the past five years or so, it's been challenging to recruit for full-time positions, we are seeing a sudden change to people having a strong preference for full-time work, especially due to the need for paid time off and health insurance benefits. Several part-time library assistants and pages are actively searching for full-time positions elsewhere.
- There was discussion regarding whether it would be good to offer more full-time than part-time positions. Benefit costs can be prohibitive in the budget, though. It was suggested that the board could also discuss if it would make sense to change the allocation of employer versus employee-paid insurance ratios. Current employees could be grandfathered in if such an option was pursued in the future. It is also important for employees to look at their total compensation, including benefits.
- **MOTION (McElfresh, Whitford):** To enter executive session at 6:09 P.M. to discuss personnel and space matters. The motion carried unanimously.
- **MOTION (Tenglund, Whitford):** To leave executive session at 7:08 P.M. The motion carried unanimously.

2025 budget planning

- Because we are asking for a tax increase for 2025, we must approve the 2025 budget by March 2024, which the taxpayers will vote on in May.
- We usually ask for a 2 percent increase (last year, we also asked for the carryover amount available from the prior year's tax levy increase due to coming in under the allowed amount). A smaller carryover amount of \$3,891 is available to include in this year's tax levy increase (for 2025). The board also votes to approve overriding the tax cap in case our increase ends up being more than the allowable tax levy. This usually occurs in March when the board approves the proposed budget.
- Business Office Manager Angell and La Voie presented a proposed budget that included a 2 percent across-the-board wage increase for staff (except for three full-time staff who receive the minimum NYS exempt salary, which is set to increase by 3.3 percent).
 - The tax levy in the proposed budget does not include the \$3,891 in carryover available to use. If the board includes the carryover, it will reduce the use of the fund balance by the same amount.
 - Once the voters approve the budget, the board can move monies from one budget line to another, but not to increase spending above the total approved budget for the year voted on.
- There will be a public hearing in the Library on April 23 for constituents to ask questions about the proposed budget. While the Director runs the hearing, it is recommended that Trustees also attend, especially the President and Finance Officer, to help answer questions and show support for the proposed budget. The treasurer also attends the budget hearing.

- It was decided to have a special board meeting to discuss the budget, salaries, insurance, etc., since all are connected, and it would not make sense to have a single committee meet to look at it. This special meeting will be on January 24 at 5:30 P.M.

2023 annual audit

- Angell has sent everything to the auditor, Ed Bysiek. He is planning to present the audited financials at the February board meeting.

8. New Business

Review and adopt the Schedule for the Trustee Election and 2024 Budget Vote

- The Trustee Election and 2025 budget vote is scheduled for the first Tuesday in May (May 7, 2024) and will be held at the Library. Polls open at 9 A.M. and close at 8 P.M. Trustee Gretchen Copella's term expires in June 2024; she must decide if she plans to run for a full 5-year term, as the term she was elected to fill in 2023 was only for one year (she was completing the term vacated by John Bartimole in 2022).
- Absentee ballots must be sent to every voter in the school district listed as permanently disabled.
- Petitions for nomination to the ballot for Library Trustee will be available on March 7, along with applications for absentee ballots. The budget hearing will be held on Tuesday, April 23, at 6 P.M.
 - **MOTION (Whitford, Shumway):** To adopt the attached Schedule for the Trustee Election and 2025 Budget Vote. The motion carried unanimously.

Conflict of Interest Forms

- The trustees, treasurer, and staff must complete the Conflict of Interest form each year. Trustees were requested to email the form or bring a signed form to the meeting.

Trustee Training

- La Voie is arranging dates for trustee training. It is a requirement that board members receive two hours of training annually, and this will fulfill the requirement.

Treasurer Authorizations

- **MOTION (McElfresh, Tenglund):** To authorize the treasurer to pay utilities, insurances, equipment leases, periodical renewals, payrolls and payroll withholding taxes, and credit cards as they become due in 2024. The motion carried unanimously.
- **MOTION (McElfresh, Tenglund):** To authorize the treasurer to maintain the following accounts for 2024:
 - Tax Fund Account – Community Bank
 - General Operating Fund Checking – Community Bank
 - Capital Fund Checking – Community Bank
 - Investment Holdings Checking – Community Bank
 - State Aid Fund Account – Community Bank

The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION TO ADJOURN (Whitford, Tenglund): To adjourn at 7:30 P.M. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann M. Tenglund