

MEETING MINUTES
Olean Public Library Board of Trustees
May 21, 2025
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 at 5:35 P.M. by Board President Lanna Waterman. In attendance were trustees Copella, J. Mahar, McElfresh, Shumway, Tenglund, Waterman, and Whitford. From the Library: Angell, Steffen, K. Mahar, and Director La Voie. Consultant Larry Sorokes was also present during the first part of the meeting to discuss planning.

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 April 17—May 21:
 #963 Operating Fund: \$142,264.73
 #336 Capital Fund: \$7,411.3

Discussion:

- Steffen reviewed the warrant sheets and found everything to be in order.
 - There were two separate bills from Staples; the second one listed was not a duplicate.
 - Our gas bill was less than expected for May. Electric is still at top prices, up almost 39 percent over last year. We will probably come in around \$35,600—electric is a line to watch.
 - Payroll is up because it was a three-payroll month with where the end of April fell.
 - All of the bills for the new chairs have come in. The chairs the Friends gave were accounted for with the revenue in grants and the expense in the library supplies line.
4. Review of Financial Statements
 - We had patron donations, payment in lieu of taxes from the school district, and other contributions.
 - Expenditures were the usual items.

MOTION (McElfresh, Copella): To approve agenda items 1, 3, and 4. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Director's Report

Trustee Election and Budget/Bond Vote

- The trustee election and 2026 budget vote will occur on Thursday, June 26, at the Library. Polls open at 9 A.M. and close at 8 P.M. Four election inspectors will work that day and be paid the Library's current minimum wage of \$16.33/hour.
- Trustee Ann Tenglund is not running for another term on the Board. Mike Morgan is running for her seat and has turned in a petition with the required number of signatures.
- The 2026 budget will be made available to the public on May 28, with a public hearing on Tuesday, June 10 at 6 P.M. The press release is scheduled for publication in the newspaper on May 28.
- We are also offering public presentations on the capital project. One was held on May 15, which was well attended. The Times Herald was present, and a favorable article was

published the following day. The next public presentation is scheduled for Saturday, June 14, at 11 A.M. The architect will also be present.

Personnel [Action Item]

- **MOTION (Whitford, Tenglund):** To rescind the April 16, 2025 motion to accept the resignation of Business Office Manager Heather Angell. The motion carried unanimously.
- **MOTION (Shumway, J. Mahar):** To approve the Business Office Manager salary adjustment of 6.25 percent in 2025 and 5.88 percent in 2026. The motion carried unanimously.
 - Angell's reconsideration of her resignation was due, in part, to the Board agreeing to a two-part salary increase, which was competitive with the salary being offered by the other employer, in addition to greater scheduling flexibility.
 - Everyone was pleased with her decision to stay at the Library.

April Gifts/Grants/Donations [Action Item]

- **MOTION (McElfresh, Whitford):** To accept, with gratitude, the following gifts, grants, and donations received in April 2025. The motion passed unanimously.
 - A \$12,969.77 annual grant from the Frances Bean O'Connell Endowment for the Arts;
 - \$4,000 from the Friends of the Library for annual library programs;
 - The annual distribution from the Bush Family Charitable Fund for \$180; and
 - \$11.50 in anonymous donations.

Staff Development Day 2025

- The annual staff development day will be Friday, September 12.
- It is a full day of staff training, including the mandatory annual sexual harassment prevention training and Narcan administration training, which is provided free of charge by the Employee Assistance Program.
- The Board has provided lunch to the staff at this event for many years. The staff has always appreciated this gesture and enjoys having lunch with any trustees available to eat with the staff.
- It was noted that it might be nice to invite the Friends of the Library to the luncheon so everyone would know each other.
- There was a recent question to Ask the Lawyer about the legality of a library paying for luncheons. The answer was that if the event included elements of staff development, it was permissible. Therefore, even the Christmas party could include food provided by the library and a small gift since that event also consists of some development and employee recognition.

Friends of the Library

- At their May meeting, the Friends approved the annual gift of \$1,500 to help pay for presenters for the children's Summer Reading Program. They also gave \$300 to help cover the cost of prizes given away at the Summer Reading Kickoff Carnival.
- A number of Friends board members have agreed to serve on the Steering Committee to promote and fund the Library's capital project. They were also a large presence at the presentation. Most seem to be very excited and are eager to help support the project.

News from the Library

- La Voie and Board President Lanna Waterman were asked to speak about our capital project at the Olean Business Development Corp. CEO Alliance meeting on May 21. La Voie used some of the slides from the PowerPoint used at the public presentation. She sought to build support among this group by talking about our usage statistics and how our popular, and sometimes very large, programs bring families from around the area, including PA, into Olean. These same people will likely visit restaurants, stores, and other attractions before and/or after library events, which will be positive for the whole community. The Library has also had success with childhood literacy initiatives. The Library provides a safe and enjoyable space for area teens, digital literacy and tech training for adults, and meeting rooms for local organizations. At the end of the call, it came up that the Ralph Wilson Foundation is focusing more on rural areas. It would be nice if the library could present to them on this project.
- There has been an increase in the number of volunteers serving at the library. We had a healthy number of volunteers before Covid, but the numbers have been low ever since. Through a partnership with Foundations for Change, we have 2-3 volunteers per week helping with programs. Several students from the RISE program at BOCES come weekly to help with shelving and other tasks. There are also two regular teen volunteers assisting with projects and shelving, and one other who comes to help out at special events. Four adults volunteer with shelving, with one maintaining our fish tank. We are fortunate to get this assistance from volunteers, which frees up time for staff to work on special projects or catch up when large numbers of returned items pile up in the staff workroom.

6. Committee Reports

CCLS Board meeting (McElfresh)

- No report.

7. Old Business

Library space needs – updates.

- Sorokes said that the first public meeting went well. Approximately 35 people attended, and the mood was positive. It would have been better if the other concepts considered had been summarized more without as many details—if this were shorter, with a summary, it would have been enough to demonstrate that we did our due diligence without belaboring it. Also, we do not want to say that the Makerspace could be rented out without the need for staffing. The meeting flowed positively, though.
- There was a discussion about whether library spaces could be rented out during business hours for a donation. We would need to think about setting a precedent. We will need to ensure that the policies are well-written regarding rentals. There are other spaces people can rent now, too, such as at St. Bonaventure University.
- Some people have said they will write letters to the editor supporting the library's project. People seem to be loyal and involved.
- The Friends will start sending out postcards to get out the vote. They will keep track of who gets them. It makes sense to do neighborhoods rather than circles of friends, so there is less chance that the same person receives multiple postcards. The first round will come out around Memorial Day. It would be good to have a second round sent later.
- This will start the first public phase of getting out the vote. We need the vote passed first and then consider grants, endowments, etc. Social media from individuals is not part of our

strategy—the library will post some things. The project website is just about finished. There will be a question box on the page as well.

- Board members were asked to inform La Voie if they know of any community groups interested in having presentations about the project.
- Starting around June 9-10, a bookmark will be available to encourage voting, with details, a link to the website, a photo, etc. Hundreds of them will be at the front desk for the staff to hand out.
- We have a lot of copies of the talking points, which were not meant for public dissemination, but we have close to 100 copies of them, so they might be shared with people who are writing the letters.
- How much has the staff seen? The talking points sheet has gone out to the staff. The more they are comfortable and positive.
- We need to start thinking about grants. The Consolidated Funding Application is out now, and workshops are coming up. It would be good to try for this.
- For supporters of the library who do not live in our district, we could send them information about the project. They might turn into donors. We would not want these people to be surprised by the project later. Larry said he would be willing to keep a master list of people getting personalized letters and brochures.
- Phase 2 will involve fundraising and include people with an affinity for raising funds.
- Absentee ballots can be requested up until a week before the vote. People can also pick up the ballots after their request is approved.
- It needs to be clear to people that the tax increase from the bond does not take effect until next year.

CRCF donor bequest

- Steffen and La Voie signed the paperwork for the bequest. The fund distribution will be annual, starting next May.
- People can donate to the fund and help it grow as well.
- The CRCF might be willing to waive a fee if we want to start another endowment with them, now that we have an established fund.

2025 Trustee Election and 2026 Budget Vote Calendar

- **MOTION (Copella, Tenglund):** To adopt the adjusted 2025 Trustee Election and 2026 Budget Vote Calendar. The motion carried unanimously.
 - The only change was to reschedule sending a fourth notice to the OTH on Juneteenth to the following day. The newspaper does not publish on Juneteenth.
- **MOTION (Whitford, Shumway):** To adopt the 2026 budget line adjustments. The motion carried unanimously.
 - This will be the budget that is put out for the vote.

Review the alternative budget spreadsheet option

- There has been discussion on whether we can change revenues on the proposed budget. The accountant, Ed Bysiek, said that he would not have a problem with the totals being adjusted.
- Another way of creating a budget is to have a tab showing what taxes cover. There is another tab that shows what is covered by grants, etc.
- Angell matched revenue to expenses for anything that was not tax-related. In the future, this would be a way to see exactly where we stand. If we get an unexpected revenue like a grant, we can show what expenses it covers. This would not touch anything the taxpayers

voted on. Her only concern is if it would look strange to see a new budget that was only based on tax revenues. La Voie said that this version would be internal, and we would still put out the regular budget, showing both items covered by taxes and other revenue. Taxpayers agree to the overall tax increase but do not vote on every line. For internal review, this method will make it more straightforward to see what taxes fund.

- The possibility of having a contingency line in the budget was discussed. The library would not spend from a contingency line—it is a way to budget contingency, and then the funds would be moved to the line where they are needed. School districts cannot do this, but we could. The Board can determine a reasonable amount for the fund balance as well. We want to stay within the tax cap as well.
- No decisions on this reporting needed to be made at this meeting.

2025 Budget line adjustments were reviewed. We budget total salaries, so an adjustment did not need to be voted on, but Angell wanted to provide the information to the Board. The Board agreed to increase the Support Staff (appropriation line 102) by \$60,410 (move the Head of Children's budgeted wages from appropriation line 100 to 102). We would then reduce Professional Staff (appropriations line 100) by \$60,410. This adjustment was needed because of how the Civil Service classifies titles. Certain positions are designated as support staff, regardless of the position title at the library.

Investments

- The Library has a CD maturing on May 26 for \$400,000. The rates are between 3.5-3.8 percent. We could reinvest it because we have cash on hand for five months' expenses, but if we have to pay project costs, that would not work. We could renew for three months and get an additional \$3,750 in interest. We know we have an HVAC bill coming up. We could reinvest a portion to ensure we have enough funds on hand. The \$400,000 was part of the tax levy that had been reinvested. If we do not reinvest it, we will be okay with anticipated earnings on investment for the year.
- **MOTION (McElfresh, Shumway):** To reinvest \$200,000 for three months. The motion carried with one abstention (Copella).
- We have two additional CDs maturing before the June Board meeting. There is one maturing in July as well. The June CDs were earmarked for project costs and will not be needed immediately. For the June CDs, one matures on 6/2 and the other on 6/18.
- **MOTION (Tenglund, Shumway):** To reinvest the two CDs maturing in June for another six months. The motion carried with one abstention (Copella).

8. New Business

2025-2026 Board Reorganization

- Rather than having a motion for someone to present a slate of officers at the June 18, 2025 reorganization meeting of the Olean Public Library Board of Trustees, it was decided to discuss it at the meeting to develop and vote on a slate.
- Our system director confirmed that it is okay for Angell to take the minutes except for executive sessions. Angell would step out when the Board enters an executive session when minutes are not kept anyway. It would need to be entered into the minutes who made and seconded motions to enter and leave executive sessions, along with the time of each motion. Angell could record the motion to enter the executive session before leaving the meeting. Board members would keep track of who made and seconded a motion to leave executive session, along with the time. It should also be noted that no action was taken during the

executive session if that was the case. If motions are necessary to enact a decision, they are to be made after exiting an executive session.

- **MOTION (J. Mahar, Copella):** To approve the slate of officers as identified above. The motion passed unanimously.
 - President—Lanna Waterman
 - Vice-President—Reed McElfresh
 - Secretary—Laura Whitford
 - Finance Officer: Patty Shumway
- **MOTION (McElfresh, Copella):** To appoint a Treasurer for 2025-26 at the June 18, 2025, meeting of the Olean Public Library Board of Trustees, whose term will begin on July 1, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.
 - The treasurer is appointed annually in June.

Employee Handbook – possible Remote Work Policy update

- This policy has been in place since 2020 and was on the agenda for review. It was determined that no action was needed on it at this time.
- There was recent concern about sensitive documents being taken home when an employee works from home. However, any sensitive documents are now electronic, so there would not be a chance sensitive paperwork would leave the building.
- We might want to specifically say that in the future, work from home should be done from a secure location in a distraction-free environment.

MOTION TO ADJOURN (Whitford, J. Mahar): To adjourn at 7:28 P.M. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Tenglund