

**MEETING MINUTES**  
Olean Public Library Board of Trustees  
September 16, 2020  
**5:30 P.M. – Zoom Teleconference Call**

The meeting was open to the public and a Zoom link was provided.

*The mission of the Olean Public Library is to provide equal access to materials in various formats, programs, services, and professional staff to assist all people with their educational, informational and leisure needs.*

A Certificate of Compliance and Notice of Meeting Posted was signed, notarized and made a part of these minutes along with a copy of said notice.

**Call to Order** at 5:37 pm by Lanna Waterman. In attendance were trustees Edstrom, Kasperski, McElfresh, Sorokes, Tenglund, Wagner, Waterman, treasurer Elser, assistant director Mahar, and director La Voie.

1. Waive the reading of the minutes of the previous meetings and approve as mailed.
2. Approval of Warrant Sheets for August 19—September 16:  
#904 Operating Fund: \$60,136.73
  - Elser said that she had reviewed all of the bank records and made sure everything tied from the bank, the warrant sheets, the checks, and the original documentation.
  - **MOTION (Wagner, Sorokes):** To approve the warrant sheets. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Review of Financial Statements
  - Elser said that she looked through the financial statements. Everything looked good, even though we do not know what our state aid will be. Kasperski agreed that there was nothing else of concern.
  - Regarding the state aid. La Voie said that she has been told through CCLS that they will let us know if they hear anything on when the aid would be released. We budgeted \$32,740, but this year we will also get Prendergast's portion, so we will actually get around \$76,000. We normally would have received this by July. That is the only anomaly on the revenue side.
  - We are also down on library charges and copy machine revenue.
  - Gifts and donations will most likely be fine. The Friends larger donation will come in this fall.
  - Kasperski said that the expenditures looked good for eight months in. Of course, retirement is not in there. But it is in line with where we would expect to be, especially considering the time that the building was closed. La Voie agreed, and noted that it is still slow.
  - La Voie noted that the publishing and printing industry is also not supplying print materials like they normally would. She suggested moving \$10,000 out of print purchases to e-book purchases, because we can obtain e-books at this point.
  - Kasperski noted that we have not heard anything from the retirement system. The market has rebounded and it will probably be okay, but we do not know that yet. La Voie noted that we do not have a lot of people enrolled at this point. Elser noted that the rates would normally have been out for months at this point; they usually try not to adjust during the year. There could be an adjustment next year or the year after. It is not even just the people who are currently working, but it is also the retirees.

- Elser attended a webinar on record retention. There have been some changes for libraries. They talked about retention needed for new library card information, how long you have to keep interlibrary loan documents, especially if copied, and also how long to keep parental consents. There is a lot of talk about screenings. They have not changed the record retention book since 1994, so they are asking all public boards to re-adopt the record retention schedule. There is a sample motion that La Voie will have researched and presented to the board. The document is searchable so that it will be easier to find out how long to keep something. You only have to keep checks, deposits, etc. for 60 days, but the IRS requires keeping this material for seven years, so that is what the library will stick with. La Voie will send out the sample motion language for a future meeting.
- Elser said that Kasperski had suggested that she get a feel for the last state audit, which she has done. She has also looked at the BWB report, and has conversed with Scott Reed. She had found nine instances in the published report that was missing information, but this was most likely due to links that were not working when it was published/printed. Also, the actual expenditures, rather than the budget, were noted as authorized by the board. It was decided that it would be good for Elser to spend some time with BWB to understand where the numbers are coming from so that she is comfortable signing these forms in the future. We will need to ensure that the forms that were filed with the state have the correct numbers. BWB would also need to re-issue the portions that were wrong after publishing.

4. Correspondence: None

5. Voice of the Public: None

6. Director's Report

- Library reopening: the library expanded its hours with the schools reopening. Overall traffic remains slow, most likely due to the need to wear masks while using the library as well as social distancing. There have not been major problems with these requirements though. An after school program is also being offered.
- Future Pandemic Planning is required by the state and Mahar will work on this.
- Personnel: Library page Meaghan Johnson, who has been out on maternity leave, has resigned her position effective September 4, 2020, in order to stay home with her baby. Abigail Meek was hired as a library page on September 9, 2020.
- 2021 Personnel Budget: La Voie suggested that we wait to post the full-time programming librarian position until the limitations on in-person programming are lifted. Minimum wage is going up again, which further strains our budget, especially as we did not request a tax increase for 2021. It is going up by 70 cents per hour per year. She suggested a maximum two percent increase for performance evaluations, excluding staff who receive the minimum wage increase. She also had recommendations for library assistants and part-time librarians who worked very hard throughout the shutdown and continue to do so. With these changes, we would go from \$779,000 to \$754,000 in the personnel line. Elser is also looking into whether we need to offer paid sick leave for part-time staff.
  - We did not lay anyone off during the shutdown. Employees would have been entitled to unemployment but the library would have to pay it. Discussion ensued regarding what the rules are when someone says that they could not work certain hours.
  - La Voie provided this information to the board for consideration when the board approves the budget.

- Kasperski suggested keeping the original personnel line item amounts in the budget in case additional hiring is necessary. La Voie agreed that we should keep the lines the same, but we may have to shift in some other lines.
- We may see reductions in lines such as travel and professional fees in 2021.
- We will need to make some adjustments overall.
- State Aid to Central Libraries: The state granted Prendergast's request for a waiver from the cuts to Central Library Aid, which means that Central Library Aid will be fully restored to the levels it was before the cuts. However, in this year's state budget, Cuomo cut library aid by 2.6 percent, with an additional 20 percent cut after COVID hit. Due to CLA being fully restored, we will receive more than we originally thought we would.
- National Grid Bill: The library's National Grid bill has increase substantially over the past six months, as well as over last summer's bills in the same months. They saw an increase of over 4,000 kWh per month starting in mid-February, indicating it may have something to do with the new rooftop HVAC units. La Voie contacted the contractor and our clerk-of-the-works to inquire about this and research is being done to see what caused the overage and/or if it has been resolved.
- 2021 Holiday Schedule: **MOTION (Tenglund, Waterman)**: To approve the 2021 holiday schedule. Motion carried with one opposed (Wagner).
  - Some board members thought that there were too many holidays. However, the library is very quiet on those holidays, and we save money when the library is closed for a holiday as well.
- WNYLRC, CCLS, and NYLA Annual Meetings: These meetings will be held virtually this year. The WNYLRC meeting will be 9/29, the CCLS meeting will be 10/14, and the NYLA conference is 11/5-6. The Friends of the Olean Public Library's award will be presented during the conference, although we do not yet have a time.
- Friends of the Library: In August, the Friends approved a gift of \$1,500 to support the Library's Summer Reading Program. In September, they approved a gift of an additional \$5,000 to support annual programming at the Library. Even with the shutdown, the library spent money on crafting supplies for patrons in online programs, digital subscriptions, and online platforms. We are grateful for the solid support of the Friends during these times. The Friends are also busy with planning the FeBREWary Beer Tasting fundraiser on February 19 at 7-9:30 pm. There are plans for how it can be held, even with social distancing.
- Library News: WPIG gave a shout-out in August regarding the Library's online trivia programs. La Voie attended a webinar on trauma-informed library services; the meeting had discussed the possibility of hiring social work student interns to help serve patrons facing problems.
- Moving funds from books to e-resources: **MOTION (Edstrom, Sorokes)**: To move \$10,000 from the book budget to the e-resources budget. Motion carried unanimously.

## 7. Committee Reports

- CCLS: Edstrom said that they discussed a lot of Chautauqua County business. The construction aid funds were entirely allocated. The annual business meeting is 10/14, and the CCLS board meeting will immediately follow the annual meeting. It was also noted that Reed McElfresh would take over for Edstrom at the end of the year.

## 8. Old Business

Check signer; Community Bank Trust Department signature form

- A signed copy of the minutes is needed for adding Elser as a check signer.
- Elser will also be added to the trust forms.

Medical Loan Closet partnership opportunity

- Soborowski said that since August, she has done additional research on the Medical Loan Closet.
- Karen Buchheit, from the Cattaraugus Regional Foundation, contacted her to offer help and offer some funding. A foundation associated with the Motherhouse has also offered support. She also had contact from the Visiting Nurses' Association and the Department of the Aging. The Department of the Aging is also going to do an e-book collection with the library, and they can also help with obtaining specialized medical equipment.
- Soborowski has contacted other libraries and special lending libraries to find out what their liability waivers were. She has this information, and also visited a medical loan closet that operates out of a library in Orchard Park. They also offered to seed our loan closet by providing some medical equipment. They have shared their policies and procedures as well, including gift policies, and guidelines so that they do not get overwhelmed.
- One of the library assistants is friends with someone from the Rural Revitalization Corporation, which is interested in partnering. They were hoping to start a tool library. They have a building on Barry Street. They would like help setting up their tool library, including cataloging and circulation management. The building they have is too big for what they need, and they could accommodate our need for space for the medical equipment. There is plenty of storage space for both types of libraries, and there is a wheelchair ramp. The utilities are paid from grants. They would not seek rent money from us. It would probably require a memorandum of understanding.
- Wagner and Kasperski were going to look into forming an LLC. Wagner said that it helps to know more about what we are envisioning before looking at that. However, we need to be careful about, and ensure that it is legal, for the library to part of another entity. Wagner and Kasperski will discuss it more.
  - Scott Brook, from the insurance agency, was in support of the project and wrote that it is important for the community. He was in favor of it operating as a separate LLC. He asked that the board give him time to find insurers to underwrite a policy.
- Sorokes agreed that it was a need in the community. He noted that in the past, it was hard to find hours when the closet was open, and their ability to accept new inventory was somewhat limited. It is good to know that this type of service is operating well elsewhere. He felt that forming an LLC was the only way to go. He was not sure about being in partnership of another non-profit at this time. We would need to know that their financial situation was strong. We need to decide what we want to do before we complicate the issue by tying into another non-profit.
- Kasperski noted that there were two basic decisions: whether we will run it, and how it will be funded. Then structure decisions can be made. We need to determine if we are putting physical and human resources towards the process. Is there another group that might also do this?
- Soborowski said that in envisioning the project, it would not cost the library money to fund the project. She would be taking on more volunteers to supervise with the project. In the past, the loan closet was financially self-sustaining, and that should continue. She noted that La Voie had directed her to look at partnerships with agencies in the area. In addition, other libraries are involved with lending all sorts of things, including all manner of equipment, hosting makerspaces, etc. Being behind an innovative project that lends things to the community is not beyond the scope of our mission. In addition, having partnerships helps entities attract grant

funding. The partnership would mean that the library would be able to use some of their space, and they would get librarian expertise for setting up loan management.

- It was noted that many board members felt that the Medical Loan Closet was important to the community. La Voie noted that it was a valuable project for the library as well, and could help to increase the visibility and relevance of the library. Because we are a taxing authority, we want people to know what types of things we do, and how we can help with projects in the community. Currently, there is no Medical Loan Closet.
- The issue of repairs to equipment was discussed. In Orchard Park, they did not have to repair equipment because they had enough donations so that worn out equipment did not need to be used.
- Some board members would be most comfortable if this was a separate organization, with its own board. If the library wanted to lend staff (a commitment of resources and dollars), that would be fine. This might be better than having it under the library. It would work better for the library if it was a separate group, and we can support their efforts by managing volunteers and other needed things.
- Others agreed—it would be better to be a partner rather than the manager of this. Could another foundation help, with the library providing loan management assistance. It seemed that the Cattaraugus Regional Foundation was more likely to fund than to provide staffing assistance.
- La Voie noted that it would be beneficial for people to know that the library is associated. We would be stepping in to make sure a need is met. And our insurance broker did say that it needed to be set up as an LLC, due to potential liability issues. Other issues board members discussed was whether we could have an LLC inside the library's domain.
- The idea that it is a valuable resource is a no-brainer, but some board members were nervous about entering into an agreement with a separate organization, yet we would be nervous about doing it without a partnership as well.
- In other libraries, they did not form an LLC, and they used liability forms. We would have these same issues with other innovative projects that other libraries are doing, such as makerspaces. Libraries that lend out tool such as chain saws and lawn mowers could also have large liability issues, yet they are successfully operating. However, waivers do not stop lawsuits.
- The Medical Loan Closet loans for free. Recipients can make a donation if they wish.
- There is another library in the Finger Lakes that offers a makerspace that partners with industries. They got grant money to purchase high-tech equipment
- We would need a lot of insurance when we are talking about personal injury risk. We currently do not have that level of risk. Do we want to expose ourselves to that level of risk, and how can we protect ourselves? La Voie suggested asking Scott Brook to do more research. If he is able to find an insurance company to cover it, then we can explore it further. It was decided to put the idea on hold until we hear back from Brook.
- One question to answer is if we want to manage this in-house? Some board members noted that they were fine with it, and it is a huge help to the community. It is already established in the community. If the answer is yes, then we need to know how much staff time from the library would be needed, and if the insurance can be found. We also need to know if there are any dollar commitments.

- The board took a straw poll on the concept. Two board members were in favor. Others noted that if we did not want to be a part of it, we should not ask Soborowski to spend more time on it. Some felt that we could be part of the solution, but the library should not be the coordinator. Others noted that our future involves creative partnerships, but there are risks involved. It could be a big asset to the community. Some board members were not 100% there in knowing if we were the best agent to drive it, but they were open to more conversation. We could be an agency to lend assistance, but it might not be where we should put our efforts.
- La Voie encouraged the board to give Scott Brook time to research it further to see if insurers can be found. Some board members thought we could find insurance, but the question is, do we want to manage that and is it in our mission. Also, do we know if we can have a sub-entity. La Voie said that she could get a legal opinion through the WNYLRC Ask a Lawyer service. If it was set up as a separate board, we could lend staff to it. If the whole point is building our brand and expanding our services, how far into this are we willing to go? We would need to have it recognized that the library stepped in. After the initial article was in the paper, the library received a lot of positive feedback. But there might be other places that would help, such as health care industries. They could manage it and we could help.

#### 9. New Business

Board Committees (Finance, Administrative, Buildings & Grounds): During this past year, the committee membership was as follows:

- The Administrative Committee was Waterman, Wagner, and Sorokes. [McElfresh was added]. *Waterman is ex officio, as President, on all of the committees.*
- Kasperski, Wagner and Edstrom were on Buildings & Grounds. [McElfresh replaced Kasperski].
- Kasperski, Wagner, and Tenglund were on Finance. [No changes].

It was decided that McElfresh would replace Kasperski on the Buildings & Grounds Committee and will also join the Administrative Committee.

Check signer: **MOTION (McElfresh, Kasperski):** To add Kathy Elser as a check signer. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Adjournment: **MOTION TO ADJOURN (Kasperski, Sorokes):** To adjourn at 7:40 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

**Reminder:** Sexual Harassment Training must be completed by October 15, 2020. Board members need to return documentation to Michelle.

Copies of the library's financial statements and director's report are available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Tenglund

