

**MEETING MINUTES**  
Olean Public Library Board of Trustees  
August 19, 2020  
**5:30 P.M. – Zoom Teleconference Call**

The meeting was open to the public and Zoom meeting information was made available

*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** by Lanna Waterman at 5:30 pm. In attendance were trustees Edstrom, Kasperski (left at 6:40 pm), McElfresh, Tenglund, Wagner (left at 6:40 pm), Waterman, Assistant Director Mahar, and Director La Voie.

1. Consent Agenda Items: **MOTION (Edstrom, Tenglund):** To approve the consent agenda items. Motion carried unanimously.
  - A. Waive the reading of the minutes of the previous meetings and approve as mailed.
  - B. Approval of Warrant Sheets for July 16 – August 19:  
# 903 Operating Fund: \$76,811.03
    - The expenditures on the warrant sheets were reviewed by La Voie.
    - The library needs an electrician to look at the HVAC units due to excessive energy use. The problem started in mid-February when the HVAC units were installed.
  - C. Correspondence: Letter from the Friends of Libraries Section of the New York Library Association regarding the award to our Friends group. The award will be announced at a virtual meeting tentatively scheduled for November 17. We can then plan a reception for them whenever it is safe to do so. A board member of the NYLA Friends of Libraries Section would try to attend a reception to present a plaque.
  - D. Voice of the Public: None
  - E. Director's Report
    - Hours and Working with the Schools:
      - Hours will be expanding soon. The library will open at 10 am
      - Schools will be letting out at 1:30 pm, so there is a possibility that the library will be bustling. But students are supposed to then log in online for another hour of school. Students who take the bus will not be able to log in that quickly, either. The early dismissal is to allow for additional building cleaning time.
      - It is good that the library can serve as an educational resource, but we need to observe social distancing, and we need to have activities or supervision for the students. Staff members will need to watch the door counter to ensure that building occupancy remains in line.
      - The school is looking for partners to provide space and resources.

- The library has adequate broadband unless people are gaming. The library would not have enough computers, but it would be okay if students brought their own laptops. They are still waiting to hear about the Manley Grant, which would provide for additional laptops.
- Shared Work Program: we are not eligible for this program through the Department of Labor.
- Workplace Accommodation Request and Medical Accommodation Form
  - It would be good to have these forms on hand so that we would have them when needed.
  - In the past, people were asked to bring in a note from a physician explaining what the restrictions are and the length of time that an accommodation would be needed.
  - The forms came from an attorney. La Voie will check with the attorney to ensure that asking for medical information is legal, as there was a disclaimer on the form.
  - **MOTION (Waterman, McElfresh):** To approve of the proposed forms, pending additional legal approval. Motion carried unanimously.
- Other informational items included paid sick leave, annual sexual harassment prevention training, staff training opportunities, and information on WNYLRC strategic planning.

## 2. Review of Financial Statements

- We do not know when state aid will come in.
- Books are still under budget in terms of spending, because there are continuing issues with receiving orders.
- All other budget lines are in good shape and tracking close to where they should be.
- Cleaning supplies have been an additional expense.
- There was a question as to when gifts tend to come in. We are tracking close to where we usually are. Also, some gifts tend to come in closer to the end of the year.

## 3. Committee Reports

### **CCLS Board Meeting Report** (Linda Edstrom)

- There was a Zoom meeting last Wednesday.
- The biggest news was that Prendergast Library's budget referendum was approved by City of Jamestown voters. Prendergast will become a co-central library again in January 2021. Through December, Olean will be the sole central library. The state reduced our central library aid because of the Jamestown situation for three years, and now there are additional cuts due to state budget deficits.
- The annual meeting will be a business meeting only, over Zoom.
- It was noted that the CCLS Board is comprised of five representatives from Chautauqua County and four from Cattaraugus County.

## 4. Old Business

### **Treasurer Position** (Kathy Elser joined the meeting for an introduction)

La Voie noted that the treasurer is not a formal member of the board, but does take an oath of office and reports directly to the board. She will review bank statements, reconcile them with Peachtree, and review financial statements prior to the board meeting. The treasurer oversees deposits to the bank as well. It is another check and balance. Elser had met with La Voie and Kasperski prior to the board meeting.

Elser has just retired as the business administrator for the city school district. She was in that position for 16 years, and prior to that was a bank auditor. She also has the educational qualifications. She spoke with Kasperski about the state audit expectations as well as those of the board. She will make sure that bills are paid in a timely manner as well.

Check signing was discussed. The treasurer is supposed to be a signer.

La Voie said that the previous problems with the Peachtree accounting software have been corrected.

**MOTION (Tenglund, Kasperski):** To appoint Kathy Elser to the Treasurer Position. Motion carried unanimously.

## 5. New Business

**Medical Loan Closet partnership opportunity** (Sheryl Soborowski and Medical Loan Closet co-manager Vicky McKinney joined the meeting)

[NOTE: Please see addendum at the end of the minutes for presentation information provided by Soborowski.]

Soborowski introduced McKinney, who is a nurse and a co-manager. The other co-manager was unable to attend.

When Soborowski saw that the Medical Loan Closet was closing, she thought it might be a good outreach/partnership project. Libraries loan out all different types of things. Libraries are uniquely positioned to catalog and loan out equipment. It would be durable medical goods, like hospital beds, lifts, walkers, wheelchairs. They would have nothing disposable.

The closet has helped people from as far away as Rochester and Buffalo. Social workers and home health aides from the county use it. Many county social workers contacted Soborowski to express support for the project.

Pickup and delivery is expected to be arranged by the person renting the equipment.

The current co-managers are willing to continue to manage the service and it did not seem that there would be any problems retaining or attracting new volunteers.

Monetary donations come into the loan closet as well from people asking for loans, as well as other local agencies. It is also something that could attract grants. Karen Buchheit from the Community Foundation said that they would like to help with funding. She has been contacted by other organizations in the region who have offered assistance as well.

Soborowski already has one offer for warehouse space, but they are still looking for operational storage space; others are considering the space. The next steps would be to contact our insurance company to see if there are any adjustments needed, as well as an attorney to see if there were any liability issues. In terms of liability, McKinney said that they have not had any problems with liability that she knew of. They have had instances

where people who were heavier could not use equipment that was rated for a smaller person, and they tell them if it is not rated for a certain size. They cannot dictate how the borrower uses the equipment though. But there has never been any legal action, and she has volunteered there for seven years.

When they get new equipment in, they wash and sanitize it. At that point, they look it over for safety. If it is not safe, it is recycled.

The only information that they ask for is name, address, and phone number.

The loan closet was not a formal, legal entity. The history of the loan closet was discussed. A church owned the building where the loan closet was formerly housed. Donations went through the church as well. The church had insurance on it. McKinney thought that it was mostly for fire protection and that the church would have had liability protection. The church has a very small membership, and they are not able to continue with the loan closet. The building had to be used for a nonprofit, so it will be used for a counseling center in the future.

Expenses were telephone and Internet. They had a computer to help people decide what type of equipment they needed. They can also see prices for equipment if they are considering a purchase of something. They also need to have plumbing to have water, etc., to clean equipment.

It is not necessary to have someone with a medical background to staff the loan closet, but it helps to have had experience caring for someone who is sick. Sometimes they just need suggestions on where to find a special piece of equipment that the loan closet does not have. Other times, clients come in with a specific list from a therapist. Soborowski noted that other volunteers can be trained to do these types of consultations as well.

The library staff would not be providing the advice for the equipment; it would be handled in the operational space that they are hoping to find for the loan closet. In addition, it helps if clients can look at the equipment to decide if it is something that would be useful.

Wagner looked at the proposition from a legal point of view. What the loan closet does is wonderful and it is very worthwhile. However, we cannot say that we do not give out any medical advice, but then give them tips like this equipment isn't rated for a person of this size, and then they get hurt, the library could be sued. We would have to be well insured for those kinds of potential situations. Medical equipment carries risks. And if you determine if equipment is safe or not, then you are implicitly saying that the equipment is safe. Lawsuits will come in if someone gets hurt. But if we can insure for it, then it would work. It would be smart to get insurance. We also would need to check on workers' compensation coverage for our staff. However, the closet is staffed by volunteers and we would need to check to see how we would be protected for volunteers who could get injured handling equipment, etc.

La Voie noted that other libraries lend a variety of things, including equipment that requires training, such as heavy equipment and power tools. People sometimes have to sign waivers. It would be good to find out what these libraries do.

Other questions were discussed, such as what it would mean operationally for the library. The article that was in the Olean Times Herald was to gauge interest and find potential partners. The partners would provide volunteers and funding. It was not estimated that the Medical Loan Closet would have any impact on the library budget, even if it was necessary to rent a small space for it. In addition, it should be easy to attract grant funding. Staffing would be done by volunteers. Ideas for forming a financial organization for the loan closet were also discussed.

Issues to resolve include finding a suitable location, finding out how other libraries handle these types of loans, and considering the insurance needs. It was decided that Kasperski and Wagner would meet offline to talk further as well. This will be further discussed at a future meeting.

**2020-2021 Board Committee membership** (Finance, Administrative, Buildings & Grounds)

- This will be discussed at a future meeting when all board members were present. The membership of the committees currently were:
  - Finance Committee: Kasperski, Wagner, Tenglund
  - Administrative Committee: Wagner, Waterman, Sorokes
  - Buildings & Grounds Committee: Kasperski, Edstrom, Wagner

**Appreciation of Staff:** Waterman noted that board members are appreciative of everything that the library staff members have been doing during this time. She asked La Voie to share thanks with the staff members.

6. Adjournment: **MOTION TO ADJOURN (Tenglund, Edstrom):** at 7:17 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Next meeting: September 16, 2020

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

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Tenglund

**Addendum: Medical Loan Closet Presentation Notes provided by Sheryl Soborowski**

Introduce the co-managers of the current Olean Medical Loan Closet  
Vicky McKinney, RN  
Norma Britt (could not attend)

After seeing the original article in the newspaper about the Olean Medical Loan Closet closing, I had an idea. As Outreach Librarian for the library, I am pursuing the possibility of creating a Medical Loan outreach via the library and some community partners. I am currently researching partners and a possible location.

My idea is not unheard of in the world of libraries. Libraries currently have collections of and loan out everything from telescopes to cake pans. I've heard of libraries with loan programs for digital media, adaptive toys, fishing poles, seeds, and household tools. Our own library system loans out museum passes and can perpetuate the loan of adaptive technologies from the NYS Talking Book and Braille Library.

---The library is uniquely positioned to catalog and inventory medical equipment and manage their loan and request lists with library card numbers.

---The equipment for loan are durable medical goods. Expensive items like hospital beds, lifts, four prong canes, and walkers. (The service does not include disposable items or needles or medicines.)

---The Medical Loan Closet has helped people from as far away as Rochester, Buffalo, and NW PA. It is a unique service unheard of in other parts of WNY. OGH, OMG, VNA, Social Workers from the County and home health aides all utilize the service.

---\*\*\*IMPORTANT: We are not accepting donations of any medical goods yet. Even if we do the donations would be accepted at the location and not at the library.\*\*\* We are currently seeking partner organizations that could provide space to house the program.

---All items loaned are required to be picked up. All lifting and delivery is expected to be arranged by the person renting the equipment.

---The current managers estimate that the service could be operated with as little as 8 hours a week volunteer time with two open days a week.

With items cataloged in our library system customers could call the library to make reservations...the library is open many, many hours, giving folks an easier time to access information on the Loan Closet.

---The current Medical Loan Closet volunteers are willing to continue to volunteer and help us continue this service.

To start this process I spent 2 hours with the managers of the Loan Closet to see the facility and learn about their operation.

Some facts:

---The current Loan Closet building will not be available.

---They don't do repairs. The donations are so forthcoming it's not worth the time and expense.

---The donation money slushed into the church but the co-managers estimate it's around \$12,000 just for the closet.

---It's a very grantable project.

---The current managers are willing to continue volunteering and for the future, I foresee the community being very supportive of this endeavor...

Anecdotes:

---As I arrived at the Loan Closet a family heard about my idea and immediately said they would show up to build shelving or whatever I needed.

---I got numerous phone calls from individuals that offered to volunteer almost immediately after they read the OTH article.

---Interfaith Caregivers contacted me to say they did not have storage space but they did have a network of volunteers and they would like to explore a partnership wherein they could do referrals for people who needed equipment. I am also the volunteer coordinator for the library so I can assume the responsibility for keeping it staffed.

Brainstorming possible donators:

- VNA
- Allegany American Legion
- grants for Veterans (need to keep stats)
- Rotary
- VFW

Requirements of a space:

- About the size of a large classroom
- 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- Utility sink
- Washer dryer
- Cleaning supplies, paper products, computer, internet, phone
- Shelving/cabinets
- Telephone
- computer

#### Contacts Made:

Karen Buchheit from the Cattaraugus Region Community Foundation called and offered her help for when we are ready or need to ask for funding for the Medical Loan Closet. She says the Foundation would like to fund the closet in some way. She also gave me contact info on the Renodin foundation through the Allegany Motherhouse and a contact for a potential property.

“Pay It Forward” group Salamanca

Nate Smith –Worth W. Smith and other warehouse space ideas

IJN Epic Church – Pastor Chuck Main

Jeff Belt – Sol Epoxy (space available but then contacted Mr. Savarino.)

Savarino --community benefit spaces

- Manny Hanny
- Seigal Shoes

Future contacts?

- Larry Sorokes InTandem
- Foundations for Change
- Believers Chapel

Action steps:

- call insurance company
- liability advice of a lawyer (do we need a release form?)
- find partner with space
- insurance riders for a volunteer that gets hurt?

Notes: Mr. Wagner and Mr. Kasperski will discuss LLC and insurance options.