

MEETING MINUTES
Olean Public Library Board of Trustees
March 15, 2023
5:30 pm – 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 5:32 pm by President Lanna Waterman. In attendance were trustees J. Mahar, McElfresh, Shumway, Sorokes (on Zoom), Tenglund, Waterman, Whitford, Treasurer Elser, Assistant Director K. Mahar, and Director La Voie.

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 February 16-March 15:
#935 Operating Fund: \$96,648.37
#310 Capital Fund: \$7,600.00

Discussion:

- Some checks were not cashed, so they were voided and reissued. Uncashed checks have to be reissued if not cashed within six months.
- The “Other Miscellaneous” revenue category was up due to the disability reimbursement.
- Operations and Maintenance are up because Stormer had to repairs.
- Everything else looked good on the warrant sheets.

4. Review of Financial Statements

Discussion:

- Investment interest looked good.

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

5. Director’s Report

NYS Construction Aid

- At the February board meeting, trustees voted not to accept either of the two bids submitted for the HVAC replacement project, for which we received Construction Aid in 2022. The bids came in significantly higher than the initial quote for the project, and so for that reason, it was felt the project should be put on hold for now. We can amend our original application for Construction Aid and use the funding for a different project. Because the project began within the 180-day requirement (the bids counted towards that), we have until June 30, 2027, to complete whatever project we decide to use the funds for, as long as the division of Library Development approves.
- Our clerk of the works, Curt Wallace, sent letters to each contractor who submitted a bid, notifying them that the board rejected all of the bids due to coming in over budget.

Treasurer Position

- Treasurer Kathy Elser announced her intention to retire in June. There are potential candidates to consider. Elser and La Voie will meet with potential candidates to discuss the job duties. With a highly competent business office manager, the treasurer position should return to requiring an average of 4-8 hours per month. The primary responsibilities are reviewing the monthly financials and doing the bank reconciliations.

Friends of the Library

- The Friends held their annual beer-tasting fundraiser, FeBREWary, on Friday, Feb. 17th from 7–9:30 pm at the Library. Over 100 people attended, and the Friends raised over \$3,000 to benefit the Library!
- The Friends have set a date for this year’s Bookmark Awards Ceremonies. They will be held on Saturday, May 6th; one will be held in the morning and one in the afternoon.
- The Friends approved paying for parts needed to get the 3D printers donated by Boundless Connections up and running.

News from the Library

- Programming librarian Alijah Fox created a video for Library Advocacy Day, which was held in Albany on February 28th. WNYLRC shared the video with legislators as part of their advocacy efforts.
- The Library has plans to start a weekly coffee and conversation program (a passive program, meaning it won’t be staff-led) in the gallery beginning during National Library Week in April.

6. Committee Reports

Finance Committee (Shumway) [Strategic Plan Goal 2]

- We seem to be caught in a bidding war between the trust and legal sides of the bank.
- The upcoming trustee training will include information on investments.
- The board could set aside a reserve fund for employee benefits. The library can set up this reserve based on potential benefits that would need to be paid when someone retires or leaves, such as unused vacation pay. The business office can calculate what is pending.
- The other reserve that could be used is ERS for employee retirement. It will allow us to calculate and project out five years of what the bill would be so that we can set aside the proper amount of funds.
- The purpose of a reserve is to allow the library to pay benefits or retirement even if something happens to a funding stream. We would still need to pay these benefits or the retirement bill, and a reserve could help to offset anything in these areas. It would be for rainy-day scenarios, such as a significant drop in the stock market.
- We can decide to move funds to reserve at any time, but it is good to have an audit first, which we had.
- When you have a reserve fund, you still budget for the expenses annually because the reserve is to cover extraordinary measures.
- The auditors have recommended a capitalization policy. La Voie provided a sample policy for review. We can look at it and vote on it next month.
- The board reviewed the current Purchasing Policy with recommended changes. It was noted that we could draft a set of procedures to accompany the policy in the future if the situation warranted.

- The remainder of the Finance Committee report dealt with the budget. The committee had looked at two taxing scenarios: 2% or 2% with a carryover. The Finance Committee recommended using the carryover amount. Given all the years we went without asking for tax increases, we need to go for the maximum amount this year due to financial circumstances and the economy.
- On the appropriations side, the spreadsheet showed different personnel scenarios regarding salary, including 2%, 3%, or variable (because we have one full-time person on staff who is increased to the minimum NYS exempt amount, which creates a situation that affects all the other full-time, exempt employees).
- The increase for all staff last year was more than the minimum; therefore, this year it would be 4.46% for the exempt employee. Using a variable increase would give the same dollar amount that it equates to for that person, and then it becomes a variable percentage based on that figure for other full-time staff working in a professional capacity. Support staff would get a 2% increase.
- The committee looked at our 2022 actual spending and found areas where we can achieve savings that are reasonable. We looked at the capital improvement line that is there to balance the budget, but we usually use the capital fund to pay for capital improvements, so we were okay with zeroing that out. Postage rates are increasing, so we can bring this line down by not mailing our newsletters. Printouts will be available at the library. Professional fees could be reduced because we have a different auditor. The other administrative line can also be reduced because our actuals have been coming in less. Technology equipment spending was higher in 2022 because of a grant assigned to that line. We have a restricted reserve that can also fund some of that line. Overall, we achieved quite a bit of savings.
- Teen program attendance has gone up. Teen Room attendance was around 360, which is impressive. Also, adult programs have been popular.
- We may not be digging into fund balance the way the budget makes it look like we will because we tend to budget for the highest-cost case scenarios which often end up coming in lower.
- Discussion on the budget ensued:
 - Board members need to be prepared to justify the budget and tax numbers. We will have examples of what the budget will mean to individual taxpayers.

7. Old Business

Library space needs – updates [SP Goals 1,2,3]

- **MOTION (McElfresh, J. Mahar):** To enter executive session at 6:16 pm to discuss space needs and personnel. The motion carried unanimously.
- **MOTION (Whitford, Shumway):** To leave the executive session at 7:04 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Trustee Training

- Trustee training will touch on capital project issues, investments, and essential responsibilities.

2023 Trustee election and 2024 budget vote

- The upcoming votes will be advertised.

2024 proposed budget [action item]

- **MOTION (Tenglund, Whitford):** To approve the 2 percent tax increase + carryover and the variable salary increase scenario of the 2024 proposed budget. The motion carried unanimously.

8. New Business

2022 Annual Report to the Community [SP Goal 3]

- This report will be made available along with the budget.
- **MOTION (Whitford, Tenglund):** To approve the Community Annual Report for 2022. The motion carried unanimously.

Capitalization policy

- The board will vote on this in April.

EBLAR reserve

- The EBLAR reserve can be established to equal the amount noted in the audit report. Details of this were discussed in the Finance Committee report section.
- **MOTION (Tenglund, McElfresh):** To establish the Employee Benefit Liability Accrued Reserve (EBLAR) reserve at an amount equal to the reserve for accrued leave and benefits in the annual audit report. The motion carried unanimously.

Amend purchasing policy

- **MOTION (Tenglund, Shumway):** To approve the changes to the Purchasing Policy. The motion carried unanimously.
- Details were discussed under the Finance Committee report section.

MOTION TO ADJOURN (Whitford, McElfresh): at 7:19 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Tenglund