

**MEETING MINUTES**  
Olean Public Library Board of Trustees  
December 18, 2014  
**5:30 P.M. – Conference Room**

*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 5:35 pm by Lanna Waterman. In attendance were trustees Wagner, Tenglund, McElfresh, Casey, Wolfram, Assistant Director Mahar, and Director Chaffee.

1. Consent Agenda Items: A motion was made by Tenglund, seconded by Wolfram, 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 Nov 21 – Dec 18:  
Operating Fund: #835 - \$73,098.88  
Cafeteria 125 Fund: #125-115 - \$54.02
  - C. Correspondence: None
  - D. Director's Report

Chaffee reported that the Connect NY grant, which we were awarded last year for computer equipment and other things, will be reimbursing the library for its grant expenditures next week. Everything else he had to report was in his written report.

2. Review of Financial Statements

Chaffee reviewed the financial statements. He noted that we were ahead of where we thought we would be at this time of year because we have taken in more than we had anticipated. Under appropriations, there were a few items in the red, but most were a matter of timing. Under clerical staff, we began Sunday hours in November, which affected that line. Fuel and utilities were a concern. We are not using that much more kilowatt hours than last year, but the rate is so high now that the bills are high. A big part of the overage in this line was due to electricity. The state retirement line, another uncontrollable expense, was also high. The bottom line was healthy and was expected to remain healthy throughout the rest of the month. There was a potential that we could end this year with some funding.

This time last year we adopted a budget that called for us to use \$77K of fund balance, but we may end the year with a balance to put back into the fund instead. Last month we talked about a concern over possibly using up the entire fund balance, and for the most part, it is not necessary to draw from the fund balance at the end of each budget year. We did use the fund balance in the past for a boiler, the roof, etc., which is what this fund is for. This is why there is a depreciation expense built into the budget each year.

3. Committee Reports:

Library System Board – McElfresh said that the board met last week in Kennedy, NY. The board reviewed policies, approved the budget, elected a new treasurer, and welcomed a new member. The system is in good shape and the system director is liked, respected, and on top of things.

Library Exhibit – no report

4. Voice of the Public: None

5. Old Business:

**Review, discuss, adopt the 2015 Proposed Library Budget**

The board discussed the proposed budget reduction options, which were incorporated into the 2015 proposed budget. Some of the items were put in to get some discussion going.

If we eliminated Sunday hours, we would not save as much in utility costs as originally thought, since the library is not open 12 hours on a Sunday.

Eliminating the insurance policies would leave the board and the library at risk. Board members agreed that it would not be a responsible thing to eliminate the policies.

The workman's compensation reduction is a given because of a rate reduction.

Tenglund spoke against making any further cuts. Chaffee had pointed out earlier in the meeting that there was no need to dip into the fund balance for FY 2014's expenses. Every year we approve a conservative budget that often has included use of the fund balance, but then, due to careful management of the budget by Chaffee and Mahar, we end up not needing to dip into it.

Discussion ensued regarding the pay telephone. It costs \$1,100 per year. The only paid use of the phone now is by patrons who need to call a taxi. These calls could be made at the desk. It seemed that it would make good sense to eliminate the pay telephone.

We get good coverage through the Olean Times Herald. The library also uses social media extensively.

If we only cut the telephone, there is the potential that we would use money from the fund balance. There is always the depreciation expense that we are covering. However, in recent years, as earlier reported, the only use we have made of the fund balance is for capital expenditures such as the boiler or the roof.

The idea of charging for use of the library's meeting room was brought up. It was not known how much we could bring in by charging, and it would probably not be a lot. Most inquiries the library receives are from people or organizations looking for free or low-cost spaces.

Wagner was not a fan of raising taxes or eroding the fund balance. Maybe not this year, but for down the road, we need to think about what happens if the population here continues to decline and the businesses also continue to decline. He would like to see how we could achieve most of our goals for less money so that we would not have to raise taxes. Are there things that we can get rid of? These types of conversations, like how much we could charge for the conference

room, need to be had. Chaffee and Mahar do a good job with managing the funds. In future years, we might find that we need to make further cuts. We should not get too comfortable.

Others noted that organizations such as the hospital have done a great job with getting bequests. The hospital has a full-time fund raising executive. However, what if we approached National Fuel or some other type of company? They donated \$10,000 to the hospital several years in a row. There might be a free-lance fundraiser we could hire part-time, or maybe we could ask the fund raising vice president at the hospital for some advice. We would need a good plan for what we were going to do before we would start anything like this. One difficulty is that if you get used to gifts and all of a sudden they dry up, it could be problematic.

Regarding the budget, we do need to be prudent about all of our expenses. The supervisory committee went through the budget line-by-line to see what they could do without affecting services a lot. As we move forward, if we will not have more income than we have now, then cuts will be necessary. Charging more for services that the library charges for also hurt the users. Even charging five cents more per printout affects patrons. However, raising fees modestly might be an easier way of raising some revenues.

One other issue is the dramatic decline on revenue from investments. We used to make more than \$50,000 or \$60,000 per year on investments. Now we earn a very small amount in comparison, and the library is limited in what it is allowed to invest in. Also, the large increases in state retirement costs have also hurt us a lot.

The proposed budget included a 2% increase in salary for staff.

Sunday hours were discussed. In 2005 we instituted Sunday hours and additional adult programming as a result of a 2004 survey. We decided that since those were big on the list of requests, they would be added. In 2005, we had an FTE of 21.64 working here. Last year we had 18.72 FTE. We are covering the same hours with less personnel. That 18.72 is the lowest it has been since 2000. There were some fluctuations in staffing due to grant funding. Board members noted that it would not be good to reduce Sunday hours because that might be the only time some people can get here. The staff do not like Sunday hours; it is hard to staff. The hours are used on Sunday, but per hour that we are open, it is the slowest number of visitors. However, the circulation of books per hour is higher than other time periods during the week. There are four people here—one at each of the three service points and one person shelving. This is the minimum number of staff to keep the library open. A couple of years ago, the library trimmed back the number of Sunday hours.

The salary cost is the largest component of the entire library.

Are there any services that are so under-utilized that they could be considered for elimination in the future? The librarians are always assessing the programming and how receptive the patrons have been to them. There are some services that are popular but expensive, such as one-on-one tutoring. Possibly a class could be offered instead. They are looking at these issues. Through staff attrition, they could possibly modify the hours that people work so that people could cover more hours.

Would there be a way of closing an hour earlier two or three evenings? These hours could then be used on a Sunday. This would have to be built into the schedule and announced well ahead of time.

There is a gate count available for every hour that the library is open.

A motion was made by Tenglund, seconded by Waterman, to approve the budget (column 6) with the pay telephone eliminated. Motion carried unanimously

6. New Business:

**New Employee Salary Scale for 2015.**

Chaffee explained that this would be for new hires. For 2015, it was raised 1.5%. This does not affect current staff. Minimum wage will be \$8.75 beginning on January 1. We will have a retirement of a full-time staff member next year.

A motion was made by McElfresh, seconded by Wolfram, to approve the 2015 starting salary scale. Motion carried unanimously.

**Library Tax Levy**

A motion was made by McElfresh, seconded by Wolfram, to accept one check from the Olean City School District in the amount of \$979,465.00 for payment of the Library Tax Levy for 2015. Motion carried unanimously.

**Discuss recruitment of Library Board Member(s)**

McElfresh's term is up in June. The election will be in May.

7. Adjournment. A motion was made by McElfresh, seconded by Wolfram, to adjourn at 6:35 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

**Reminders:**

Next Board Meeting 5:30 p.m. on Thursday 1/15/2015 in the Conference Room

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

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Tenglund