

MEETING MINUTES
Olean Public Library Board of Trustees
September 18, 2024
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 5:30 p.m. by Board President Lanna Waterman. In attendance were trustees Copella, J. Mahar, McElfresh, Shumway, Tenglund, Waterman, Whitford, 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: Thank you note from the library staff for the luncheon on training day.
3. Approval of Warrant Sheets for August 15—September 18, 2024:
 #954 Operating Fund: \$98,279.23
 #328 Capital Fund: \$1,297.50

Discussion:

- Books orders have been trending upward.
 - The Technical Services Librarian has been making sure we are purchasing all the popular titles.
4. Review of Financial Statements

Discussion:

- We have received more gifts and donations than expected for 2024.
- We have not used any fund balance as of yet.
- The retirement system bill will come in higher than we budgeted, most likely \$8,000 over, but it can be covered by funds in other lines.
- We are tracking under in personnel because support staff hours have not been as high.
- Maintenance will stay low, and other lines will also be low, so if other items come in higher, we can move funds as needed.
- We need to look at future budgets to eliminate reliance on the fund balance, even if we always use little to no fund balance at the end of the year.
- In October, we can talk about reinvestment of CDs.

MOTION (Tenglund, Copella): To approve Agenda items 1, 3, and 4. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Director's Report

HVAC Unit Replacements

- La Voie had the library join TIPS (The Interlocal Purchasing System) to help with contracts such as the one proposed with Mazza. Concerns over additional costs led to contacting TIPS directly for advice on alternative vendors; they suggested the Scarlett Group, which could reduce the total

project cost. Mazza can work through them. The Scarlett Group will have a third-party company verify pricing.

- La Voie will contact Curt Wallace Engineering to see if he will provide clerk-of-the-works services again. An on-site project manager is unnecessary for a project of this scope.
- Scott Bova plans to visit the library with his HVAC engineer later this month, and they will confer with Mazza to make sure the proposed units will work with the proposed expansion and renovations.
- NYS Construction Aid will cover \$253,469 for the project.

NYS Construction Aid

- CCLS has over \$250,000 remaining in Construction Aid after receiving this year's round of applications from member libraries. Initially, OPL decided to sit this year's round out, as we are concerned that projects that won't be funded for another year or two might not be useful by the time we would be funded.
- However, after hearing about the unallocated funds, La Voie spoke with the architect, and he came back with a proposal to expand the current teen room as a standalone project that would be a part of any upcoming renovations. La Voie submitted a proposal along with a quote of \$317,000, which includes our matching funds. A few other libraries also applied for some of the leftover funds, but they were smaller projects.

Manley Grant

- We received notification in August that the Library's application for a Manley grant to purchase equipment for our emerging Makerspace was funded for \$5,000! While our request was for just over \$7,800, it is not unusual for Manley to approve partial funding. The Friends of the Library might possibly be willing to cover the remaining amount not funded by Manley.
- La Voie sent a thank you letter that included an invitation to Lynn Carleton, who oversees the Manley grant awards at Key Private Bank, to visit the Library if she is ever in the Olean area.

Annual NYS Property Tax Cap Filing

- On September 3, La Voie filed our annual tax cap form with the NYS Comptroller's Office. With PILOTS and Retirement System exclusions and a levy growth factor of 1.02 percent, our total allowable tax levy for 2025 was \$1,127,623. We asked for \$1,124,663.
- Therefore, in 2025, our carryover amount for the 2026 budget vote will be approximately \$2,960. However, at this time, the state has not factored in the Retirement System exclusion, which could reduce that amount.
- When we develop the 2026 budget for the May vote, La Voie will check the tax cap website to see if the exclusions were entered and if that amount changed.

Building Insurance

- Our building insurance policy with Utica was recently renewed.
- Our insurance agent, Scott Brook, came in to discuss it with La Voie. He asked if the amount we have the building covered for (i.e., to replace the building in the event of a total loss) was adequate. It did not seem that the covered amount would replace the building, so Brook suggested checking with the architect to get a more realistic number for a building of our size. Bova had said it could cost between \$10M-12M to rebuild a

19,500 SF building. Our policy could then increase anywhere from \$1,875 for \$8M in coverage to \$3,909 for \$12M (\$2,670 for \$9.6M) to adequately cover the building.

- We might be able to drop our Crime Policy, purchased long ago to cover potential theft by an employee of the annual tax levy check. La Voie is checking to see if a regulation requires this coverage. If not, we will save \$1,075 annually at the current rate. Board members recommended receiving the tax payment electronically rather than with a check.

Third Lane Strategies Agreement Renewal [Action Item]

- Larry Sorokes' agreement with the Library to perform consulting services through his company, Third Lane Strategies, has expired and needs to be renewed. The new agreement has one new provision: the Library will pay a monthly retainer rate of \$750, based on 10 hours of work per month. Additional hours will be billed separately and must be approved by the Director first. Sorokes previously billed monthly for approximately the same amount, so this is intended to simplify the process.
- For full transparency, it would be good to require a monthly statement of activity.
- **MOTION (Whitford, McElfresh):** To approve the contract with Third Lane Strategies as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

July and August Gifts/Grants/Donations [Action Item]

- **MOTION (Copella, Shumway):** To accept, with gratitude, the following gifts, grants, and donations received in July and August of 2024. The motion passed with two abstentions (J. Mahar and McElfresh).
 - \$1,000 from Merrill and Muriel Frable to purchase adult fiction titles and periodicals;
 - \$50 from Carolyn and Randall Samuelson for the children's department;
 - \$30 general donation from Jim Mahar;
 - \$64.40 memorial donation for Shannon Debus;
 - \$5,000 grant from the Manley Charitable Trust;
 - \$100 memorial donation for Sandra Macfarland,
 - \$100 memorial for Molly Wagner,
 - \$100 memorial for MaryLou Muir,
 - \$14.85 memorial for Barry K. Miller;
 - Anonymous donations of \$66.55 in July and \$17.80 in August.

Personnel Updates [Action Items]

- **MOTION (Tenglund, J. Mahar):** To approve the following two appointments. The motion passed unanimously.
 - Allison Braun was hired as a part-time library assistant on September 4
 - Maddix Deschler-Gilfert was hired as a part-time library page on September 9.

Employee Handbook Update [Action Item]

- **MOTION (Shumway, Tenglund):** To approve a minor change to the Employee Handbook on page 5 as presented, to indicate that the pay period ends on Saturday for all staff. The motion passed unanimously.

2025 Holiday Schedule [Action Item]

- **MOTION (Whitford, Tenglund):** To approve the 2025 holiday schedule as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

CCLS and WNYLRC Annual Meetings

- Trustees were invited to attend the following regional annual meetings:
 - CCLS Annual Meeting (Wednesday, October 9, from 3PM-@ to 8 p.m.), which includes workshops for staff and trustees.
 - WNYLRC's 58th Annual Meeting (Tuesday, October 22, from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.) will include the announcements of this year's WNYLRC awards recipients (this includes our own Kathy O'Malley!).

Friends of the Library

- The Friends of the Library nominated the Coordinator of Children's and Family Services, Kathy O'Malley, for WNYLRC's 2024 Library All-Star Award. WNYLRC notified the Friends that they selected her as the recipient! The award was created to honor individuals from a WNYLRC member library who work towards enhancing the experiences of patrons and/or library operations and providing excellent engagement and outreach within and outside their library and neighboring communities. In the letter sent to the Friends, WNYLRC stated: "Her long history and dedication to the Olean Public Library, including rising the ranks and experiencing different areas of the library throughout her career, was noted as well as the dynamic programming she created for the children in the library." As noted in the previous section, Kathy will receive her award at the WNYLRC Annual Meeting. She will be in attendance to receive her award.
- The Annual Read Between the Wines event on September 6 was a big success. Approximately 100 people attended. The event brought in \$3,643 from ticket sales, the basket raffle, the 50/50 raffle, and buttons sold as part of the celebration of the founding of the Olean Friends of the Library in 1981. Retired Library Director Maureen Curry was invited to speak as part of the celebration, as she and then-Library Board President Alfred Eade worked to create the Friends group during a time of austere funding cuts to the Library. In an August article for the Olean Times Herald, La Voie discussed the Friends' history and how much they have helped the Library over the years. It's no exaggeration to say that they have given hundreds of thousands of dollars to support the Library since it was first organized.
- The Friends presented the Library with the annual Book Endowment gift at the September meeting. They are required to give no less than \$7,000 from the Endowment annually; however, for many years, they have always given more than that. This year's gift was \$12,000! Every year, the Board sends a thank you note to the Friends for this gift and for all they do to support the Library throughout the year.
- FeBREWary has been tentatively scheduled for Friday, February 28.

News from the Library

- The staff members were grateful for the luncheon provided by the Board on Staff Development Day. The day went well, with important trainings, and meetings to plan and problem solve.

6. Committee Reports

CCLS Board Meeting (McElfresh)

- McElfresh has been added to the slate to be elected President of the CCLS Board at the annual meeting.
- They will be asking the counties for a 5% increase this year.
- They were able to do a 90/10 split on construction aid projects for six libraries, which helps smaller libraries. Twelve projects were funded.

7. Old Business

Library space needs – updates.

- Scott Bova will visit the library with his HVAC engineer later this month.
- La Voie talked to Bob Schofield about fundraising ideas. Because we are a 501c3, we are fine for fundraising. The reason there has ever been any debate about whether public libraries could fundraise was an older OCS finding on village libraries.
- It would be good to have a fund at the Community Foundation as a fundraising arm for space needs.

8. New Business

2025 Holiday Schedule [Action Item]

- See the motion under the Director's Report section.

Employee Handbook update

- See the motion under the Director's Report section.

Tax Cap

- **MOTION (McElfresh, Shumway):** To rescind the tax cap override vote approved in February 2024, as the Library did not exceed the tax cap for 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION TO ADJOURN (Whitford, Copella): To adjourn at 7:01 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Tenglund