

MEETING MINUTES
Olean Public Library Board of Trustees
December 11, 2024
5:30 p.m. – Story Time Room

The mission of the Olean Public Library is to assist all people with their educational, informational and recreational needs.

Call to Order by Board President Lanna Waterman at 5:32 p.m. In attendance were trustees Copella, J. Mahar, Shumway, Tenglund (joined via Zoom at 6:14 p.m. / non-voting), Whitford, Accountant Angell, 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 for November 21-December 11:
Operating Fund: \$159,690.14
Capital Fund: \$1,482.50

Discussion:

- Notes from the Business Office, prepared by the new treasurer, were distributed in advance and discussed.

4. Review of Financial Statements

Discussion:

- Heather will be unrecognizing revenue from grant income for this fiscal year and deferring it until next year and future years when the funds will actually be spent.
- Budget line adjustments (included in the pre-meeting documents) – increase the building operation & maintenance line by \$1,000 to clean the roof drains and Outreach by \$600. Decrease Fuel & Utilities by \$1,600.
- **MOTION (Copella and Shumway):** To approve budget line adjustments. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION (Shumway, J. Mahar): To approve agenda items 1, 3, and 4. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Director's Report

Property Tax Check

- The 2025 property tax check for \$1,124,663 was received and deposited into the Exchange account on November 20. \$650,000 of the funds were moved into a 3-month CD.

NYS Retirement System Bill

- The bill for our 2025 Retirement System payment was prepaid on November 21, which saved approximately one percent of the total amount owed. We had budgeted a lower amount for this payment based on estimates from the previous year.
- We have the projected 2026 invoice, which is higher than what was budgeted, so the budget will need to be adjusted to reflect the new amount.
- It is difficult to budget for this payment so far ahead, with so many fluctuating factors; however, going forward, we should have a clearer idea of how to budget the annual bill each year.

2024 Central Library Book Aid (CBA)

- At year's end, we have \$9,000 remaining in CBA money after renewing several databases we purchase on our own or in partnership with Prendergast.
- We will purchase an Overdrive credit with the balance.
- We are able to fill our patrons' requests, fill holds, and use the money to supplement our e-resources budget, such as for e-books and e-audiobooks. We also have more flexibility as to how we can spend CBA now that the state has changed the rules that used to require it only to be used for nonfiction resources.

John Henry Eldred, Jr. Foundation Grant

- Several months ago, the Library received an invitation from the John Henry Eldred, Jr. Foundation, based in Toledo, OH, to apply for a grant of up to \$5,000 to support children's collections. Kathy O'Malley looked into the grant specifications to request funds to refill new books in our book vending machine, which is used year-round to reward children and teens for a variety of things such as successful completion of programs and competitions, volunteering at the library, or to reward positive behavior or to recognize a birthday. We argued that helping children build home libraries with new books of their own is an important way to support early literacy. The Foundation agreed as they awarded the Library \$5,000!

Hamlin Bank Donation

- This year's annual gift from Hamlin Bank and Trust Company increased from \$1,000 to \$1,200, which we received on November 18. As in years past, it came with the request that the funds be used for programs that serve low to moderate-income individuals. La Voie sent a thank you letter detailing some of the programs and services provided over the past year that serve that population.

November Gifts/Grants/Donations [Action Item]

- **MOTION (Whitford, Copella):** To accept, with gratitude, the following donations received in November 2024. The motion passed unanimously.
 - \$1,200 from the Hamlin Bank and Trust Company;
 - \$1,000 memorial donation for Vicky Eade Eddy and Fred Eade;
 - \$300 donation from Love in Action for Outreach Services to purchase books;
 - \$200 donation from the Children's Jr. League Coasters;
 - \$126 donation from the Bush Family (issued through CRCF);
 - \$50 memorial donation for Vicky Eddy;
 - \$25 general donation from Ellen Weaver;
 - \$21.20 in anonymous donations;
 - \$20 memorial donation for Ronald Anastasia;

- \$15.99 memorial donation for Irene Dieteman.

Friends of the Library

- The Friends participated in Giving Tuesday this year and did very well. They won the Power Hour \$500 incentive and an additional \$250 through a random drawing earlier in the day. They raised a grand total of \$3,965! Thank you to everyone who donated, especially during the Power Hour. This year, they featured the Library's emerging Makerspace technology, which is an area the Friends contributed to this year.

News from the Library

- On Tuesday, December 10, the Library hosted a WNYLRC advocacy meeting with incoming Assemblyman Joe Sempolinski. Approximately 18 people attended, including staff, trustees, CCLS representatives, a WNYLRC rep, a patron, and, of course, the Assemblyman and one of his aides. It was an excellent meeting, with a good discussion about the need for increased funding for libraries of all types in NYS. Many people contributed to the discussion about the importance of libraries to their communities. Sempolinski was very engaged and seemed to understand and agree with much of what was stated.
- On December 4, Library staff who supervise multiple employees attended an Ask the Lawyer webinar offered by WNYLRC on providing reasonable workplace accommodations for staff with disabilities.

6. Committee Reports: None

7. Old Business

Library space needs – updates

- Larry Sorokes was present to discuss this, so this item was moved up on the agenda after Items 1-4.
- During a call with the Harris Beach law firm and Corey Wiktor at IDA to discuss tax-exempt bond issues and alternate funding through the Cattaraugus Resource Corp (CRC), it was stated there would be no need for bond counsel or a financial advisor. Many fees that occur with DASNY and the school district wouldn't occur here.
- We might be able to hold a vote on a single day for both the bond vote and the tax levy increase.
- Sorokes would like to share the architect's rendering with the owner of the potential donated property to let them know we're moving forward with the project. This property could serve as a staging area for the construction project and later become library parking. Ideas to memorialize the former use of the property were discussed.
- The board reviewed the architect's renderings of the outside of the building and discussed parking. The main entrance would be oriented toward parking.
- Changes to the inside addressed most of what the library staff had requested. Staff were reasonably happy with the drawings. The local history space won't fit everything, so there may be some need to figure out more space.
- There would be a way to provide access only to the meeting room, kitchen, and restrooms for events when the library was closed.
- Space for the Friends of the Library was discussed. They do not staff their space at present. The Friends will expect some dedicated space, but they have not mentioned any specific needs. It could be an area for a limited amount of merchandise, etc.

- The gallery will be a flexible space.
- If we wanted a café area, we could have it in an area of the gallery which would include a seating area. We could also have displays in that area.
- Security cameras will be increased to see all spaces necessary.
- The library building currently does not have a basement. The drawings show that some of the new basement space would go under the existing building. The new addition would have a full basement.
- Tweaks can still be made.
- Board members expressed overall support for the drawings.
- It was disappointing that the local history room would not be large enough. The ideal room would have the materials, the microfilm, the microfilm machines, tables for research, and some room to spell out. Currently, the local history collection is not all together, and it would be nice if it could be. The idea of switching the conference room with the local history room was discussed. The local history readers are in use daily. The conference room on the drawing was about the size of our current room.
- The local history room could be an attractive space for the community and might get them excited about the project.
- The Makerspace layout was discussed. The 3D printers, etc., are supervised and staff mediated.
- If more books are put into storage, you lose browsing ability, and patrons enjoy browsing. Books that are placed in storage will be mostly nonfiction. However, patrons search the catalog quite a bit as well, as evidenced by the number of holds placed on titles before patrons visit the library.
- The children's area will not grow either; however, larger programs will be able to be held in one of the new multipurpose room spaces. The teen room will expand, which is a good thing.
- Sometimes, it seems that some people use the library as an office. It is also used for tutoring, counseling sessions, supervised visitations, etc. Some of these uses could be directed to the new study rooms.
- We also need to consider the placement of the HVAC unit. Some drawing details were the way they were to accommodate the equipment.
- Next steps: the drawings can be used for bids.

Community Bank investments (Angell)

- Angell made some suggestions last month, and since then, she renewed a \$100,000 CD and purchased a CD with a portion of the tax check.
- The next CD to mature is 12/28. She will not know the rates until a couple of days before. She recommended reinvesting it. She has been reinvesting for six months in case we need to use some of those funds for capital projects. The six-month rate is 3.8%. Currently, you get a better rate for a shorter term.
- The Nottingham Trust account is now closed. There is still an issue because it appears that the fees were taken out twice. Angell is still checking on this.
- **MOTION (Whitford, Shumway):** To approve the reinvestment of the CD once Angell obtains the rates. The motion carried unanimously.

Personnel

- **MOTION (J. Mahar, Copella):** To enter executive session at 7:18 p.m. to discuss personnel matters. The motion passed unanimously.

- MOTION (Copella, Shumway): To leave executive session at 7:22 p.m. with no action taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Adopt 2025 budget [Action Item]

- The Board discussed this last month and there were a couple of items to clarify.
- Angell said on the expense side, there were some notes to give insight into why the adjustments were made.
- Some personnel expenses were not the same as what was in the budget because Angell calculates budget amounts based on what is most likely at the time the budget is created. Things have changed a lot since early this year when it was developed. These items are explained in the budget notes. She now knows how to calculate projected retirement bill amounts, which will make future budgets more realistic.
- With disability and worker's comp, there are always additional fees that must be budgeted for.
- Some material formats, such as CDs, are no longer popular, so material budgets shift accordingly.
- In order to balance the budget, some lines were reduced further.
- When the budget goes out for a vote, the voters vote on the tax levy, not the budget itself.
- Angell suggested adding a line item for our portion of the HVAC unit installation. We received approximately 65% of the current cost of the units from construction aid. This would be a line for capital reserve showing our portion from the fund balance for this, a capital expense line, and a state aid revenue. Angell looked at the OSC website to see what was allowable and recommended for these types of reports.
- Angell recommended increasing the capital reserve to include the HVAC units.
- We also had the bathroom grant and are responsible for 25% of that (\$22,275). La Voie said that the funds will need to be segregated for the restrooms. The 25% we pay might be able to be part of a bond. La Voie will check with the attorney to ensure that this would be the proper way to handle this. We need to know from the architect what the entire restroom project will cost and segregate the portion covered by the grant.
- Should the reserve increase even more because of the potential building project? We will want to show the designated reserve when this goes public.
- **MOTION (Shumway, Copella):** to adopt the 2025 budget. The motion passed unanimously.

2026 budget planning updates

- La Voie said Angell is putting scenarios together for 2026 now. We have been talking about what the tax increase might need to be. If we add positions and things we need, the budget will be higher than expected at this point.
- In 2025, we are budgeting \$208,000 from the fund balance, but if we had been asking for tax increases all along, we would have needed only \$47,000 from the fund balance.
- We have increased security, materials, and programming needs, such as in the children's area.
- The Finance Committee will meet to review the budget first before it goes to the full board. This meeting will be in early January, before the next board meeting. If there is a lot of debate over personnel, then the personnel committee can meet.
- The budget is publicized in April.

- Whether the project is included in the budget depends on how quickly we can get details wrapped up. If this could be done, it could be one vote.
- It was noted that a second December Board meeting was needed to approve another warrant at the end of the month. The meeting was scheduled for December 30 at 11 a.m. This would allow Angell to get the end-of-year bills paid.

8. New Business

Employee Handbook – Bereavement Leave policy update [Action Item]

- Language needed to be clarified because bereavement leave days should expire at a certain point. Employees can take up to three days for bereavement leave; sometimes, someone will take one day immediately and need the other two later. There has not been a problem with this, but it would be good to clarify the policy for the future.
- If someone had an extenuating circumstance where they need more time to use this leave, they could discuss it with their supervisor.
- **MOTION (Whitford, J. Mahar):** To approve the updates to the bereavement policy. The motion carried unanimously.

Board of Trustees – 2025 expiring term

- Ann Tenglund’s term is expiring in 2025.

2024 annual audit

- We received a letter from auditor Ed Bysiek, and the audit is under way.

MOTION TO ADJOURN (Whitford, Shumway): at 7:54 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Tenglund

With thanks to Laura Whitford for taking minutes at the beginning of the meeting