

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OSSINING PUBLIC LIBRARY
Special Meeting/Executive Session
March 2, 2022, 7:00 PM, Zoom

MEETING MINUTES

In Attendance

Board of Trustees: Matthew Weiss, President; Althema Goodson, Vice President; Cecilia Quintero, Secretary; Amanda Curley, Meghan Huppuch, Alice Joselow, Shandi Speller

Staff: Karen LaRocca-Fels, Director; Molly Robbins, Assistant Director; Jaime Aguirre, Treasurer; Kathy Beirne, Secretary to Library Director

Others: Michael Holmes, INSIGHTS4U; Craig Olivo, Esq.

Call to Order

At 7:02 p.m. Matthew Weiss called the March 2, 2022, Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees to order.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Treasurer's Update with Jaime Aguirre

Jaime first took the Oath of Office as Treasurer.

He then outlined the responsibilities of the office of Treasurer–

- Point of contact to OPL staff for reporting any suspicious financial activity.
- Responsible for establishing internal controls procedures/checks and balances.
- Bi-weekly review of library expenditures and review and examine recipients, vendors, high payments.
- Bi-weekly signing of expense checks and review of library expenditures for appropriateness of financial accounts being used to log expense charges.
- Primary financial representation on behalf of OPL and annual independent financial audits.
- Backup approver of ADP payroll wire transfers.
- Future: concern regarding responsibility over community resources being used fairly and disposed of in the right way. Higher level of scrutiny – for Board consideration.

Committee Reports

- Strategic Plan Consulting: Michael Holmes, INSIGHTS4U
 - Staff training proposed.
 - Board would like to have a bigger discussion – shift may be needed and opportunity to take a step back.
 - What does the Board need?
 - What is the most critical phase?

- Michael can give the Board some other options to consider, i.e., engagement over the next 6 months; executing plan and reporting to the Board; Board retreat.
- Michael will have something for the Board after speaking with Karen.

Why the OPL Strategic Plan is So Important:

I strongly support the Ossining Library Strategic Plan and its emphasis on forming relationships that are based on Civility and inclusiveness. Civility is a word we stopped using over the last generation or two. When I was in elementary school, we were taught to be polite and respect each other. Today, Civility is not taught as a discipline and our behavior towards each other reflects its absence. Why, you might wonder, would our library make this a central topic of its Strategic Plan?

We intentionally maintain your library as a haven of knowledge, information, comfort, and safety. As the Plan states:

“The library belongs to, and should feel like home to, all members of our community”.

It seems that segments of our country no longer accept this inclusiveness. Often, in the media and on social media, we have regressed to calling each other names meant to differentiate our backgrounds and beliefs. Beyond the name calling, some states across the U.S. are introducing bills intended to restrict the topics that are taught in schools. Many of them limit discussions of race, racism, gender, and American history.

It is within this setting that the library staff, Board, and community members sought to reinforce the pillars that make Ossining a healthy place to live and raise a family. We consider the library a good starting point. As you look through the Plan, you will see how the library reaches and impacts nearly all of Ossining in many ways.

There will always be differing opinions on the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We did not make the Strategic Plan a political document, but a spiritual one. The library has a responsibility to the community to help maintain the spirit of Ossining that made it possible for so many immigrant families to settle here over the generations.

I am gratified to be part of this community. Through the efforts of our staff and trustees, the library will hopefully be here for another century.

Matthew Weiss, President, Board of Trustees

- Building and Grounds HVAC Update – Molly presented the following:
 - Molly, Karen, and Building & Grounds Committee met with two architectural firms in January and February. Dattner said no – they design and build. However, Lathrop provides guidance – forensic architects. The OPL building items are many and complex. We’ve asked Lathrop to give us a proposal to assess the building and point out what they see and produce a report of items. We need an assessment before we can proceed to a Clerk of the Works.
 - We are gathering data on the retaining wall – Langan
 - Decommissioning of the well – need proposal
 - Repair work to sidewalk in front of OPL driveway entrance – contacted the Village
 - Painting and carpeting
 - Working with insurance assessor

Resolutions

RESOLUTION #55 – Approval of \$6,000 for Teen Room Modular Spaces

WHEREAS the Ossining Public Library's 2021-2022 Budget includes a budget of \$50,000 in

Account 7410200 for the building of modular spaces, and,
WHEREAS the cost estimates for purchasing and installing KI modular architectural walls in the Teen Services office spaces and the 2nd floor study rooms is \$65,969, and,
WHEREAS the SAM Grant #24693 will pay for \$60,000 of this cost,
BE IT RESOLVED THEREFORE, that the Board of Trustees will commit up to \$6,000 from Account 7410200 to pay for the cost over and above the SAM Grant funding.

Cecilia Quintero moved and Amanda Curley seconded the motion to approve Resolution #55.
Motion passed 7-0.

RESOLUTION #56 – Approval \$25,000 2021 WLS Grants-in-Aid/Bullet Aid

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees accepts, with gratitude, the \$25,000 Bullet Aid Grant, presented to the Ossining Public Library by Westchester delegations of the NYS Senate and Assembly.

Alice Joselow moved and Meghan Huppuch seconded the motion to approve Resolution #56.
Motion passed 7-0.

RESOLUTION #57 – Approval General Counsel Services

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves the retention of Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC for General Counsel Services per their confirmation of services letter dated February 15, 2022.

Alice Joselow moved and Cecilia Quintero seconded the motion to approve Resolution #57.
Motion passed 7-0.

Executive Session

The Board will meet in Executive Session with Craig Olivo, Esq. to discuss Union contract negotiations.

At 8:40 p.m. Shandi Speller moved, and Meghan Huppuch seconded the motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss Union Contract negotiations. Motion passed 7-0.

At 9:23 p.m. Alice Joselow moved, and Althema Goodson seconded the motion to leave Executive Session. Motion passed 7-0.

Adjournment

At 9:24 p.m. Alice Joselow moved, and Amanda Curley seconded the motion to adjourn the March 2, 2022 Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees. Motion passed 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Beirne
Secretary to Library Director