

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OSSINING PUBLIC LIBRARY
Regular Meeting
April 15, 2024
2nd Floor Conference Room
53 Croton Ave., Ossining, NY;
38 Sunset Dr., Ossining, NY
Approved Meeting Minutes

Physically present were: Board of Trustee (BOT) members - Amanda Curley, Althema Goodson, Meghan Huppuch, Cecilia Quintero, Shandi Speller and Phil Rice; Friends of the Ossining Public Library President Nancy Panagacos; Ossining Library Foundation Chair Leslie Allen. Public – Devante Richards, and OPL staff members – Karen LaRocca-Fels, and Steve Hamilton.

Attending remotely via ZOOM were: BOT member – Alice Joselow (posted on the agenda), and OPL staff member – Molly Robbins.

AGENDA

Call to Order – Amanda Curley called the April 2024 meeting of the OPL BOT to order at 7:01pm

Alice Joselow joined the meeting via Zoom at 7:05pm.

Pledge of Allegiance – was not read. Amanda Curley read aloud the OPL Mission and Vision Statements: *The Ossining Public Library enriches, connects, and inspires our community. The Ossining Public Library will be the community's center for lifelong learning.*

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes – Motion to Accept the Minutes of the March 18, 2024 Regular Meeting and the March 21, 2024 Work Session was proposed by Shandi Speller and seconded by Phil Rice. Motion passed 7-0.

Public Budget Hearing

- Public Hearing for the 2024/2025 Proposed Budget – Karen LaRocca-Fels asked if anyone present had any questions. No questions were asked.

Public Comment

- Friends of the Ossining Public update was provided by Nancy Panagacos, President who reported the following: the Friends recent two-day book sale (April 5 & 6, 2024) held at the OPL was successful earning just over \$1,800.00; Being Somebody – a performance/play sponsored by the Friends is scheduled for Wednesday, 04/16/24 in the Budarz Theater; a Mother's Day artisan market, sponsored by the Friends with Etsy.com, is being held at the OPL on 04/24/24 with Etsy giving the Friends 15% of total sales proceeds; the Friends are planning their next book sale – dates not yet determined; and the Friends have

lawn signs available for distribution urging people to vote in the upcoming library board elections and budgets.

- Ossining Library Foundation update was provided by Leslie Allen, Chair of the Foundation who reported the following: the Foundation is actively seeking more Foundation Board members. They have placed a notice on the OPL website, as well as blurbs in various community organization notices. She is also requesting that individuals who may run for the OPL BOT and not win a seat be referred to the Foundation.
- Westchester Library System Update was provided by Alice Joselow, Board Trustee, District 2 who reported no updates.
- Devante Richards noted the earthquake and eclipse from the preceding two weeks and hoped that everyone was safe during the earthquake and enjoyed the eclipse.

Director's Report and Personnel Report

Operating Budget and Revenue Report

Cecilia Quintero had a question regarding tax rates and Karen LaRocca-Fels reported that the Ossining School Board has not yet provided them to the OPL but that Karen will follow-up with them. Shandi Speller had a question regarding a group (Abbot House) who visited the OPL's Children's Room. Karen LaRocca-Fels replied that she would follow-up with Ignayra Lopez, Head of Children's Services for more information on the visit and advise at a later date. Amanda Curley relayed to Karen LaRocca-Fels her congratulations to Diana Lennon, OPL's Head of Adult Services on her joining the ArtsWestchester Grants Review Board.

Karen LaRocca-Fels and Molly Robbins reported to the BOT that the recent Eclipse Program (Monday, 04/08/24) was a huge success, with over 1,000 pairs of eclipse viewing glasses being given out and approximately 275 patrons attending the pre-eclipse lecture in the Budarz Theater. OPL's Scott Craven provided a detailed minute by minute scientific presentation explaining the NASA real-time eclipse programming to the attendees. Guillermo Rodriguez provided English to Spanish translation so that non-English speakers could fully participate. Karen and Molly reported that most individuals left the OPL property after receiving their glasses. Althema Goodson reported that she was at the OPL on the Saturday before the eclipse and concurred that the OPL was very busy and productive. Meghan Huppuch was present at OPL on the day of the eclipse and viewed the eclipse from the OPL's lower parking with patrons who stayed. Karen and Molly reported that the OPL is now collecting the eclipse glasses to be recycled/reused by other areas where an eclipse is scheduled to occur.

Amanda Curley asked for clarification on the weeding criteria for classic titles, i.e., those from 1930s to 1980s. Karen responded primarily for condition. Molly Robbins added that the OPL often purchases several editions and formats of classic titles, ex. new editions with new introductions, paperbacks, and the aim is to keep the collection fresh.

Amanda Curley complimented Molly on keeping the newspaper/periodical collection up-to-date and relevant. Molly noted that this has been a project that she and Marie Trapasso have previously worked closely on – now Sumbul Faridi has taken over the project and continues to improve the collection.

Cecilia Quintero asked for more information on the webinar Diana Lennon had previously attended and reported that the content would be useful for trustees.

Amanda Curley noted that she viewed the webinar slideshow and will send the link to all of the BOT members.

Karen LaRocca-Fels noted that the Operating Budget report provided to the BOT shows that the OPL is under-spending, primarily due to being unable to file vacant positions due to Civil Service delays.

Committee Reports

- **President's Report:** Amanda Curley noted that last week 04/07-04/13/24 was National Library Week and last Tuesday, 04/09/24, was Library Worker Appreciation Day. Amanda wanted to take this opportunity to express her appreciation, on behalf of the entire BOT, for the excellent work done by the entire OPL staff. Karen LaRocca-Fels reported that there will be a luncheon this Wednesday, 04/17/24, at the OPL to acknowledge those who have volunteered their time and services to the OPL. Amanda Curley asked Karen for a list of the volunteers' names. Karen will provide the names to Amanda.

Policy, Bylaws, and Personnel Committee

- **Use of Meeting Room and Performance Spaces Policy:** Amanda Curley noted that this was still a work in progress.
- **Bylaws:** First Reading of Draft Amended Bylaws dated 04/01/24 – All BOT members agreed on the first reading of the Draft Amended Bylaws with no changes.
- **American Library Association Core Values:** Karen LaRocca-Fels reported no updates and that this remained a work in progress.
- **HR Consultant:** will be addressed at next month's Work Session Meeting where the consultant can be present, either in person or via Zoom.

Finance Committee

Phil Rice stated that there was nothing new to report. He previously reviewed the budget line-by-line with Karen LaRocca-Fels and the Finance Committee's consensus is that the budget is well constructed.

Buildings & Grounds Committee

Phil Rice, Chair of the B&G Committee, referenced the comprehensive reporting provided at the Special Meeting of the OPL BOT on Thursday, 04/11/24, which covered in great detail much of the following.

- SGH Proposal
- Scope of Building Project

Phil Rice reported that the consensus from the Special Meeting of the BOT held on Thursday, 04/11/24, was to limit the scope of the building project to “A” and “B” priority items. Phil reiterated that “A” items included repairs, renovations and upgrades to the OPL buildings and grounds that absolutely must be made, for ex. health and safety, code compliance; and that “B” items included upgrades, renovations and repairs that, if made, would greatly enhance the utility and available space of the OPL buildings and grounds while also making them more inviting and comfortable for patrons and OPL staff. Item “C” items, while also necessary to enhance the utility and aesthetics of the library and grounds, may be unrealistic due to fiscal constraints. The estimated cost for all proposed upgrades, renovations and repairs (items “A”, “B”, and “C”) would be approximately \$29,500,000. The estimated costs for items “A” and “B” would be approximately \$22,652,000. The estimated costs for item “A” only would be approximately \$16,400,000. The plan approved at the Special Meeting of the BOT on 04/11/24, was to move forward with items “A” and “B”. Althema Goodson suggested that instead of parsing out items ourselves, we should leave in our proposal all of the proposed repairs, upgrades, renovations (items “A”, “B”, and “C”) as there may be earmarks and grants for items that we are unaware of. There was back and forth amongst the BOT members regarding how to maximize funding, beyond just putting out a bond with the School District. Ideas included contacting local politicians to inquire about grants, earmarks, capital project funds. BOT all agreed that before exploring this option we must solidify (as best as we can) in conjunction with Lothrop and SGH timelines and estimates for the work to be performed. All BOT members agreed that the BOT must know the estimated tax increases that would be directly related to fund the proposed upgrades “A”s, to “B”s, to “C”s. This would be the best way to present an accurate picture to the community for what they will receive in response for the likely tax increase related to the bond. Karen will contact school district to determine next steps for calculating tax rate projections so that the BOT members will have a clearer picture of what is the estimated impact on tax bills for each phase of the total project. Amanda Curley requested that all BOT members confirm that they are in agreement and will support the above plan and all confirmed that they were in agreement. Shandi Speller stated that it is her belief that the job of a library trustee is not to just maintain the status quo – it is to push to improve and better the library.

Board of Trustees 2023-2024 goals

- **Meet the Trustees** - Meghan Huppuch, Chair of the Community Outreach Committee asked Althema Goodson how her experience was at Meet the Trustees held on Saturday morning 04/06/24. Althema reported that her experience was productive, informative and fun. She added that having the Meet the Trustees on a Saturday morning also allowed for her to meet with families and children who may not have been present at an evening Meet the Trustee event.

- **Community Outreach** – Meghan Huppuch said that she will need a trustee or two to volunteer for May 2024’s Meet the Trustees. Meghan will meet with Ginnie Blake West and Mallory Marinaro to coordinate and keep everyone informed and involved in presenting the building project to the community and keep the messaging on point. Nothing new to report on BOT professional development. Meghan submitted a NYLA program proposal highlighting Meet the Trustees and said it may end up being a panel discussion with other libraries.

Resolutions

RESOLUTION #42 Approval of the 2022/2023 Annual Report for Public and Association Libraries

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves the 2022/2023 Annual Report for Public and Association Libraries. (Request to table this resolution until the May 20, 2024 Meeting) BOT agreed to table this resolution until next meeting.

Shandi Speller proposed that the BOT vote on the following three Resolutions (#44, #45, and #46 in one vote). Seconded by Cecilia Quintero. Motion passed 7-0.

RESOLUTION #44 Approval of Personnel Changes

Name	Position	Department	FT/PT	Pay Rate	Change	Effective Date
Stephen Garrett	Custodial Worker	Buildings and Grounds	PT+	\$31.53	PT to PT+	4/20/2024
Stephen Hamilton	Staff Assistant – Library	Business Office/Administration	FT	\$70,000	Probationary Appointment	3/25/2024

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves the personnel changes above.

RESOLUTION #45 Approval of the SGH Work Authorization No.2 – Additional Services

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves the SGH Work Authorization No.2 --- Additional Services dated 4/3/2024 in the amount of \$54,500.

RESOLUTION #46 Acceptance of Bullet Aid Grant

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees accepts, with gratitude, a Bullet Aid Grant in the amount of \$30,000 from the Westchester delegation of the New York State Assembly.

Prior to the BOT voting, Alice Joselow asked if there are any limitations on how the Bullet Aid Grant (see Resolution #46) can be spent. Karen LaRocca-Fels responded there are none. Althema Goodson proposed and Cecilia Quintero seconded that Resolutions #44, #45, and #46 all be accepted. All three resolutions passed 7-0.

RESOLUTION #47 Approval of Stipulation of Agreement

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves the Stipulation of Agreement dated 4/11/2024 with employee #675000266. Karen LaRocca-Fels requested that the BOT first review this Resolution in Executive Session prior to a vote. All agreed.

Old Business

- Parking Lot – Molly Robbins reported that the recent Bluey and Eclipse programs provided staff with excellent experience in managing the limited parking. Additionally, the new fence along the north property line looks great and is doing its job in keeping delivery vehicles from using our parking lot to park while making deliveries to the adjacent property.
- Trustee Election – Karen LaRocca-Fels informed the BOT that there were no updates and nothing new to report.
- Annual Report for Public and Association Libraries – Karen LaRocca-Fels indicated that, per the tabled RESOLUTION #42, this will be addressed at the May 2024 Regular BOT Meeting.

New Business

- Public Sector HR Consultant – Consultant will attend the BOT's May 9, 2024 Work Session.

Public Comment

Devante Richards said that he hoped to see everyone turn out to support and vote in favor of the upcoming school district and library budgets.

Amanda Curley requested that a motion to enter Executive Session be made. Meghan Huppuch made the motion and Cecilia Quintero seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0. The purpose of the Executive Session was to discuss **RESOLUTION #47 Approval of Stipulation of Agreement**

Amanda Curley declared the Executive Session open at 8:22pm.

Executive Session: *The medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation.*

Althema Goodson made a motion to exit Executive Session and Meghan Huppuch seconded. The motion passed 7-0 and the BOT exited Executive Session at 8:26pm.

Cecilia Quintero made a motion to return to regular meeting. Seconded by Shandi Speller. The motion passed 7-0 and at 8:26pm, the BOT reentered its regular meeting.

RESOLUTION #47 Approval of Stipulation of Agreement

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves the Stipulation of Agreement dated 4/11/2024 with employee #675000266. Motion to accept RESOLUTION #47 was proposed by Althema Goodson and seconded by Meghan Huppuch. Motion to accept RESOLUTION #47 was passed 7-0.

Adjournment Amanda Curley requested a motion be made to adjourn the April 2024 Regular Meeting of the OPL BOT. Cecilia Quintero made the motion, seconded by Shandi Speller. Motion passed 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:28pm.