

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OSSINING PUBLIC LIBRARY
Special Meeting
October 17, 2024 – 6:00pm
(Rescheduled from October 10, 2024)
Library Director's Office, 2nd Floor
53 Croton Ave., Ossining, NY;
54 Pinesbridge Rd., Ossining, NY 10562

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

OPL BOT Members Physically Present: Amanda Curley, Meghan Huppuch, Alice Joselow, Rachel Murphy, and Cecilia Quintero

OPL BOT Members Attending Remotely via Zoom (with prior notice): Phil Rice

OPL BOT Member Absent Without Prior Notice: Althema Goodson

OPL Staff Members Physically Present: Karen LaRocca-Fels, Steve Hamilton

Prior to the start of the meeting, Amanda Curley told all present that Meghan Huppuch would lead the meeting this evening.

At 6:04pm, Meghan Huppuch called the meeting to order.

Meghan Huppuch 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.

RESOLUTION #25 Approval of the SGH Work Authorization No. 4 – Interim Repairs of Sidewalk at Lower Parking Lot, Project No. 210835.02, Dated September 27, 2024 (Revised October 8, 2024), in the Amount of Hourly with Recommended Budget of \$30,000.00

RESOLVED, that Board hereby approves the SGH Work Authorization No. 4 – Interim Repairs of Sidewalk at Lower Parking Lot, Project No. 210835.02, Dated September 27, 2024 (Revised October 8, 2024), in the Amount of Hourly with Recommended Budget of \$30,000.00

After brief Board discussion regarding the tentative timeframes for the repair work, Cecilia Quintero made a motion to approve RESOLUTION #25. The motion was seconded by Alice Joselow and passed unanimously, 6-0.

RESOLUTION # 26 Approval of the agreement between and among the Ossining Public Library, the CSEA and employee # 6QCUJMANV dated September 26, 2024

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Library Director, the Board hereby ratifies and approves the agreement between and among the Ossining Public Library, the CSEA and employee # 6QCUJMANV dated September 26, 2024.

Cecilia Quintero made a motion to approve RESOLUTION #26. The motion was seconded by Amanda Curley and passed unanimously, 6-0.

Board Discussion

- Library Director's Goals

The Library Director's goals for the Fiscal Year 2025 were discussed. Karen LaRocca-Fels reported that her primary FY '25 goals include 1) moving the building project forward; 2) planning for the continuation of library services during building project work; 3) actively participating in related bond outreach necessary to secure funding for the building project, and 4) making time to actively participate with staff and the community through her own professional librarian work. She noted that this list is neither all inclusive, nor immutable. Board discussion focused on supporting Karen in achieving her goals and freeing her up to be more present with both library staff and patrons. The Board acknowledged the time-consuming administrative work done by Karen that is necessary to move the building project and related bond forward and offered support and encouragement for her to pursue presenting a library program of her own.

- Planning for FY 2024/2025

- Director's performance review process

Board discussion focused on the reformatting of the performance review document made by Rachel Murphy and allowing the Director to participate in the review process more actively via self-assessment. The Board also discussed the need to summarize and define the process by which the Board would assess the Director's performance. Meghan Huppuch noted the importance of linking the Director's Goals with the BOT's Goals.

- BOT Goals/Long-Range Strategic Plan – LRSP (mistakenly omitted from the meeting agenda)

Cecilia Quintero reported that she had recently viewed a Trustee On-Boarding video presentation from WLS and found it very informative and recommended it to all Board members. Meghan Huppuch and Rachel Murphy also viewed the video and concurred with Cecilia's assessment. They noted that the video was recorded and is available for 24/7 viewing on the WLS website. Cecilia Quintero will provide the website link and Steve Hamilton will email it to all Board members.

The Board discussed the possibility of using a more data-driven process to assess the LRSP and the hiring of a consultant to gather and assess data. The goal being to remove the added administrative responsibility and not inconsequential workload from library staff – particularly, Karen. The Board noted that the LRSP is an evolving document that will be updated as necessary. Intent and spirit are as important as explicit plan goals which are often difficult to align with reality on the ground at any given time.

- Biennial Trustee Survey

Board discussion focused on the format of the survey. All agreed the current format is fine. Meghan Huppuch led the review two years ago and will do so again. The Board agreed that the survey will take place later this year. Meghan suggested that the survey be used as a self-reflection tool to focus on seven (7) or eight (8) different areas of responsibility with the goal of seeking consensus on Board professional development – particularly now that continued training for Board members is required by NYS law.

- Yoga

Karen LaRocca-Fels reported that staff had conducted an internal review of all the programs offered by the library and their related costs. The review noted that a handful of programs, attended by a limited number of library patrons, were disproportionately impacting available program funds. She noted that the disproportionate use of program funds is not the primary issue – the funds are available. The primary issue is one of equity. The current programming can be more balanced and representative of a wider group of patrons’ interests. The plan is for staff to develop new and more diverse programming that will appeal to a broad range of library patrons – ideally including those who may not have otherwise come to the library. She noted that current programs, such as yoga, are not being cancelled. They are being moved from twice a week, to once a week. Or from once a week, to once every other week. Attendees of the library’s yoga program provided Karen with a signed petition requesting that the library keep the program scheduling as-is, i.e., offered twice each week. Karen told the petitioners that she would present their petition to the Board. Board discussion focused on the library possibly charging a fee for yoga. Karen noted that this has never been done before. The BOT agreed with the curtailing of the existing repetitive programming so that the goal of expanding programming to include a larger and more diverse group of patrons could be pursued.

- November Artist Exhibit

Karen LaRocca-Fels brought to the Board’s attention that an artist whose work is political in nature and focused on current world events would be showing at the library from November 1-30, 2024. Karen reported that she had spoken with the artist to inform her that any work that a reasonable person could perceive as being either for or against either Presidential candidate and/or their respective political parties could not be shown in the gallery space on Election Day, Tuesday, November 5, 2024. The reason being is that the library is an election polling place. Karen reported that the artist understood the reason for this very narrow and time-specific limitation on what she could present in her show. The Board agreed.

Adjournment

At 7:13pm, Amanda Curley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Rachel Murphy and passed unanimously, 6-0.

Scheduled Upcoming Meetings

- Monday, October 21, 2024 – Regular Meeting
- Friday, October 25, 2025 - Finance Committee Meeting
- Wednesday, October 30, 2024 – Long-Range Strategic Plan Committee Meeting
- Monday, November 4, 2024 – B&G Committee Meeting
- Thursday, November 14, 2024 – Work Session
- Friday, November 15, 2024 – Policy & Personnel Committee Meeting
- Monday, November 18, 2024 – Regular Meeting
- Tuesday, November 19, 2024 – Community Outreach Committee Meeting
- Friday, November 22, 2024 – Finance Committee Meeting