

**OAK PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
834 LAKE ST., OAK PARKS, ILLINOIS
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES, REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 24, 2023, 6:30 pm**

BOARD MEMBERS:

Virginia Bloom
Colleen Burns
Susanne Fairfax
Theodore Foss
Kristina Rogers
Matthew Fruth

ALSO ATTENDING:

Joslyn Bowling Dixon, Executive Director
Stephen Jackson, Director of Equity and Anti-Racism
Leigh Tarullo, Director of Collections
Jodi Kolo, Director of Communications
Jeremy Andrykowski, Director of Finance
Billy Treece, Director of Human Resources
Lori Pulliam, Director of Public Services and Programs
Robert Simmons, Director of Social Services and Public Safety
Peggy Conlon-Madigan
Rory O'Neill

Minutes prepared by Mary-Margaret Scrimger of Minutes Solutions Inc. from a recording.

1. CALL TO ORDER

On a motion made by Virginia Bloom, seconded by Susanne Fairfax, it was resolved to allow remote participation in the meeting. Motion carried.

There being a quorum present, and the Trustees having been given adequate and proper notice of the meeting, the meeting was called to order.

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On a motion made by Colleen Burns, seconded by Theodore Foss, it was resolved to approve the minutes from the November 15, 2022, Board of Library Trustees meeting. Motion carried.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rory O'Neill requested the library include on a future agenda discussion regarding why Alpha Building Maintenance Services received an automatic contract renewal when they failed to fulfill their contract.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Rory O'Neill** <roneill1918@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Jan 24, 2023 at 8:32 PM

Subject: Please add to meeting minutes

To: Matthew Fruth <m.fruth@oppl.org>, Joslyn Bowling Dixon <jdixon@oppl.org>

Matt

Could you please add this to the meeting minutes.

Respectfully

Rory O'Neill

I will start tonight by stating the obvious to the library board, and more importantly to any taxpayer who may be listening that Joslyn Dixon played no role whatsoever in the circumstances that I have described to you in the past, and will once again describe to you tonight.

In a word Joslyn Dixon is innocent.

I will forward to board president Matt Furth video evidence on the matter that I will discuss with you tonight. I request that Matt share that video evidence with the rest of the library board.

I also respectfully request it what I say tonight be added to the board meeting minutes.

My reason for speaking to you tonight is to request, once again, that the Oak Park public library board of trustees places on their agenda a discussion as to why a contractor was awarded an automatic contract renewal even though they clearly failed to meet the terms of the contract.

Alpha Building Maintenance Services, the contractor in question, Knew perfectly well that the work they were contracted to do, was not getting done and yet presented invoice after invoice, in full, for work they did not do.

Worse still, your administrators paid those invoices in full, once again, for work that was not done. How on earth do your administrators justify continuing a business relationship with this contractor. I worked for this library for 22 years and I have never seen anything but the utmost in integrity. And now this?

Folks we are talking a minimum of \$35,000 just given to a contractor for nothing. \$35,000 of the taxpayers money and no return whatsoever. That amount was not pulled out of thin air, that amount has a basis. Question your administrators as to where that dollar amount came from. Once again I ask that you discuss this matter in detail and in public, that you make this matter an agenda item.

Professional integrity demands this, accountability to the taxpayers demands this.

Peggy Conlon Madigan shared praise for library staff. She noted concern regarding the cessation of print newspapers. She later submitted the transcript below for the meeting minutes.

STATEMENT READ ALOUD TO THE OAK PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES' REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF JANUARY 24, 2023, PUBLIC COMMENTS

Good evening,

My name is Peggy Conlon-Madigan.

That our Oak Park Public Library is a five gold star awardee, again, from Library Journal—based on the data of 2018 (updated correction, is actually 2020)—is a good thing.

There are more outstanding staff members than are appropriate to name in this setting. However, Michelle Springer and Rashmi Swain immediately come to mind for their routinely outstanding professionalism and assistance given just within the past two weeks.

That said, the two buttons that I'm wearing are:

*the OPPL five star button

and

*one of OaK Park native Ernest Hemingway.

Known of is the archive collection housed here.

Also known of is a quote of his—a variation of his guiding writers:

“Start with one true sentence.”

As a volunteer at the Ernest Hemingway Birthplace Museum, I encounter many visitors from far and wide who seek more understanding of the formative years of his life.

My one true sentence this evening is: Communication with OPPL's Board of Trustees over the strategy change announced last July, have resulted in no known replies, even when a specific question has been asked of it.

(meaning via email)

*I ask that there be a policy put in place so that trustees respond to polite, reasoned questions asked of *them.

It seems almost absurd to have to ask it, but there it is.

Thank you.

4. TRUSTEE COMMENTS AND CALENDAR

The dates for 2023 are aligned with the policy.

5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Dixon has been engaging with stakeholders in the community. On December 16, 2022, it was announced that Oak Park Library had again received a five-star ranking. The library received a state appropriation for \$25,000 initiated by State Rep. LaShawn Ford. This money will be used to fund a mentorship program held at the library for young men.

6. STAFF REPORTS

- a. **Strategic Priorities Report (Anti-racism, Engagement, Learning, and Stewardship):** Stephen Jackson shared highlights from 2022 and referred the board to the 2022 full Anti-Racism Impact Report linked in the board meeting materials packet.
- b. **Library Core Use Statistics:** Retention statistics are increasing by quarter. Market penetration statistics are increasing and are on par with comparable libraries. Digital resource use continues to be up.

7. FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY

On a motion made by Virginia Bloom, seconded by Colleen Burns, it was resolved to approve both November and December 2022 expense reports. Motion carried.

8. ADDITIONAL REPORTS

- a. **Intergovernmental Committee:** The iGov met on January 21, 2023. The candidate forum has pivoted away from meeting in person and will be conducted via Zoom. Engaging with the public was being considered for the forum, specifically challenges with social media.
- b. **Council of Governments:** The Council of Governments has not met since the November 2022 meeting.
- c. **PlanIt Green:** It was noted that education on sustainability is extremely important. The library is an excellent institution to disseminate this information.
- d. **Friends of the Oak Park Public Library:** There was a brief update regarding this group and its plans for a 2023 book fair to be held at the library.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. **Library and Holiday Closings:**

On a motion made by Colleen Burns, seconded by Virginia Bloom, it was resolved to approve the proposed library closures for 2023, as amended. Motion carried.

On a motion made by Colleen Burns, seconded by Kristina Rogers, it was resolved to approve the proposed employment holiday policy. Motion carried.

Billy Treece recommended adding two closures in 2023, which would be October 9, 2023, which is Indigenous Peoples' Day, and November 24, 2023, which is the day after Thanksgiving. For 2024, there will be more discussion and work around dates related to how building closures and floating holidays currently work.

b. Travel Reimbursement Policy:

On a motion made by Colleen Burns, seconded by Kristina Rogers, it was resolved to approve the changes to the travel policy, as presented. Motion carried.

Currently, the policy is more restrictive than necessary. Changes to the policy were outlined, including a limit of \$750 per day for travel without prior Board approval. This is an increase from \$500, due to the increase in hotel prices and incidentals.

c. Trustee stipends for childcare: There was discussion regarding trustee childcare stipends and new legislation surrounding this. No actions to take at this time.

10. NEW BUSINESS

a. Library Employment Policy Updates:

On a motion made by Susanne Fairfax, seconded by Virginia Bloom, it was resolved to approve the EEO Policy, Bereavement Policy, and the Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy. Motion carried.

The leaves of absence around bereavement are being extended for more inclusivity. The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policy is being updated as per the *CROWN act* regarding hairstyles and other items. The Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment policy is also adding to the definition of discrimination, including hairstyles and work authorization status.

b. Structure of Public Comment: There was discussion on the specifics regarding how public comments should be addressed. Generally, the Board does not respond to public comments on the spot. It was suggested to provide a framework to the public regarding public comments. A process for Board responses was discussed.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was closed.