

Ottawa Public Library Board Meeting

Minutes 19

Tuesday, 3 November 2020

5:02 p.m.

Electronic Participation

-
- Notes:
1. *Underlining indicates a new or amended recommendation approved by the Board.*
 2. *The Ottawa Public Library Board Members participated virtually.*

Prior to the Agenda business, Chair Luloff welcomed Members and attendees to the Ottawa Public Library Board virtual meeting; he also explained the legislative reasons for Members' electronic participation and the provisions governing the Meeting. The Chair proceeded with Roll Call by voice in reverse alphabetic order.

Present: Chair: Matthew Luloff
Vice-Chair: Kathy Fisher

Trustees: Steven Begg, Riley Brockington, Mary-Rose Brown,
Allan Higdon, Carol Anne Meehan, Harvey A. Slack, Tim Tierney

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No declarations were filed.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes 18 – Tuesday, 13 October 2020

On page seven, replace the word "South" with "Park"

*In response from a question from Trustee Brockington with respect to the hold lockers opening in Hunt Club Riverside South **Park** hold lockers opening in Hunt Club Riverside Park...*

CONFIRMED, as amended

CHAIR'S VERBAL UPDATE

Financial Literacy Month

Chair Luloff indicated that Financial Literacy Month is being marked with a variety of workshops focused on challenges relating to living on a low or fixed income, with sessions about dealing with reduced income due to COVID, retirement preparation, and making a will. He said the workshops are offered in partnership with the Credit Counselling Society, the Council on Aging in Ottawa, and the Ontario Bar Association.

OPL-LAC Joint Facility Project

The procurement process for the Ottawa Public Library and Library and Archives Canada Joint Facility is moving along with the start of preparatory work on the site of the future landmark destination. The Chair explained that the early works construction package was awarded to PCL, and that this work will prepare the site for construction. A blessing ceremony led by elders from the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nations and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nations was held ahead of the start of the early works, this sacred ceremony included prayers and a smudging of the site. Chair Luloff said he was very happy to see this important project progress so well, and to see the project team continuing to develop a strong relationship with the Algonquin host nations, who have provided important direction and input into the design of the OPL-LAC Joint Facility.

MOTION OPL 20201103/1

That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive the Chair's verbal update for information.

RECEIVED

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Library Month Wrap Up

Another Library Month concluded last week; this year, the theme focused on kindness. The CEO said although the Library Month campaign was scaled down in 2020, "Being Kind" is aligned with the Library's mandate, and is a valuable reminder during these difficult times. The weekly blog posts, social media prompts, and booklist encouraged acts of kindness throughout the month. Branch staff also shared a printed calendar with customers that contained 31 prompts for every day in October, inviting people to respond with a thought, photo, or anecdote. The CEO mentioned that the campaign reached close to 80,000 members of the Ottawa community online and generated nearly 1,500 interactions with OPL's online Library Month initiatives. She thanked staff and Board Trustees for their participation, and the Ottawa community for being #COVIDkind.

Coming Up

The Ottawa Children's Storytelling Festival, in partnership with the Ottawa StoryTellers, will take place online this year, from November 16 to 21. The week-long festival consists of virtual stories for ages three to twelve, told by storytellers from across Canada, including Indigenous storytellers. The Young Adult (YA) author series (Ottawa Reads YA) will offer a range of visits and workshops from Catherine Girard-Audet, Kenneth Oppel, and Lindsay Wong. The CEO indicated that in the fall, OPL will be highlighting Ottawa's local film industry through "Lights, Camera, Ottawa," a four-week series about live-action and animation movies filmed in Ottawa. The series is offered in partnership with the Ottawa Film Office and will interest film buffs and anyone wanting to get into the industry.

Remembrance Day

OPL branches and offices will be closed on November 11, 2020 to acknowledge the courage and sacrifice of those who served this country.

MOTION OPL 20201103/2

That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive the CEO's report for information.

RECEIVED

ITEMS

1. OPL COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN - UPDATE

Danielle, McDonald provided a verbal presentation regarding the Library's COVID-19 Recovery Plan and OPL's ongoing response, highlighting that many Ontario libraries are currently operating with modified services and hours, that community members see the library as an essential service during the pandemic, and that many customers and employees are seeking some sense of certainty in the services they can expect to receive and provide in the coming months. The update this evening provides information about additional locations re-opening in the coming months. There are no plans to reduce the number of locations currently open. Ms. McDonald also indicated that staff's initial recovery plan (May 28 OPLB report) will be updated and a revised version will be presented to the Board in early 2021. Catherine Seaman, Division Manager, Customer Experience reported on performance data, highlighting borrowing trends, community partnerships to reduce the digital divide, and virtual programming information. She also provided information about the high-level communications plan regarding re-opening locations. Donna Clark, Division Manager, Branch Operations discussed the revised Recovery Plan priorities and provided a detailed overview of the upcoming branch re-openings, including dates and services offered at each location. *(Presentation held on file with the Chief Executive Officer).*

Chair Luloff thanked Councillors Fleury, King, and Menard for joining the virtual meeting and being great supporters of the OPL.

Trustee Tierney inquired regarding the size of the new Bookmobile, and the availability of drivers for this unit. Ms. Clark indicated that the new vehicle is the largest unit, requiring a driver with special licensing, and that there are sufficient drivers on staff at present to operate the service. Once staff receives the keys from the City after fleet inspections, all additional Bookmobile stops that were discontinued during COVID will be reinstated.

Trustee Slack thanked staff and the Ad hoc Committee. He said OPL has

come such a long way over the last several months, and that he was specifically looking forward to the opening of the first floor of Rosemount and for the grand re-opening.

Chair Luloff thanked Councillor Jeff Leiper, Ward 15, Kitchissippi for his collaboration regarding the Rosemount branch.

Trustee Meehan was happy to hear that Manotick branch was re-opening.

Trustee Higdon congratulated the entire team, as there have been many challenges throughout the pandemic.

Vice-Chair Fisher spoke in French. She thanked the CEO and the team for the presentation, as well as all staff for their efforts to offer services during such a difficult period.

Trustee Brown echoed everyone's congratulations to staff, and said she is excited about the additional locations that are re-opening soon, particularly the renovated Rosemount branch.

Trustee Brockington asked staff to comment on the challenges they face regarding resuming 24-hour book drop service at branches. Ms. Clark explained the sorting process that occurs when an item is returned in the book drop, and highlighted the challenges. For example, the requirement to quarantine items for 72 hours, as well as the risk that in some cases items can "overshoot" the sorter, which, if not monitored regularly, can cause a backlog or sorter jam. Since employees are working different hours at present, as branches are open COVID hours, this risk is elevated. These and other challenges also increase the need for staff to personally handle each individual item, which puts employees at additional potential risk, given that these items are potentially contaminated (prior to quarantine). She said a small team of employees are exploring options, and currently piloting using book returns at a few locations. Ms. Clark pointed out that access to the 24-hour book drop was highly valued by customers in the recent survey.

Further to a question from Trustee Brockington regarding when the Bookmobile will be able to offer browsing and additional services "on board," Ms. Clark said staff is committed to increase the level of service from current "contactless" holds pickups and returns as soon as feasible. She mentioned

employees are keeping an eye on each stop and will be testing out offering limited browsing when possible.

Trustee Begg thanked staff for the presentation; he is looking forward to the Sunnyside branch opening soon.

Chair Luloff thanked the Ad hoc Committee and senior management for their hard work and flexibility. He also thanked employees for their commitment to provide services.

There being no further discussion, the presentation was RECEIVED as presented.

MOTION OPL 20201103/3

That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive this presentation for information.

RECEIVED

2. OTTAWA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD RULES OF PROCEDURE BY-LAW AMENDMENTS

Alexandra Yarrow, Program Manager, Board and Strategic Services indicated that a minor amendment was made to the changes to the OPL Board Rules of Procedural By-law tabled at the October meeting. The revision is recommended to the Quorum section, as the intention is to reflect that all participating board members (regardless of whether they attend a meeting in person or virtually) count for quorum.

There being no further discussion, the report was CARRIED as presented.

MOTION OPL 20201103/4

That the Ottawa Public Library Board approve the OPL Board Rules of Procedure By-law amendments as further described in this report.

CARRIED

3. 2021 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

OPLB-2020-1103

MOTION OPL 20201103/5

That the Ottawa Public Library Board approve the 2021 regular meeting schedule as proposed in Document 1.

CARRIED

4. LIBRARY SERVICES IN THE CARLINGTON COMMUNITY

OPLB-2020-1104

The Board heard from the following delegation:

John D. Reid from the Hunt Club Community Association (HCAA) spoke to the substandard library services he believes the urban south area of Ottawa receives. He was initially surprised by the recommendation in the Carlington report; however, the HCAA supports the need to take advantage of this opportunity to explore library services within the Alexander Community Centre (ACC). Mr. Reid said a 2,400 square foot library facility would be a major addition for the Carlington community, making the 50 square foot holds locker kiosk space at the Hunt Club Riverside South Park Community Centre feel insignificant. Aside from the direct benefit to the community, Mr. Reid hoped that the work for library services for the Carlington community will help break down what he perceived to be silos between the Ottawa Public Library and community centres. He pointed out that, while they are in the same ward,

library services for the Carlington community are not useful for the Hunt Club neighbourhood, which is more than five kilometres away from Carlington. Mr. Reid said statistics in the report claimed to be from the Ottawa Neighbourhood Study (ONS), but some were not; he thanked staff for the clarification on this matter in the revised report. He further highlighted that several neighbourhoods of the city, including Hunt Club, are the most socio-economically disadvantaged, according to the ONS. He provided percentages regarding the racialized population and stated that he believes there is ageism and systemic racial bias in library services. Mr. Reid looked forward to OPL progressing in tailoring library services to neighbourhoods. He concluded by saying the scope for meaningful public dialogue with the Board regarding the budget is extremely limited.

Trustees did not have any questions for Mr. Reid. The Chair opened the floor to questions by trustees to staff.

Trustee Meehan was delighted at the prospect of a library for River Ward, as it is needed. She stated that she did not believe OPL had discriminated against this area; however, she asked why this large and diverse neighbourhood has waited so long for a library. Anna Basile, Division Manager, Corporate Services said that, in short, most of OPL's facilities are "legacy" facilities that existed prior to amalgamation, and have been carried forward into the current OPL system. Ms. McDonald added that how libraries are funded also has a profound effect on how, and where, new facilities are built. She mentioned that either development charges or reserves are needed to build new branches. Lastly, she commented that while examining the opportunity in Carlington, staff will be exploring the specific services needed in this community.

Trustee Meehan asked staff to comment on services currently in River Ward. Ms. Basile mentioned that there are three branches that are within five kilometres of the proposed Carlington location: Rosemount (2.9km), Emerald Plaza (3.7km), and Carlingwood (4.5km), as well as two Bookmobile stops: Carlington (pilot) and Caldwell.

Vice-Chair Fisher asked how the planning work will be undertaken with the \$200,000 funding envelope for potential library services. Ms. Basile said the work in 2020 will be two-fold: one, it will determine the service needs and

gaps, and two, it will explore the facility-related opportunity with Recreation, Culture and Facilities Services (RCFS), Department. RCFS is working on a study that will present three options, of which the “library option” will be one. Staff will explore the cost for OPL to convert the space in the ACC. She indicated that normally, these two pieces of work would be done sequentially, however, the plan is to do them simultaneously given the current opportunity. As for the cost, RCFS is expecting to do the design work in 2021, and the \$200,000 is intended to fund the initial study on the facility and preliminary design work for the OPL-specific space. Ms. Basile further clarified that the budget is also designed to provide flexibility to proceed before the end of 2021, assuming the outcome of the review is a recommendation to proceed, and that the Board approves this recommendation (a report is expected to come back by Q3 2021). Given the budget cycle, staff did not want to run into a situation where funds were not available to proceed, resulting in a potential 6-month delay to the facility partners. Ms. Basile said if staff do not proceed with the opportunity, all unspent funds would be returned to the budget via the annual Capital Works In Progress (WIP) close-out, which is completed in Q2 of each year.

In response to Vice-Chair Fisher’s question about progress on the Facilities Master Plan (FMP), Ms. Basile said the FMP was delayed due to COVID’s shifting priorities. She indicated that the Ad hoc has now developed draft criteria, and she expected that the criteria will be used for a facilities development assessment (size, location, etc.), which will be presented to the Board in February 2021.

Trustee Brockington reminded the Board that a decision is not being taken to build a new library at this time, and that the recommendation in this report will allow OPL to participate in studies that will help determine the options available, and help inform staff and trustees about potential next steps. He highlighted the opportunity in the ACC for the library to use the gymnasium space, which would be a good fit for a library and save over \$1M in capital funds. He reiterated that staff will come back to the Board in Q3 2021 with a report, in order to recommend whether to proceed with the facility at that point. He listed the letters that were provided to the Board from the main stakeholders in the community. He is supportive of the report and budget allocation, and believes that the studies need to happen. He indicated that the

City has not yet approved the ACC renovation or capital project at this point, and that he has been paying for the studies to date out of his Councillor “cash in lieu” account. He said that while he is the local councillor, he also wants to be sure that the best decision is made for OPL.

Chair Luloff was pleased to see the report and was encouraged that staff will explore an opportunity with the ward councillor for library services for an underserved area.

Trustee Begg inquired whether staff are exploring a different service model, referring to language in the report regarding new technology. Ms. Basile said that staff will explore new technologies; this will form part of the FMP, underpinned by the requirement to determine community service needs and gaps. Ms. Basile provided examples of new technology such as RFID shelving that may assist staff.

In response to a question from Trustee Begg regarding the risk that the Board may spend \$200,000 for planning and then staff could recommend that the opportunity may not be a good fit, Ms. Basile said the intent of the report is to put time, money, and effort into exploring the opportunity initially in order for trustees to make an informed decision based on the data.

Trustee Begg was supportive of the recommendation in the report, as it would support the work of the FMP. He asked if the work will impede any future decision the Board may make about the neighbourhood as a result of more broad master planning; Ms. Basile said this decision does not hinder this process. Lastly, Trustee Begg expressed some concern that the ACC was not on a “main street,” and wondered whether this concern would be addressed by the current study. Ms. Basile indicated that it would not be addressed at this time.

Written correspondence in support of the recommendations in this report was submitted to the Board prior to the start of the meeting, from the following organizations, as noted:

- Carlington Community Association;
- Carlington Community Health Centre;
- Neighbours of Meadowvale Park;

- Ottawa Central Park Community Association; and,
- Ottawa Community Housing.

There being no further discussion, the report was CARRIED as presented

MOTION OPL 20201103/6

That the Ottawa Public Library Board approve the exploration of library services in the Carlington community, and direct staff to report back by Q3 2021, as further described in this report.

CARRIED

5. 2021 DRAFT OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET ESTIMATES AND
FOUR-YEAR CAPITAL FORECAST

OPLB-2020-1105

Danielle McDonald, CEO provided brief opening remarks and introduced Anna Basile's, Division Manager, Corporate Services.

Ms. Basile provided a presentation on the 2021 Draft Operating and Capital Budget Estimates and Four-Year Capital Forecast. (*Held on file with the Chief Executive Officer*). Ms. Basile outlined the 2021 Draft Budget details and estimates. She presented the Board with the 2021 Operating Pressures which includes financial adjustments, mandatory costs, strategic items, COVID-19 impacts, user fees, and Library Reserve Investment. Ms. Basile concluded her presentation with the next steps and summary of OPL in 2021. Matthew Pritz, Program Manager, Finance and Business Services, and Brenda Gorton, Account Manager, Financial Services Unit (City) were in attendance to respond to questions.

Chair Luloff reminded the Board that only questions of clarification could be posed to staff at this time.

In response to a question from Trustee Brockington whether the \$52.954M budget was operating, Ms. Basile indicated that it is the total 2020 budget envelope.

Trustee Meehan asked a question regarding room rental market prices, and Chair Luloff stated that questions should only be for clarification at this time. Debate and discussion would occur at the December 1, 2020 OPL Board meeting.

Trustee Brockington requested that staff issue a memo to the Board to explain the process whereby staff determine how reserves are allocated to certain projects.

There being no further discussion, the report was RECEIVED and TABLED as presented.

MOTION OPL 20201103/7

That the Ottawa Public Library Board:

- 1. Receive and table the 2021 Draft Budget for Ottawa Public Library and four-year capital forecast; and,**
- 2. Direct staff to forward the 2021 Draft Budget for Ottawa Public Library to Ottawa City Council on November 4, 2020 as part of City Council's tabling of the City of Ottawa 2021 Draft Operating and Capital budget.**

RECEIVED and TABLED

Direction to staff:

Staff issue a memo to the Board on the process to allocate reserves.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION OPL 20201103/8

Be It Resolved that the Ottawa Public Library Board meeting be adjourned at 6:24 p.m.

Chair

Recording Secretary