

Ottawa Public Library Board Meeting

Minutes 20

Tuesday, 1 December 2020

5:01 p.m.

Electronic Participation

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- 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 meeting and proceeded with roll call by voice in random 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, 3 November 2020

CHAIR'S VERBAL UPDATE

Awesome Authors Youth Writing Contest

Chair Luloff indicated the 2021 Awesome Authors Youth Writing Contest is accepting submissions, with a deadline of February 26. The contest is open to youth between the ages of nine and eighteen. Contestants can get writing tips in English and French by registering for a workshop hosted by local authors and contest judges, who will share their knowledge and experience. Details on how to participate can be found on OPL's website.

Upcoming initiatives

Branch staff are compiling a Holiday Video Project by sharing their favourite books, songs, and activities with Ottawa families. The family-friendly content will be released on OPL's YouTube channel in early December. From November 16 to December 18, 2020, OPL is hosting an "Ottawa Kids eRead" event. Participants will be reading the graphic novel *The Cardboard Kingdom*. This graphic novel by Chad Sell follows a neighbourhood of kids who transform ordinary cardboard into fantastical homemade costumes as they explore conflicts with friends, family, and their own identity. The eRead is offered in partnership with the Embassy of the United States, and local kids will have a chance to "eMeet" some of the authors at a virtual panel event on December 10, 2020. This initiative is being funded by a grant from the Embassy of the United States.

Canadian Urban Library Council (CULC) One eRead Canada:

Chair Luloff highlighted that OPL is proud to be part of Canada's first bilingual digital book club, led by the CULC eContent Working Group, starting in January 2021. Participants will be reading *Vi* by Kim Thúy.

Digital Book Club blog

Chair Luloff indicated OPL recently developed a series of monthly blog posts to support books clubs. With many community book clubs now meeting virtually, the blog posts will highlight digital titles in the library's collection that are always available to check out. The posts will also highlight resources to assist book club hosts in running a successful online book club.

Staff recommendations

Chair Luloff pointed out the new “We Recommend” feature on the OPL homepage, which features new titles every week. Titles, chosen by employees who catalogue new titles regularly, are arranged by theme or appeal factors, and the feature links to a whole page on the website with further staff suggestions.

OPL-LAC Joint Facility Project

The Chair indicated that the federal government, in its Fall Economic Statement, announced it has earmarked additional funding to make the OPL-LAC Joint Facility a Net Zero Carbon facility. This funding will showcase sustainable design for the city, and all of Canada.

MOTION OPL 20201201/1

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

RECEIVED

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT

Death of OPL employee Deniz Bokesoy

The CEO said OPL was saddened to hear the death last week of Deniz Bokesoy, a long-time OPL employee. Deniz joined the OPL family in 2010, starting as Children’s Programmer and Public Service Assistant with the Greenboro branch. She subsequently worked in a variety of positions: Librarian Supervising Librarian and Coordinator and in many locations, including Bookmobile, Carlingwood, Emerald Plaza, Nepean Centrepointe and Sunnyside. Deniz was a valuable member of the training team, serving as an instructor for Public Service Training from 2014 to 2017. Her colleagues appreciated her thoughtfulness, compassion, professionalism, and sense of humour. Born in Ankara, Turkey, Deniz emigrated to Canada with her young family and arrived in Ottawa in 2009. Deniz was a champion for many of OPL’s inclusive services, often working with customers living in poverty, newcomers to Canada, or older adults. Her passion for public library work shone through, and she will be dearly missed. Our thoughts are with her family at this difficult time.

Hours of Operation during the Holidays

The branches will be closed December 25 and 26, 2020 for Christmas and Boxing Day, as well as January 1, 2021 for New Year's Day. Branches will be open on December 24 and 31, 2020 from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Another Extraordinary Year at OPL

The CEO highlighted several accomplishments in 2020 via a presentation (*held on file with the Chief Executive Officer*):

- The pandemic was the “big story” in 2020, and staff worked hard to respond to the emergency situation and plan the recovery.
 - In terms of branch services during the pandemic, we provided contactless service (holds pickups and returns) at five branches, as well as some Homebound and Bookmobile Services, and enhanced service (contactless and limited browsing and PC usage) at 20 branches. In terms of the larger customer experience, we provided assistance by phone and email, created the Isolation Recreation portal to digital services, and we also provided virtual programming for the first time, a truly outstanding achievement. Program attendance in 2020 was up, despite or perhaps because of virtual offerings.
 - In providing services during the pandemic, OPL worked with numerous stakeholders, at the City and in the community, to provide support for residents, through digital inclusion initiatives (outdoor wifi, and loaning tablets and wifi hotspots), as well as virtual programming. We were thrilled to work with many partners to offer very these virtual programs, events, and series with local organizations, including: the Ottawa International Writers Festival, Library and Archives Canada, the City team responsible for the Ottawa Book Awards, L'Association des auteurs et des auteures de l'Ontario français, Meridian Theatres @ CentrepoinTE, Embassy of the United States, Frontier College, A Company of Fools, Ottawa Storytellers, Ottawa Film Office, EnviroCentre, and the Rideau Trail Association. A special thank you to the Friends of the Ottawa Public Library Association for providing funding for several programs. We also worked with the school boards to create and share promotional videos to invite kids to participate in the summer reading club. We worked with many new and long-standing partners to support OPL's core values of community and inclusion through the Hotspot and

Chromebook Lending initiatives and through the distribution of Make-It-Kits to children in vulnerable communities.

- OPL-LAC Joint Facility Project: In 2020, we celebrated a successful reveal of the facility's design in January, at an event attended by hundreds of people and viewed and commented on by more than 100,000 more online. The Constructions Documents phase began shortly after the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately, restrictions have not had a negative impact on the project progress, and the Project Team has been able to advance the design remotely without issue. The Project Team announced its commitment to a bird-friendly design and the intent to comply with the City of Ottawa's Bird Friendly Design Guidelines. In August, three firms were selected to form the shortlist of pre-qualified General Contractors for early works and main construction tender contracts. The Early Works construction package was awarded to PCL, who are now in the latter states of performing soil remediation, mass excavation and shoring on the project site. The Project Team also hosted online presentations for local and national Indigenous organizations in the fall, as well as held a very successful virtual engagement session with members of the Ottawa urban Indigenous community. A national Indigenous survey was also developed to offer a new way for Indigenous peoples in Ottawa and across Canada to provide ideas, suggestions, and input into the joint facility. A Sacred Blessing ceremony (prayers and smudging of the site), led by Elders from the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation and Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation, was held in October.
- Other highlights from the past year:
 - Branch improvements at Munster, and the Rosemount branch revitalization.
 - Installation of all-gender washroom signage on all stand-alone washrooms reflecting for use by all customers regardless of gender.
 - Mayor Jim Watson, along with many mayors and county leaders from the United States and Canada, signed a Statement on Equitable Public Access to eBooks to institute fair, transparent, and flexible lending models for public libraries and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities endorsed a motion asking multinational publishers to provide equitable eBook access.

- The Board approved a Commemorative Naming initiative to honour Helen Tweddle at the Cumberland branch, and honoured the United Muslim Organizations of Ottawa Gatineau with the Order of Friendship. The Board also approved the 2020-2023 Content Services Framework, eight new key performance indicators (KPIs) aligned with the Board's 2020-2023 Strategic Directions, revisions to the Bylaw allowing electronic participation in Board meetings for trustees, staff, and members of the public, and a recommendation to explore potential library services in the Carlington community.
- OPL received the largest single donation to-date from the Friends of the Ottawa Public Library Association (\$410 for 2019).
- We celebrated a successful #BeKind Library Month promoting the value and reach of our services.
- Staff welcomed a new Chair of the Board, Councillor Matt Luloff, appointed in March after the former Chair, Councillor Tim Tierney, stepped down.

The CEO thanked the Board for their guidance, wisdom, and unparalleled support for the library. She also thanked trustees for adapting to a virtual meeting environment with grace and professionalism. She said staff value the expertise the Board brings to many of the Ad hoc Committees; the following committees were active in 2020:

- CEO Performance Review: Chair Luloff, Vice-Chair Fisher, and Trustees Begg and Tierney
- Facilities & Finance: Trustees Begg and Higdon
- Fundraising: Trustees Brockington and Slack
- Intellectual Freedom: Trustees Begg and Meehan
- Governance: Trustees Higdon and Slack
- Order of Friendship: Trustees Meehan and Slack
- Alternative Services: Trustee Brown & Vice-Chair Fisher

On behalf of the Senior Management Team and OPL, the CEO wished the Board and their families a safe and happy holiday season.

MOTION OPL 20201201/2

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

RECEIVED

PRESENTATION

1. PRESENTATION – ORDER OF FRIENDSHIP RECIPIENT – UNITED MUSLIM ORGANIZATIONS OF OTTAWA GATINEAU (UMOOG)

Chair Luloff invited the CEO, Danielle McDonald to introduce the recipient and say a few words. The CEO said the Order of Friendship is a special honour, bestowed upon a recipient every two years to recognize exceptional volunteer contributions made to OPL by individuals, groups, or institutions. She welcomed Jalil Marhnouj, President of the Assunnah Muslims Association and co-chair of UMOOG, who accepted the award on behalf of the team. The CEO recognized Trustees Meehan and Slack, members of the Order of Friendship Ad hoc Committee, who recommended UMOOG to the Board. She thanked Librarians Robin Gallagher and Courtney Mellor, who made the presentation possible. *(Held on file with the Chief Executive Officer).*

Vice-Chair Fisher (nominator) read the description in the certificate wording.

Mr. Marhnouj was very grateful for the nomination and commented that the team is very proud to receive the award. He thanked the Chair, the CEO, staff, and the Board for the recognition. He spoke about the importance of the public library in his family's life, and his pleasure working with OPL to ensure that vulnerable children of all backgrounds in Ottawa were able to participate in summer reading club activities.

REPORTS

2. OPL COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN - UPDATE

Donna Clark, Division Manager, Branch Operations and Catherine Seaman, Division Manager Customer Experience provided a verbal presentation regarding the Library's COVID-19 Recovery Plan and OPL's ongoing response, highlighting the context and OPL's upcoming plans. Ms. Seaman highlighted news since the November board meeting, including the re-opening of Sunnyside branch and the substantial completion of the Rosemount branch renovations. She also updated trustees about OPL's digital inclusion and virtual outreach initiatives, including additional loans of technology equipment and new community partners such as the Community Adult Justice Network. Ms. Clark provided an overview of upcoming branch reopening's, including Rideau, Rockcliffe Park, and all remaining Bookmobile stops on January 11th. Ms. Clark closed the presentation by summarizing OPL's 2020 COVID-19 recovery plans to date. (*Presentation held on file with the Chief Executive Officer*).

Trustee Brockington said that given there are five rural branches not able to open, he would be willing to work with staff to yield some of his bookmobile stops on a temporary basis so that the five rural branches could have short term services in the community. Ms. Clark thanked Trustee Brockington and said staff will consider what is possible for these communities.

Trustee Brockington commented that when he recently visited a branch, he was unable to print a list of his loans. He asked if the function to print a receipt of borrowed items at the library has changed because of safety measures during the pandemic, and whether these changes are in place at all branches. Ms. Clark said some changes were made to the interface of the self-checkout screens; however, she had not heard of the inability to print and would inquire.

In response to a question from Trustee Brockington regarding the timeline for re-opening the Kiosk lending machines at the Hunt Club Riverside South Community Centre, Ms. Clark indicated there is no exact timeline for this

service, and that staff are continuing to examine options.

Trustee Meehan asked for clarification regarding whether the Manotick branch has contactless service, or whether customers can browse the collection? Ms. Clark said customers do not have the ability to browse at this time. Currently, Manotick has contactless service; “Grab and go” bundles of materials by theme will also be available soon as Manotick and other locations.

In response to a question from Trustee Meehan about Bookmobile service in Riverside South, Ms. Clark said the Bookmobile service resumes at this location when the full schedule resumes in January.

Trustee Meehan asked for additional information regarding the National Capital Commission (NCC) trail passes, and Ms. Seaman indicated there are 180 passes in the Express collection, provided by the NCC, and they can be borrowed for seven days.

In response to a question from Chair Luloff about the OPL partnership with Ottawa Public Health (OPH), Anna Basile, Division Manager, Corporate Services said the Orleans branch was repurposed to provide support to OPH for its flu clinic. Ms. Basile said the flu clinic at the Orleans branch has been operating since the end of October and will continue until December 21, 2020. OPL will regain use of the branch after this time and will be working on minor upgrades prior to reopening to the public.

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

MOTION OPL 20201201/3

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

RECEIVED

3. 2021 DRAFT OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET ESTIMATES AND FOUR-YEAR CAPITAL FORECAST

Anna Basile, Division Manager, Corporate Services presented the Board with a high-level summary of the draft budget including information regarding operating pressures, and the recommended 2021 capital initiatives. Ms. Basile said staff received eight inquiries and questions of clarification from members of the public following tabling in November, which were distributed as correspondence with the Board. (*Held on file with the Chief Executive Officer*). Matthew Pritz, Program Manager, Finance and Business Services and Brenda Gorton, Account Manager, Financial Services Unit (City) were in attendance to respond to questions.

The Board heard from the following delegations:

John D. Reid said that he felt that the budget process limits meaningful public dialogue with the Board. He was pleased with several aspects of the budget, including the progress for fair ebook pricing, room rental rates, and partnerships. He was concerned about other aspects of the budget and referred to a statement made by Chair Luloff indicating that he has "every intention of setting the conditions to remedy" the fact that there are areas of the City not served by an OPL branch. Mr. Reid acknowledged the studies proposed for Carlington and the East Urban area suggested that the 2021 budget should also address needs in other areas, specifically in Hunt Club and Riverside Park. Mr. Reid questioned how the elimination of late fees addresses the objective of increasing the number of active cardholders by 25 percent by 2023. He urged staff to examine renting space in the Hunt Club neighbourhood in order to provide library services and asked why staff refused to consider this option. Regarding the vehicle lifecycle replacement

funds in the budget, Mr. Reid suggested that OPL should be in line with the City's zero emissions commercial vehicle strategy and asked for a library plan on meeting climate objectives. He asked how the level of funding (12% of the budget) for corporate services compares to that for other major Ontario public libraries, suggested that this amount was bloated, and expressed his incredulity. He concluded by saying that trustees should ask more questions of staff and challenge staff to do better. Lastly, Mr. Reid commented that it's a "sprint" to speak within the five minutes allocated for a delegation.

Chair Luloff said the Facilities Master Plan, intended to be completed by 2022, will provide the required framework to inform future funding decisions regarding library services in neighbourhoods, including additional branches. He thanked Mr. Reid for being a strong advocate for the library.

Trustee Brockington inquired as to the end game: whether Mr. Reid was specifically asking for OPL to rent a storefront space, and then build a branch after conducting the Facilities Master Plan, should that Plan identify a gap in the Hunt Club area? Mr. Reid replied that this would be a sensible approach; however, he believes it does not meet the immediate needs, especially for minority children who are struggling with substandard library services. In other words, he did not think that the Facilities Master Plan process should stop OPL from moving forward at the present time on looking at storefront library space for his community. Given the flexibility staff exhibited in providing services during the pandemic, he believes more could be done to address substandard library services in Hunt Club.

In response to a question from Trustee Meehan regarding whether anything had been missed or omitted in the budget, Mr. Reid said a lot more could be achieved by being flexible and renting space in a facility in Hunt Club while freeing up hours in other branches.

Christine Johnson, Chair, Library Committee, Hunt Club Community Association*, presented a PowerPoint (*held on file with the Chief Executive Officer*) illustrating the growth in Hunt Club in the last 70 years. She stated that in her opinion, this neighbourhood had been completely overlooked since the mid-seventies. She referenced a library services questionnaire she conducted in the Shearwater Court community housing building, of which a

summary of responses was distributed to the Board (*held on file with the Chief Executive Officer*). She advocated for improved library services at the Hunt Club-Riverside Park Community Centre and requested staff to consider the following:

- 1) Consult with the Hunt Club community regarding a needs assessment in 2021 and conduct the gap analysis using an evidence-based approach, incorporating historical context that resulted in some areas being unserved; and,
- 2) Include in a library branch in the Hunt Club community between Riverside Drive and Bank Street in the Facilities Master Plan.

*[*Individuals / groups marked with an asterisk above either provided comments in writing or by email; all submissions are held on file with the CEO.]*

Written correspondence was submitted to the Board prior to the start of the meeting, from the following, as noted:

- The Alexander-Goudy and Hughes families;
- Sonya Hughes (Jenkins)
- Christine Johnson;
- Michelle Nash via Councillor Fleury
- Linda Sabine via Chair Luloff;
- Zivana Pavic;
- John Reid; and,
- Linda Sabine.

Trustee Brown thanked the delegation for her time and effort and for canvassing some members of her community for feedback.

Trustee Brockington indicated that he thinks the frustration of his community is not with the Facilities Master Plan but the funding model that's used to build facilities. He stated his belief that the Board will have to wrestle with the funding model as well.

Trustee Meehan was sympathetic to the delegation's concerns, referring to the upcoming construction of a long-awaited branch in her ward, one of three

wards without a branch. She added that the new Riverside South branch in her ward will be funded by development charges.

The Chair opened the floor to questions of staff by trustees.

In response to a question from Vice-Chair Fisher regarding the percentage increase in the base budget is for eContent acquisition, Ms. Seaman indicated that the budget for purchasing eContent is \$2.5M which represents a twelve percent increase to the base budget.

Trustee Brockington suggested that staff provide the Board with a presentation on how development charges are calculated at a future meeting.

In response to a question from Trustee Brockington about OPL's ability to retain the projected 2020 surplus for OPL's reserves, Chair Luloff said the surplus is a product of responsible stewardship of funds during the pandemic, including during a time when part-time staff were placed on declared emergency leave, and, as a result, he feels the surplus should be retained by OPL. Chair Luloff reminded his colleagues that the CEO carefully monitors the growth in the reserves. He said it is important for the Board to maintain a healthy reserve to plan for the future, including potential future budget pressures or facilities growth.

Further to a question from Trustee Brockington regarding whether the Board has the authority to ensure that OPL can retain its surplus, Ms. McDonald indicated that staff is seeking a legal opinion regarding this matter. She also indicated that staff are developing a Long-Range Financial Plan, including further consideration of reserves.

Trustee Brockington suggested that, given the amount in the reserve, a plan should be developed to allocate or " earmark " the funds for a particular initiative. Chair Luloff indicated that sometimes the reserve is also needed for unanticipated needs, such as previous Pay Equity settlements.

Trustee Brockington said the Main branch auditorium meeting room fee for commercial use is significantly below market rates for comparable spaces, and he urged staff to review the commercial rates and report back in September 2021. Chair Luloff added a friendly amendment, asking that staff

look at the meeting room fees for commercial use in all OPL facilities.

Direction to Staff:

That staff review meeting room fees for commercial use at all OPL facilities and report back in Q3 2021.

Trustee Brockington said the 2021 Draft Budget is reasonable and that he fully supports what is being proposed.

Trustee Begg said the budget impact related to COVID-19 will be felt in coming years. He clarified a point made by Mr. Reid's delegation, indicating that trustees regularly converse with staff, are encouraged to pose questions of staff in writing or by phone, and that staff are very generous with their time. He said that this dialogue between trustees and staff happens behind the scenes, not only at Board meetings. He thanked staff for the opportunity to debate the Materials Recovery Model ahead of the budget, as is a good practise. Trustee Begg commented that he understands the frustration regarding the use of development charges to fund new facilities; he added that while he is in favour of expanding services but worries also about the age of existing branches and their lifecycle needs.

Vice-Chair Fisher echoed Trustee Begg's comment regarding the Board's engagement, indicating conversations between trustees and staff occur on a regular basis. She noted that the commitment made by trustees who sit on various Ad hoc Committees is also significant, and guides staff recommendations to the Board. She commented that trustees contribute to OPL in many ways, not just by their attendance or questions at Board meetings.

Chair Luloff agreed that trustees do a great deal of work and are very engaged. He is proud to Chair an incredible Board.

In closing, Chair Luloff thanked the CEO, the Division Manager, Corporate Services, and all staff for their tremendous work on the budget.

There being no further discussion, the OPL 2021 Draft Budget was CARRIED as presented.

MOTION OPL 20201201/4

That the Ottawa Public Library Board:

- 1. Approve the 2021 Draft Budget for the Ottawa Public Library; and**
- 2. Direct staff to forward the report to Ottawa City Council for consideration on December 9, 2020 as part of the City Council's approval of the City of Ottawa 2021 Draft Operating and Capital budget.**

CARRIED

4. 2021 BOARD CONTINUING EDUCATION PLAN AND CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

OPLB-2020-1204

MOTION OPL 20201201/5

That the Ottawa Public Library Board:

- 1. Approve the 2021 Board Continuing Education Plan; and,**
- 2. Approve the attendance of Trustees for the 2021 Conferences as proposed.**

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION OPL 20201201/6

Be It Resolved that the Ottawa Public Library Board meeting be adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Chair

Recording Secretary