

Ottawa Public Library Board Meeting

Minutes 14

Tuesday, 12 May 2020

5:03 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 second Ottawa Public Library Board virtual meeting; he also explained the legislative reasons for Members' electronic participation. Chair Luloff reminded trustees that the Agenda is limited to key meeting items that are time-sensitive or require approval. He said the CEO will present an update to the Library's response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. He introduced Alexandra Yarrow, Program Manager, Board and Strategic Services as the meeting Moderator. Before turning it over to Ms. Yarrow for logistical instructions, the Chair proceeded with Roll Call by voice in 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

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes 13 - Tuesday, 14 April 2020

The following sentence had two minor changes brought forward by Trustee Brockington:

Trustee Brockington inquired whether, given that the ~~Province~~ City has extended the closure to public libraries ~~until~~ up to June 30, 2020 and hearing there are a number of libraries in the United States that are offering book delivery and pickups, OPL be looking at other opportunities to provide a safe way to make resources available?

CONFIRMED, as amended

CHAIR'S VERBAL UPDATE*

Passing of Alain Jubinville

Chair Luloff announced that Mr. Jubinville, a Trustee on the pre-amalgamation Library Board, had passed away on April 25 at the age of 91 years old. Mr. Jubinville was a strong supporter of French language services. His robust business expertise helped the Library save and invest in new initiatives. Chair Luloff offered his deepest condolences to Mr. Jubinville's family and friends.

Passing of Sheila Nelles

Ms. Sheila Nelles passed away April 8 at the age of 93 years old. She was a selfless volunteer and staunch supporter of the Rockcliffe Park branch and the Ottawa Public Library. Chair Luloff noted she was awarded the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award in 1997 in recognition of her voluntary contributions. Ms. Nelles was a steadfast supporter of the library budget, even attending a City Council budget meeting to oppose library cuts. Prior to amalgamation, Ms. Nelles was a volunteer at the Rockcliffe Park branch Book Sale and was involved with the Rockcliffe Park Public School Book Fair. Chair Luloff said Ms. Nelles also volunteered at the branch for many years after amalgamation and continued to be active at the Rockcliffe Park branch book sales, until the last few years when her health declined. Chair Luloff mentioned that OPL honored Ms. Nelles at a social tea several years ago, which Mayor Jim Watson

attended. In lieu of flowers, the family requested donations to the Friends of the Ottawa Public Library Association. Chair Luloff offered his deepest condolences to Ms. Nelles' family and friends.

Aging Well Together Online Programs: Seniors Exercise at Home

Chair Luloff indicated that OPL is taking its Aging Well Together Programs online. Seniors can exercise at home with a series of three 30 minute live Zoom sessions with a local fitness instructor, at 10:00 a.m. on Friday mornings, on May 15, 22, and 29. The sessions include exercises that can be done in a chair, lying down, seated, and standing. More information can be found on OPL's website.

MOTION OPL 20200512/1

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

RECEIVED

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Crois  e des Mots

The CEO indicated that the last *Crois  e des mots* event of the season will be held virtually on May 19 at 5:30 p.m. She recognized Vice-Chair Fisher support of Francophone programming at OPL and for providing opening remarks at the April virtual event. Vice-Chair Fisher juggled both the Board meeting and the *Crois  e des mots* event that night.

Mental Health Awareness Week

The CEO acknowledged that the previous week was Mental Health Week, and as part of her regular messaging to employees, she had encouraged staff to reach out to one another for support and encouragement, particularly in these stressful times. Many resources are available to help staff to take care of their mental health, including Ottawa Public Health's excellent webpage on mental health and COVID-19, and the Employee Assistance Program. She highlighted that additional mental health resources were also recently added to Agora, a forum for all OPL employees to share useful information, comments, and suggestions with one other. Recent improvements

to the Agora platform mean that employees can now access this tool from home. The CEO underlined the importance of staying connected to support networks, family, and friends during this difficult time.

OPL's Safety Commercial Vehicle Operators' Registration (CVOR) Rating

The CEO announced that OPL maintained a positive Overall Safety Rating, for the Commercial Vehicle Operators Registration (CVOR) required for the large bookmobiles and the materials delivery fleet. For the past three years, OPL has had no violations, infractions, major collisions, or convictions by their drivers. The Ministry of Transportation's CVOR system monitors commercial carrier safety to improve road safety for all road users. The CEO congratulated staff and all OPL drivers for this exemplary achievement.

MOTION OPL 20200512/2

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

RECEIVED

Prior to the Chair moving to the held items, he advised that the Board did not receive any comments from the public nor had anyone registered to speak on any items listed on the Agenda.

PRESENTATIONS

1. UPDATE - OPL RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Danielle, McDonald, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Anna Basile, Division Manager, Corporate Services provided a verbal presentation as part of the second monthly Board update regarding the Library's response to COVID-19. *(Held on file with the Chief Executive Officer)* Ms. McDonald said the information provided represents the work of the OPL Senior Management Team, and many others since the last meeting. The key highlights of the presentation are as follows:

- Responding to Community Needs (Chromebooks and WiFi Hotspots provided to community partners including the Youth Services Bureau, Travelodge, and St. Mary's);
- Programming News (over 3000 children and parents have attended online storytime and babytime, upcoming programs include virtual Awesome Authors and summer reading for adults and children);
- Performance Tracking (637 temporary cards since March 16, small decrease in active cardholders in the last 12 months, 4811 total attendees of 30 online programs, and 40% increase in daily average of online total uses);
- Employees – Workforce Engagement Strategy (OPL's commitment to provide engaging work initiatives with community partners, and advance OPL priorities, process of secondments, reassignments, and skills inventory to better match strengths/competencies to opportunities);
- Finances (Revenue and expenditure profile, strategies employed to address budgetary pressure, one-time surplus projection, 2021 City contribution anticipated to be reduced);
- Emergency Planning Approach (OPL operating in the "Sustain" mode: ensuring OPL operations such as digital services continue, ensuring that employees are fully engaged in meaningful work, developing and responding to the increased needs of customers, monitoring finances, and connecting regularly with the Chair and the Board);
- Four Task Force Teams focused on OPL COVID-19 (Mandate of each team);
- Recovery Assumptions (Safety of employees, phased-in plan for recovery, aligning with City partners wherever feasible, and looking to others to inform OPL's planning efforts); and,
- Next steps (Developing an integrated plan for the recovery of OPL

services, support from Ad hoc Committee, and monitor Provincial updates and information regarding resumption of services).

Chair Luloff thanked staff for the presentation. As per the process discussed and for simplicity, Members spoke in alphabetic order as called upon the Chair.

Trustee Brockington expressed concern about whether existing employees are fully being utilized, or whether they should be linked to the federal support network (laid off for the short-term, or placed on declared emergency leave). Ms. McDonald said the workforce engagement strategy is comprehensive and Senior Management is confident they are maximizing the productivity of employees.

Although the hunger to re-open is high, Trustee Brockington agreed with the assessment that the safety of employees is key. He briefly commented that Ottawa Public Health's guidelines must be considered as such, and urged staff to have a broader conversation with the Board on the recovery plans to ensure accountability. He looks forward working with staff on the newly created COVID-19 Ad hoc Committee. Ms. McDonald commented that staff have some concerns with respect to the budget, however, Ms. Basile continues to identify residual numbers and key strategies to address impacts. Staff indicated that due diligence will be undertaken throughout the process.

In response to what can be gained from the skills inventory that employees have to complete and what that inventory entails, Ms. Basile said the skills inventory is a standard human resources tool and involves asking staff additional skills they may have that are above the skills they utilize in their current position. Ms. Basile then provided examples. She mentioned that the inventory data will be maintained in the human resources system and will assist Senior Management in future.

Trustee Higdon said staff and public safety measures will be a daunting task for Senior Management. He looked forward seeing the results. He personally hoped budget cuts would not be too severe to OPL.

In response to a question from Chair Luloff regarding what can be attributed

to the number of cardholders dropping, Ms. Basile said staff estimate it is due to the lack of branch access during the closure and the inactivity of physical service.

Chair Luloff asked whether demographics can be used to reach customers. Ms. Basile said currently demographics is not a measure that is tracked. Generally, the available database has postal codes.

Chair Luloff urged staff to investigate measuring demographics for cardholders as it would be helpful during the pandemic. Ms. Basile explained that there is no good rationale for not having it. Historically, demographic information was not gathered from customers due to privacy concerns. Ms. Basile said staff will note that concern as the operational and strategic benefit of demographic data has been raised in other forums as well.

Trustee Slack thanked staff for their courage in going forward during difficult times. He said the COVID-19 Ad hoc Committee and the Board are available to provide feedback.

In response to a question from Trustee Tierney whether OPL and Library Associations have reached out to provincial and federal counterparts for assistance during the pandemic, Ms. McDonald said the City is gathering information from all departments; however, there is no update at this time. She mentioned that Ms. Basile is the lead working with the City regarding finance and funding projects. Ms. McDonald indicated the Library has not reached out to politicians thus far, however, she and the Chair are looking to meet with Ms. McLeod, the Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture Industries. Trustees are encouraged to send any ideas or suggestions to the CEO.

MOTION OPL 20200512/3

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

RECEIVED

REPORTS

2. OTTAWA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD POLICY AMENDMENT: CEO
SUCCESSION PLANNING
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Please refer to the 14 April 2020 OPL Board Meeting for the report.

MOTION OPL 20200512/4

That the Ottawa Public Library Board approve the amendment to the CEO Succession Planning Policy, as further described in this report.

CARRIED

3. CREATION OF A COVID-19 AD HOC COMMITTEE
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MOTION OPL 20200512/5

That the Ottawa Public Library Board approve the creation of an Ad hoc Committee composed of Vice-Chair Fisher and Trustee Brockington to work with staff to develop a Recovery Framework that will guide the development, implementation and resumption of all OPL operations.

CARRIED

4. 2019 POLICY COMPLIANCE AND DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY ANNUAL
REPORTING

OPLB-2020-0504

In response to a question from Vice-Chair Fisher regarding noteworthy revisions to the twelve administrative policies in Section 22 of the report, Ms. Basile said OPL policies are regularly reviewed on either a one or three-year cycle. The revisions are generally due to legislative changes, or

to align with City practices.

In response to a question from Vice-Chair Fisher regarding further review of administrative policies given the current situation and whether staff will ask the COVID-19 Ad hoc Committee to examine guidelines and procedures, Ms. Basile mentioned that there will be an impact on administrative policies. One of the tasks that has been assigned to staff during the re-deployment efforts is reviewing policies.

MOTION OPL 20200512/6

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

RECEIVED

5. OTTAWA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

OPLB-2020-0505

In response to a question from Trustee Brockington on the annual report not having a line about bookmobile customers and circulation statistics, Ms. Basile said that statistic is included in the total circulation numbers reported out. The Customer Experience Division will consider adding Bookmobile statistics, including customers and circulation, as a special line in next year's report.

MOTION OPL 20200512/7

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

RECEIVED

Direction to staff:

That staff provide a one-page summary of bookmobile statistics including customers and circulation for 2019 and consider including bookmobile statistics as an independent item in future annual reports.

6. SEMI-ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT – JULY TO DECEMBER 2019

OPLB-2020-0506

Vice-Chair Fisher asked if the “Hold Time to Availability” metric can be improved in the next Performance Measurement report, and whether the COVID-19 pandemic will affect this metric. Ms. Clark pointed out that the lower number in the report presented tonight was due to higher than normal staffing challenges at some branches, causing delays in making holds materials available to customers within the target timeframe of seven days. Ms. Clark indicated that this situation was subsequently resolved. Ms. Basile noted that the reduction in available Library services due to the emergency closure during the COVID-19 pandemic will undoubtedly have a negative impact on each of the KPIs adopted in February 2020. She said the COVID-19 Ad hoc Committee will review those impacts.

Trustee Brockington was concerned that the comparisons for the 2019 and 2020 report will be skewed due to COVID-19. Ms. Basile said the report reflects OPL’s 2015-2018 Strategic Priorities and KPI framework, effectively closing out the current KPI framework with a full year of data.

In response to a question from Trustee Brockington regarding whether the variables for total circulation will be reported out, Ms. Basile said some of the major metrics will be included in the report and provided examples. She indicated that the next report will reflect the new OPL Strategic Plan with the new eight KPI’s, which seven are new, focused on customer and employee actions, categorized within the three Strategic Directions, which satisfy a Balanced Scorecard approach.

Vice-Chair Fisher was in support of the tracking and said the Board may

request additional data when necessary. Ms. Basile indicated the Canadian Urban Library Council conducts a survey to forward to the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries regarding library data and staff align that data with the Strategic Plan.

MOTION OPL 20200512/8

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

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TRUSTEE REPORT

7. PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION 2020 CONFERENCE – TRUSTEE
VERBAL REPORT (RILEY BROCKINGTON)

Trustee Brockington provided a brief summary of his report, which was previously submitted to the Board. (*Held on file with the Chief Executive Officer.*) He spoke about the vast number of educational sessions that are available for library professionals, municipal leaders, library board members, and others, which offer an array of information and opportunities to network, share ideas, and learn best practices. He provided a brief overview of three of the workshops he attended, as follows:

- Serving Immigrants Beyond the Citizenship Centre: Trustee Brockington highlighted the emphasis placed by presenters on the importance of employees who speak different languages in community outreach work;
- Closing Opportunity Gaps Through School-Literacy Partnerships: Trustee Brockington was pleased to hear about the cultural and environmental opportunities for special collections in libraries, such as loaning fishing rods and park passes; and,
- Growing New Library Patrons Big Ideas with Soledad O'Brien: Trustee Brockington described how Ms. O'Brien spoke about the importance of understanding underserved residents, and

understanding and removing barriers to library services.

He thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend the PLA conference, and said it was a wonderful conference although his arrival was delayed by a winter storm.

In response to a question from Trustee Begg regarding whether staff also attended the conference, Ms. Basile indicated in the affirmative. Trustee Begg said he attended a previous Public Library Association conference and found it fulfilling.

Vice-Chair Fisher thanked Trustee Brockington for sharing his experience with the Board. Throughout the year, various library groups and associations offer webinars and seminars on a variety of subjects including governance, library trends, and advocacy. Staff monitor these opportunities and share them with the Board via email to gauge interest and coordinate participation, where applicable. She shared a recent experience that she attended as her role on the Federation of Public Libraries.

Trustee Higdon mentioned he attended several conferences during his tenure as a Board member and encouraged Trustees to attend one as these are instrumental in a Trustee's development.

Chair Luloff said the Board has strong representation at conferences, and Trustees bring back knowledge and perspective to the Board. He encouraged the members to take advantage of these opportunities. He thanked Trustee Brockington for the thorough report.

Trustee Brockington noted that the next conference will be held in 2022 in Portland, Oregon and staff should attend and present.

Trustee Meehan asked whether information from various library networks are being shared regarding COVID-19. Ms. McDonald said they have been in contact with several networks and provided an example of ideas from counterparts.

Trustee Slack said the report was inspiring and will take advantage of future opportunities.

Trustee Tierney thanked Trustee Brockington for a great report. He provided

a few examples of subjects he heard at conferences he attended with staff.

MOTION OPL 20200512/9

That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive this verbal report for information.

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ADJOURNMENT

MOTION OPL 20200512/10

Be It Resolved that the Ottawa Public Library Board meeting be adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Chair

Recording Secretary