

Ottawa Public Library Board Meeting

Minutes 27

Tuesday, 19 October 2021

5:03 p.m.

Electronic Participation

Notes: 1. *The Ottawa Public Library Board members participated virtually.*

Chair Luloff welcomed members and attendees to the Ottawa Public Library Board meeting. The Chair proceeded with roll call by voice in random order and delivered the Indigenous land acknowledgement statement.

Present:

Chair: Matthew Luloff

Vice-Chair: Kathy Fisher

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

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were filed.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes 26 – Tuesday, 14 September 2021

Confidential Minutes 6 – Tuesday, 14 September 2021

CONFIRMED

CHAIR'S VERBAL UPDATE

United Way – Community Builder of the Year Award

The Chair was thrilled to announce that Ottawa Public Library (OPL) was one of the 100 organizations recognized by United Way's Community Builder of the Year Award for its participation on the COVID-19 Response Table. OPL was recognized for providing technology to help children stay on track with homework and school during the pandemic. He said OPL's name will be listed on a "Wall of Inspiration" on the main floor of Ottawa City Hall where they hold events, across from the info desk and piano. A plaque will be provided to OPL, and staff are currently exploring where it will be situated for public viewing. The Chair commended OPL's achievement and continued effort to support the citizens of Ottawa. On behalf of the Board, he thanked all staff involved and expressed its sincere appreciation.

MOTION OPL 20211019/1

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

RECEIVED

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Library Month Update

People can count on the Library the way they count on a good friend. The CEO said for Library Month, OPL is asking those who love the Library to refer a friend, so they too can enjoy the Library. Customers can encourage their friends and neighbours to get an OPL card if they do not already have one. It is easy to sign up in person at any branch, or by using the new online registration form launched in June by Service OPL, Technology Services, and Communications. She indicated that since launching online registration, 3,000 new cardholders have signed up online, in addition to some 8,000 who have joined in branches. Anytime is good to get a library card, but this Library Month, new cardholders can receive a free OPL-Friends of the Ottawa Public Library Association (FOPLA) friendship USB bracelet, as can the friend who referred them. Spreading the word about this giveaway is another way you can be a champion for the Library. The CEO encouraged everyone to following OPL's social media for more

information and how to participate.

MOTION OPL 20211019/2

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

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REPORTS

1. **ADISOKE - PROJECT UPDATE AND FUNDING STRATEGY**

OPLB-2021-1001

Prior to the presentation, Chair Luloff provided introductory remarks. He reminded trustees that the Central Library was the Ottawa Public Library (OPL) Board's number one priority, and that together with staff, the Board had been working on this exciting, generational project for nearly a decade, which included prudent financial planning. He said the partnership with Library and Archives Canada and collaboration with the Anishinābe Algonquin Host Nation has made the project even stronger. The Ādisōke design is the direct result of an unprecedented public co-design process that asked Ottawa residents, Indigenous communities, and Canadians from across the country, and from different backgrounds with diverse interests, to provide inspiration at every stage. The resulting design incorporates recommendations for accessibility, inclusivity, sustainability, and Indigenous representation. This is the Central Library that the community has asked for and deserves. He mentioned that Ādisōke has been an important OPL project for the past decade and noted that the decision before the Board represents an important milestone for the project. He said the Board will be receiving a presentation from staff shortly and the goal is to work through the recommendations regarding additional funding for Ādisōke, with a view to moving forward, recommitting to being a part of something bigger, and to support this once-in-a-lifetime new building in Ottawa.

Danielle McDonald, CEO, and Craig Ginther, Division Manager, Ottawa

Central Library, provided a presentation on the Ādisōke project update and fundraising strategy. (*Held on file with the Chief Executive Officer*). The following City of Ottawa staff were in attendance to respond to questions: Alain Gonthier, Director, Infrastructure Services, Simon Dupuis, Manager, Design and Construction, and Isabelle Jasmin, Deputy City Treasurer.

Key highlights of the presentation included:

- Key Decisions (from 2012 to present);
- Project Vision (create a modern, iconic Central Library, one that acts as a local branch for the downtown community, a resource for all Ottawa residents, and a beacon for tourists from across Canada and around the world);
- Project Milestones (key milestones, which include project updates provided to the Board at regular meetings);
- Procurement Process (construction tender procured in a four-stage process);
- Tender Results (low bid from PCL is over the budgeted project authority, and Council approval is required to increase the total project authority);
- OPL Funding Strategy (OPL contribution proposal, specifically, Library City-wide Development Charge Debt, Library Reserve Fund, and Fundraising); and,
- Upcoming Milestones (Next steps and summary)

Trustee Brockington raised his frustration with the sequence of the legislative path, specifically that the City's Finance and Economic Development Committee (FEDC) held a Special Meeting earlier in the day to approve additional funding recommendations for the project. Chair Luloff described the legislative authorities for the project, and that the increased price is outside of the delegated authority. He said that OPL and the City of Ottawa's Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department (Ādisōke project lead) sought guidance from the City Clerk's Office with regard to identifying the appropriate legislative path and most appropriate sequencing of approvals from OPL Board, FEDC, and Council to secure the necessary project authorities. The CEO echoed the Chair's comments. Trustee Brockington appreciated the thorough response but maintained his frustration with the

recommended sequence.

Trustee Brown asked whether the 40 years amortization period for debt servicing costs for Library City-wide Development Charges is normal. Ms. McDonald said this is typical for financial project amortization. Ms. Jasmin noted that there are guidelines in the *Municipal Act, 2001*, that specify that amortization can be extended to better match the life of the asset, to a maximum of 40 years.

In response to Trustee Brown's question regarding OPL contributions from the Library Reserve Fund, Ms. McDonald explained that the staff recommendation for the OPL contribution is consistent with the strategy presented and approved in 2018, and includes a combination of development charges, Library Reserves, and fundraising. The CEO said the Board approved a fundraising framework earlier this year and further elaborated on the recommendation of contributing \$16 million through the Library Reserve Fund. She emphasized that staff are committed to providing the Board twice-yearly updates on fundraising status beginning in 2022. Chair Luloff said he was impressed with the ongoing fundraising efforts thus far and congratulated OPL's Michael Poliwoda, Manager, Major Gifts and Partnerships, the fundraising extended team, as well as the Fundraising Ad hoc Committee.

Trustee Begg remarked that the report was clear, and appreciated the cost of Ādisōke relative to comparative projects. He urged staff to reiterate to Council the importance of the implications of not proceeding with the project. The Chair said the comment is very astute and worth reiterating to Council. He highlighted some of the implications. The CEO was pleased with how Trustee Begg summarized the Board's work on this project to date and said that there are no real alternatives at this time, and that the best path is moving forward with the recommendations.

Trustee Higdon agreed with previous remarks made by his colleagues and felt that the staff report justified the recommendations by explaining implications, providing arguments, and identifying the costs of going backwards. He said that while the pandemic created this perfect storm, from a business perspective the path is forward.

Trustee Brockington said he agreed with the previous remarks, however, he

noted that the project will now cost more for taxpayers. He said it is a bitter pill to swallow because at this point in time, it is too late to look for further efficiencies or cancel the parking garage, for example, as it would mean new estimates, new tenders, and higher construction prices.

Trustee Brockington asked what OPL agreed to pay in 2018 in the Governance agreement. Ms. McDonald said if the Trustee is referring to the 2018 Implementation Plan report, OPL's direct contribution to the project was \$1 million from the Library Reserve Fund, operating costs of \$1.865 million to be brought forward for approval through the annual budget process, \$10 million from the sale of Main library and development charges. She reinforced that of the total cost 61% is OPL and 39% comes from LAC.

Trustee Brockington said that following 2018, the next contribution approval by the Board was February 2021 for \$5 million from the 2020 surplus in Library Services. Ms. McDonald answered in the affirmative.

Trustee Brockington was concerned that this financial commitment from the Library Reserve Fund would shortfall other OPL projects. Ms. McDonald stated that there would not be a surplus if it were not for the pandemic. She explained that while the OPL Board can recommend to Council, ultimately Council has final authority. To that end, Council could have withheld the entire 2020 surplus to pay for non-library investments. She added that there was a meeting with the City Solicitor with respect to the Library Reserve Fund, and noted that this project has been on the books since 2012, as OPL's number one priority.

Trustee Brockington reiterated his frustration with the sequence of the legislative path and report going to FEDC before the OPL Board, and took issue regarding fundraising for Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E). Chair Luloff remarked that FF&E also includes art, and equipment, including recording equipment, etc. Every dollar fundraised will protect a dollar in the Reserves. Mr. Poliwoda said that the fundraising case for support includes items such as those for FF&E, as well as soft items, such as programs.

Trustee Brockington urged staff to provide a fundraising update before the end of 2021, and that a verbal would be acceptable. He then reiterated that he took issue with the Library Reserves being drained. He would have

preferred to hold back the approval of the reserves until after the 2022 budget process. Ms. McDonald said that the additional target of \$7 million to be established to address that pressure is to be taken out later and does not have to be accounted for to award the construction contract. Ms. Jasmin confirmed that the amount would not be drawn down immediately, but as needed.

Trustee Brockington also expressed frustration with the additional contribution of \$4 million from the Library Reserves, and Ms. Jasmin confirmed that that amount would be drawn as part of the year-end 2021 financials. Chair Luloff said there is time between now and Ādisōke opening to bolster reserves.

Trustee Brockington said that he was unsure of his future tenure on the Fundraising Ad hoc Committee.

Vice-Chair Fisher asked the CEO to share her thoughts on the return on investment for library services. Ms. McDonald said OPL did a return-on-investment analysis in 2017 and for every dollar spent, the return was approximately \$5.17, and that currently it is more than \$4.00. That return did not include the Ottawa Central Library project. She noted that during the Commercially Confidential Meetings it was noted: "If you build it, they will come." The return on investment for library services is significant. The CEO provided comparatives of Calgary and Halifax, as well as libraries in Europe, stating that areas around central libraries are springing up and building rich infrastructure.

Trustee Meehan echoed previous remarks on the value perspective but also echoed concerns on draining Library Reserves and wanted it on record that she needed to ask the tough questions.

She provided feedback from her community, specifically on the escalating cost of the Ādisōke project and how that will affect other library projects. She asked staff to provide her with language she can take back to her community, specifically Riverside South, to reassure them that there will be funds for their local library services. The Chair noted that the Central Library has been the number one priority for the Board for a very long time and is the single largest social infrastructure project for the City. He said he finds it hard to square how the community would like a library but not a central library. The CEO indicated

that staff have done the work, prepared the reports, and presented the justifications. A central library is also a local branch for the downtown residents, our central branch for the other branches to link to, and a destination for visitors. The Chair reiterated that the Board has committed that the central library was not going to be developed at the expense of other projects, however, the current project is the number one priority. The goal is to work through the recommendations regarding additional funding for Ādisōke. Chair Luloff indicated that development charges for Riverside South remain intact and would be happy to assist the trustee to answer questions from her residents.

Trustee King said that libraries are the most egalitarian institutions in our community. The Central Library functions as a resource in the local community, and as larger destination. He was disappointed with the unfortunate reality and economy at the moment, however, libraries are an important aspect of big cities, which bestows gifts to our youth and all residents, and a bridge to Indigenous citizens. Trustee King said we must be bold, it will engage millions of people. He supported Trustee Brockington's suggestion for a fundraising update in 2021. The Chair asked staff if they are prepared to take that as a direction. The CEO agreed in the affirmative with twice a year going forward.

Vice-Chair Fisher thanked Trustee Meehan and said that messaging from staff could be beneficial. She highlighted the introductory remarks made by Leslie Weir, Librarian and Archivist of Canada at Library and Archives Canada, at the FEDC meeting earlier in the day, in which she explained the breadth of collections that will be made available to cardholders due to the partnership and Ādisōke, which will draw many people to the downtown core.

Trustee Slack fully endorsed the project. He remarked that Ottawa is a G7 City and part of the G20 inter-governmental political forum. He explained that Ādisōke will be an elite building, and urged the Board not to muck around. He thanked the CEO and Division Manager, Central Library Project for the presentation and reports.

MOTION OPL 20211019/3

That the Ottawa Public Library Board:

- 1. Receive the Finance and Economic Development Committee report Ādisōke Project Update and Procurement Tender Results (ACS2021-PIE-IS-0006), attached as Document 1;**
- 2. Receive the funding strategy for Ādisōke, as outlined in this report and Document 1;**
- 3. Approve, and recommend that City Council approve, a total of \$16 million from the Library Reserve Fund, as further described in this report and Document 1, as follows:**
 - a. A contribution of \$5 million, as previously approved by the Board on March 9, 2021;**
 - b. An additional contribution of \$4 million; and,**
 - c. An additional \$7 million for Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E), and that a fundraising target of \$7 million be established to address that pressure; and,**
- 4. Direct staff to provide twice-yearly updates on fundraising status beginning in 2022.**

RECEIVED and CARRIED on a division of 8 YEAS and 1 NAY, as follows:

YEAS (8): Chair Luloff, Vice-Chair Fisher, Trustees Begg, Brockington, Brown, Higdon, King, Slack

NAY (1): Trustee Meehan

Trustee Brockington dissented on recommendation 3 (\$16 million from the Library Reserve Fund).

Direction to staff:

Staff provide an update on fundraising status in Q4 2021.

2. FACILITIES FRAMEWORK AND FACILITIES MASTER PLAN – STATUS UPDATE

OPLB-2021-1002

The Board heard from the following delegations:

John D. Reid began his presentation with a question regarding procedure and order indicating that he had comments regarding the gap study and questions to staff, which were submitted in advance. The Chair advised that delegates cannot pose questions directly to staff or the Board, however, he indicated that staff would be happy to respond in writing through a direction to staff. Mr. Reid spoke to the Hunt Club community attending numerous meetings in the past. He said that he welcomed the Gap Analysis included in the report and asked whether existing Library infrastructure meets current population and community needs. He said the nearest library is 20 minutes by bus for the community and felt that studies show (referencing Ottawa Community Housing and Co-op's) that travel time is more impactful in an analysis than travel distance. He remarked that the priority should be library equity across the City. Mr. Reid felt the Guiding Principles (Document 2) focused too much on growth and development and asked whether rented locations could be explored rather than new builds. He felt the second principle (Facility development will support the City of Ottawa's planning goals, specifically equity between neighbourhoods, socioeconomic demographics considerations, and access through sustainable modes of transportation), should be the driving force and not a component as equity demands it. Mr. Reid said that he hoped that the public will have the opportunity to provide comments while the document is being developed, and not simply after it is complete and is being brought to the board. Finally, he wanted assurances that affordability in the gap analysis would be identifiable. Mr. Reid then read his questions to be on record:

1. Regarding the gap study, what provision will be made for transparent public input?
2. How will the gap study account for accessibility in a reasonable time by public transit?
3. Will the gap study be conducted separately from any consideration of

affordability in closing a gap?

4. Will gap study results be detailed and transparent for individual community assessment?
5. What is the timeframe for the Board to receive the results of the gap study and recommendations?

Vice-Chair Fisher proposed that Mr. Reid's questions be answered in writing by staff. The Chair asked staff if they are prepared to take that as a direction. The CEO agreed in the affirmative.

Trustee Brockington said his River Ward 16 is very supportive of the Facilities Master Plan and keen to be part of the process. He is looking forward to capital investments and the Master Plan assisting the Board in decision-making.

To Mr. Reid's question, he asked staff to speak about opportunities for public engagement during the process. Anna Basile, Division Manager, Corporate Services said the public will be engaged during the process, with engagement to commence in Q2 2022, where public feedback will shape the Facility Decision Matrix, as identified on page 12 of the report.

Trustee Brockington asked whether public transit will be considered. Ms. Basile replied that public input will determine whether transit will be an element in the criteria. Further to a question from Trustee Brockington on whether gaps in service would be funded either by new resources or by shaving funding from other resources, Ms. Basile stated that first, gaps have to be identified and second, that the strategy will guide staff to address priorities on the status of projects listed.

Trustee Brockington asked about the timelines for the process. Ms. Basile said that if the report is approved, staff will use the principles to guide the development of Branch Decision Matrix, including seeking public input, and return to the Board for approval of the Matrix prior to undertaking the gap and growth analysis.

There being no further questions, the report was RECEIVED and CARRIED as presented:

MOTION OPL 20211019/4

That the Ottawa Public Library Board:

- 1. Receive the Facilities Framework and Facilities Master Plan status updates; and,**
- 2. Approve the Facilities Guiding Principles, as detailed in Document 2.**

RECEIVED and CARRIED

Direction to staff:

Staff provide a written response to the delegation's questions.

INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY DISTRIBUTED

- A. DEVELOPMENT CHARGE PROJECT LISTINGS

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION OPL 20211019/5

Be It Resolved that the Ottawa Public Library Board meeting be adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Chair

Recording Secretary