

## Ottawa Public Library Board Meeting

### Minutes 21

Tuesday, 9 February 2021

5:02 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, Harvey A. Slack, Tim Tierney

**Regrets:** Trustee Carol Anne Meehan

### DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No declarations were filed.



## CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes 20 – Tuesday, 1 December 2020

CONFIRMED

## CHAIR'S VERBAL UPDATE

### **OPL Celebrates Black History Month**

Chair Luloff said this is the 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Black History Month in Canada, a time when Black Canadians' contributions are highlighted in communities and Canadian society. OPL will be honouring the contributions of many Black Canadians with a veritable festival of virtual activities with the theme "Canadian Black History in the Making". There are programs throughout the month for all ages and interests, including panels, author talks, remarkable personal stories, cooking, breakdancing workshops, and much more. More information can be found on OPL's website.

### **Sustainable Canadian Infrastructure Bilingual Zoom Event with Minister's Steven Guilbeault and Catherine McKenna**

The Government of Canada has taken action through significant investments in the environment and in sustainable infrastructure in Canadian communities. Chair Luloff indicated that he and Mayor Jim Watson spoke at the Contribute Fighting Climate Change event on February 8 with the Honourable Minister Steven Guilbeault, Canadian Heritage and the Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities. Chair Luloff said the Mayor highlighted that 2021 is a special year for the Ottawa Public Library and Library and Archives Canada Joint Facility project and today's event is the first of many, including the ground-breaking ceremony planned for later this year. The Mayor also highlighted the efforts made by the City of Ottawa in fighting climate change. Chair Luloff gave an overview of where the project was at and thanked the project team and architects. He briefly highlighted Minister Guilbeault and McKenna's remarks. Chair Luloff said the OPL CEO, the Librarian and Archivist of Canada, and City staff were also available for the brief question period. Chair Luloff added that in the Mayor's recent State of the City address, he praised the OPL Board for their support and leadership in ensuring the Ottawa Central Library project continue to progress to the stage where it is today. Finally, he said the Mayor also proudly highlighted that the facility will be the first net zero carbon library in



Canada.

### **OPL reaches over 2 Million eBook and eAudiobook Checkouts in 2020**

Chair Luloff highlighted that Ottawans love their eBooks, especially in a pandemic, as OPL reached over 2 million eContent downloads in 2020. This accomplishment illustrates the continued growth and importance of our digital collections, especially this past year. He said reader interest and usage has grown every year, and it's certainly true that customers have valued access to all library services, virtual and in-person, even more during COVID-19.

### **Coming Up**

In January, OPL and the National Arts Centre Indigenous Theatre launched an Indigenous book club, called Our Stories. This monthly online series highlights recently published works by Indigenous authors across Turtle Island, including poetry, fiction, memoirs, and plays. Each month until June, the series will feature a different title that customers can borrow from the library's collection or purchase from an Indigenous-owned bookstore. The Indigenous book club was recently featured and celebrated in the Urban Libraries Council newsletter. Chair Luloff also indicated OPL was heavily involved in organizing the latest Un librel/One eRead Canada, the first bilingual cross-Canada digital book club offered by over 1,000 libraries from coast to coast. He said over 20,000 people downloaded the eBook and eAudio versions of the featured book ("Vi" by Kim Thúy), in French and English, across Canada. This partnership with CBC/Radio Canada meant that two wonderful hosts – Shelagh Rogers, from the Next Chapter on CBC Radio, and Kevin Sweet, a Radio Canada Arts reporter, were involved, and there were over 4,000 views of the online book club events. Chair Luloff noted that OPL also helped by responding to several media requests from across Canada about the initiative.

### **MOTION OPL 20210209/1**

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

RECEIVED



## **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

### **Death of OPL employee Sharon Wallace**

The CEO reported that Sharon Wallace, a part-time page (shelver) at the Centennial branch died on January 14, 2021, after living for nine months with lung cancer. Sharon was hired in 2005 and worked in a variety of different locations over the years, including Alta Vista, Ruth E. Dickinson, Hazeldean, and Materials Delivery, transferring to Centennial as her home base in February 2015. The CEO said OPL has lost an amazing colleague and friend: Sharon was dedicated, hard-working, kind, considerate, and always positive. Sharon will be dearly missed.

### **eChat Platform at InfoService**

On January 19, OPL launched another virtual channel for customers: eChat! The CEO observed that today's customers are looking for versatility in contacting our organization and providing a fully bilingual web chat option directly from the OPL's website enabled a quick and easy channel for customers to reach us. She indicated that in its first week, InfoService received just over 200 chat requests, and this is in addition to the regular volume of calls and email. The CEO shared some of the positive feedback received from customers about the new channel. She noted that the advances OPL has made in terms of virtual customer experience have been extraordinary over the last several months. The work behind the scenes, and the collaboration between departments that facilitates these accomplishments, is impressive.

### **An OPL employee is nominated for the City's Environmental Excellence Awards in both internal and community categories**

OPL employee Sarah Kirkpatrick-Wahl, a Children's Programming and Public Service Assistant, has been nominated in both the internal and community categories of the Environmental Excellence Awards. The CEO said there are 10 nominations in the internal category and six in the community category across the organization. In the internal category, Sarah is nominated for advocating for the installation of bird-safe window films at the Beaverbrook branch. Her knowledge of the City's bird-safe design guidelines and passionate pursuit of this project has increased the safety of the bird population by reducing window collisions. Sarah also was nominated in the community category, for her leadership in creating a striking art piece for display with her



children's Art Academy. This project involved students using recycled materials while teaching attendees key lessons about protecting and preserving the natural landscape. The CEO noted that Sarah's piece titled "Littoral Falls" is on display at the Beaverbrook branch. The Environmental Excellence Awards recognize the initiative and leadership of individuals and teams whose projects aim to safeguard our environment as mandated by the City's Environmental Protection, Water and Waste Management Committee. The CEO congratulated Sarah, adding that OPL will be cheering her on. The winner of the award will be announced virtually on February 24.

### **Family Day Holiday Closure**

OPL branches will be closed on Monday, February 15, 2021.

### **MOTION OPL 20210209/2**

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

RECEIVED

### **ITEMS**

1. OPL COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN - UPDATE

OPLB-2021-0201

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Danielle McDonald, CEO and Donna Clark, Division Manager, Branch Operations provided a verbal presentation regarding the Library's COVID-19 Recovery Plan. They outlined a roadmap for the remainder of the pandemic (the "COVID Current" period, estimated to be the next 12-18 months), during which time protective measures will be required and OPL will need to move efficiently between service levels depending on provincial directives. Ms. McDonald highlighted the four strategic pillars guiding the path ahead: implementing contactless as a baseline service across all locations, adding services in an incremental manner, responding efficiently to new provincial restrictions or re-openings, and expanding hours of operation. The CEO said staff hope, to resume Sunday hours at select locations by the end of Q2 2021, resume regular hours of operation at all locations by the end of Q3



2021, and bring back additional services when possible. These additional services have timelines yet to be determined, and include 24/7 book drop services, access to study, creative and lounging spaces, return of some in-person programs, and more. Ms. McDonald said the return of these services is contingent on many factors such as the public health context, staffing, provincial directives, quarantine requirements, and work process changes. Ms. Clark closed the presentation by outlining the Provincial COVID-19 Response Framework (coloured zones) and the implications for library services. *(Presentation held on file with the Chief Executive Officer)*. Anna Basile, Division Manager, Corporate Services, Alison Blackburn, Manager, Program Development, Sarah McIntyre, Manager, Public Services, Catherine Seaman, Division Manager, Customer Experience, and Alexandra Yarrow, Manager, Board and Strategic Services were in attendance to respond to questions.

Trustee Higdon asked what the budget implications were in implementing this plan. Ms. McDonald said proceeding with the current plan would likely result in a surplus. Increasing hours of operation and resuming services would help bring this amount down and return OPL to a situation closer to normal operations.

Further to a question from Trustee Higdon regarding the timing to return to extended hours, Ms. Clark explained the reopening process and how staff assessments of resources and the current legislative state affect any changes to hours. She said extended hours are important to OPL's customers, as noted in the Fall 2020 customer survey. She added that Sunday hours will be brought back for larger branches hopefully by the end of Q2 2021.

Many trustees thanked senior management and staff for the ability to quickly adjust existing services, and design new services, while remaining an important part of the community.

Chair Luloff thanked the CEO and staff for their flexibility, adaptability, and creativity throughout the pandemic, as well as the members of the Board Ad hoc Committee.

There being no further discussion, the report was RECEIVED and CARRIED



as presented.

**MOTION OPL 20210209/3**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board:**

- 1. Receive the OPL COVID-19 Recovery Plan Update report; and,**
- 2. Approve the COVID Current strategy, as described in the report.**

RECEIVED and CARRIED

2. OTTAWA PUBLIC LIBRARY - FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

OPLB-2021-0202

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Anna Basile, Division Manager, Corporate Services presented the Board with a high-level summary of the financial framework, including Board responsibilities, applicable policies, and the purpose of the framework. She highlighted the current context, including how OPL operates within a shared environment for financial support. Matthew Pritz, Program Manager, Finance and Business Services introduced the new concepts in the framework, which clarify reporting, goals, targets, and practices for more defined financial operations. Ms. Basile thanked the staff and Board members of the Finance and Facilities Ad hoc Committee for their contributions to this file. *(Held on file with the Chief Executive Officer).*

Chair Luloff thanked Trustees Begg and Higdon, members on the Finance and Facilities Ad hoc Committee.

Trustee Brockington inquired if staff are aiming for a target reserve of 7.5% or 10%. Ms. Basile said that the plan identifies the target at 10%, but that the Board has authority over that decision.

Further to a question from Trustee Brockington on what the difference is between what is currently in reserves and the 10% target, Ms. Basile indicated it is approximately \$2M dollars.

Trustee Brockington asked what the timeline is to achieve the desired total



reserve fund, referencing that it would be adjusted annually. Ms. Basile clarified that the framework identified that annual revenue expectations be adjusted each year as part of the budget process, not the reserve fund. In that regard, the annual adjustment ensures that future budget pressures related to under or over-performing revenue lines will be adjusted incrementally instead of a lump-sum approach, which is more consistent.

Trustee Brockington noted that the Board may need to establish a trade-off in different years based on needs in a particular year. Ms. Basile agreed, indicating that the intent of the Continuity Tool is to be able to assess the impacts of various options in order to inform decision making.

Trustee Brockington expressed his desire to pose questions on the memo the Board received regarding a legal opinion on OPL's reserves and surplus. This memo was issued as a follow-up to his question at the December 1, 2020 meeting, as he was concerned that OPL may not have the ability to retain reserves. Chair Luloff and Ms. McDonald advised that the legal opinion may not be public knowledge and that the Board may have to go in camera to discuss the questions. Ms. Basile commented that the legal option may be covered under client-solicitor privilege, but she was unsure in this specific instance. Trustee Brockington was happy to pose those questions in camera at the next meeting if warranted. Staff will confirm the appropriate process.

Trustee Brockington stated he would ask a general question instead, that is, how staff plan to protect and solidify reserves for OPL's use. He further stated that he understood that the Board does not have the ability to exclusively retain reserves, and wanted assurances that every dollar OPL puts in reserves would be spent on OPL plans and objectives. He requested more information on how OPL can solidify and protect OPL reserves for OPL.

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

**MOTION OPL 20210209/4**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board approve the Financial Framework as described in this report (Document 1).**



CARRIED

3. OTTAWA PUBLIC LIBRARY (OPL) AND LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA (LAC) JOINT FACILITY PROJECT UPDATE

OPLB-2021-0203

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Although the item was received as presented, Trustee Brockington asked for clarification regarding whether the Board will have the opportunity to approve the final design of the facility in Q2-2021. Ms. McDonald said that the Board will receive an update but the final design approval rests with the Executive Steering Committee. Craig Ginther, Division Manager, Central Library project indicated that staff are happy to take direction or a motion from the Board endorsing the final design.

**MOTION OPL 20210209/5**

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

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4. FUNDRAISING POLICY FRAMEWORK

OPLB-2021-0204

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**MOTION OPL 20210209/6**

**That, at its meeting of February 9, 2021, the Ottawa Public Library Board:**

- 1. Receive and table the OPL Fundraising Policy Framework.**

**That, at its meeting of March 9, 2021, the Ottawa Public Library Board:**

- 2. Approve the policy framework as further described in this report;**



and,

**3. In alignment with the policy framework:**

- a) Approve Board Policy 002 - OPLB Delegation of Authority to provide the CEO with approval authority for donations acquired through fundraising, as further described in this report (Document 1);**
- b) Approve Board Policy 008 – OPLB Donations and Fundraising, to support OPL’s ability to solicit, accept and process donations through fundraising, as further described in this report (Document 2);**
- c) Approve Board Policy 010- CEO Reporting and Board Monitoring to include the additional requirement for the CEO to report out annually on fundraising and donations (Document 4); and,**
- d) Approve Board Policy 022 – Sponsorship and Advertising (Document 5).**

RECEIVED and TABLED

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Trustee Tierney took the opportunity to thank the Board and staff on the progress that has been made on the Ottawa Central Library project. Chair Luloff reminded trustees that this is Trustee Tierney’s last meeting with the OPL Board. He thanked the former Chair for his leadership and dedication to OPL and library services during his tenure.



**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION OPL 20210209/7**

**Be It Resolved that the Ottawa Public Library Board meeting be adjourned at 6:06 p.m.**

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**Chair**

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**Recording Secretary**