

**NIAGARA FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR LIBRARY BOARD MEETING**

Niagara Falls Public Library 1425 Main Street, Niagara Falls, NY

Wednesday, October 25, 2023 @ 3.00 p.m

Meeting minutes

CALL TO ORDER. The regular meeting of the Niagara Falls Public Library Board of Trustees was held in person on Wednesday, October 25, 2023, in the Conference Room, 2nd floor, Main Library. The meeting was called to order by Board President Carmen Granto at 2:51 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present

Ms. Bailey

Dr. Foote

Ms. Glaser (arrived 2:54)

Mr. Granto

Mr. King

Absent/Excused

Dr. Carter (excused)

Dr. Rahman (absent)

Also present were Ms. Sarah Potwin, Executive Library Director, Mr. Pat Brown, Finance Manager, Mr. James Roscetti, Library Attorney, Ms. Marilyn Salviski (Lojek), President and Mr. Robert DiFrancesco both from the Friends of the Library.

OPEN HEARING

No speakers or comments.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA.

Ms. Potwin requested addition to the agenda under new business for digital printer purchase. Mr. Granto asked if there were any objections to the agenda change, hearing none the agenda was adopted upon a motion by Mr. Granto seconded by Mr. King, approved unanimously.

REVIEW OF MINUTES.

The minutes of September 27, 2023 were reviewed and adopted upon a motion by Ms. Bailey seconded by Mr. King, approved unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mr. Brown referred to the August 31, 2023 financial summary narrative and detailed financial reports in the agenda packet explaining variances and highlighted the following:

- Bank account balance of \$621,623, in good financial position.
- Eight months of the year has passed expectations on an evenly incurred budgetary basis is that actual revenues/expenditures would be 66.67%.
 - Total revenues are 65.91% of budget or .76% lower than expectation and 69.95% or 3.28% higher than expectation after removing unbudgeted grant revenues and adding eight months of state/county funding that comes all at once later in the year. So revenues are doing well compared to budget.
 - Total expenditures are 60.79% of budget or 5.88% below expectation of 66.67%; after adjusting total expenditures for grant, eight months of computer lease, retirement and workers compensation total expenditures would be \$1,349,598 or 59.40% of budget and under expectation by 7.27% so expenditures are doing well and should be under budget for the year at present trend by about 10% but likely less as additional expenditures for computer server, Agati table and other items incurred by year end will increase expenditures and reduce budget percent of savings. All major expense lines at or below 66.67% expectation except for equipment which is 99.84% but all has been received/expensed, building operation & maintenance is 89.96% primarily due to unbudgeted grant expenditures of \$38,181 and city insurance; without grant expenditures

expense category would be 66.64% and within expectations. Mr. Brown's report explained the reasons for the variances.

- Operating surplus (deficit) is \$14,339 or \$120,075 better than expected budget operating deficit for eight months of the year. Taking into account eight months of state/county aid of \$120,000 operating surplus would be \$134,339 compared to budgeted operating deficit of \$105,736 for eight months or \$240,075 better than budget for eight months of the year. Mr. Brown said this operating surplus will be reduced quite a bit in last quarter of the year with additional planned expenditures but expects to end the year with an operating surplus vs the budgeted operating deficit.

Mr. Granto asked if there were any questions on the financial report, hearing none it was received and filed.

EXECUTIVE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

Mrs. Potwin referred to her written report in the agenda packet highlighting:

- Upcoming library closures, meetings she has attended noting days she has scheduled off.
- Children's library desk and stools purchased with Rebello funds were delivered July 17th, waiting for DPW to assemble.
- Agati table on order (approved last meeting) will be on 1st floor main library expected delivery December 2023 will require city electricians to hook it up (workorder has been submitted).
- Computer server approved at last meeting is in place so both libraries are operating on one server (old one will be a backup)
- Flag room window covering priced out, presentation screen/smart tv on order
- DPW building repairs/issues
 - Waiting for D.V. Brown to come out and test the boiler; city hvac recently turned water on for boiler resulting in leaks in local history department, tarps purchased to protect items
 - LaSalle boiler needs new motor
- State construction grant examples of furniture for the auditorium are included, decision by Dec. '23 and samples will be available for review.
- Trustee training resources and upcoming courses/dates; the annual state report asks if trustees have completed training. Trustees with certificates of completion in their folders are Bailey, Foote, Granto, Glaser & Carter. Ms. Potwin is available to assist anyone access webinars.
- Website launch goal is early December '23
- NIOGA trustee representative for NF has been identified to serve-Tammy Kinan
- Deaccessioning of local history items list prepared by Courtney Geerhart is provided under new business for board approval.
- Statistic reports for adult, children/youth programs and meeting room for month of Sept. '23

Comments/questions on directors report:

- Mr. Granto said we need more/better publicity for the local history speaker series and asked what is being done to promote/get publicity for it asking Ms. Glaser if she has a contact at the Gazette to promote/obtain publicity for the local history dept. speaker series, Ms. Glaser suggested direct contact with/to Mark Scheer and offered to be a speaker for Oakwood Cemetery. Ms. Lojek said the Friends of the Library send in a written notice to the Gazette regarding speaker series. Ms. Bailey suggested contacting group editor at the Gazette (Joyce). Mr. Roscetti suggested sending a photo and bio of the respective speakers. Mr. Granto suggested using the NF School tv department (OSC) to cover the speaker series.
- Ms. Lojek asked when the renovations in the library auditorium will be totally completed by, Ms. Potwin said August '24.

The directors report was received and filed.

PERSONNEL REPORT

FMLA

- Tom Poehnelt, FT Librarian 1 July 27, 2023-October 19, 2023 extended by city for one year to July 27, 2024

Change in status

- Elise Lia, PT Librarian 1 to matriculate to FT (temporary/seasonal) Librarian 1 from October 15 to December 31, 2023, after an internal posting of 10 days. The purpose of the position change in hours from 17-20 hr/ wk to 35 hrs is to accommodate digitization project preparation, scanning of newspapers project, and aid in cataloging to cover duties of FMLA employee. no benefits. Posted internally Sept 27-October 10, 2023

Termination

- Kevin DiCamillo, PT Library Trainee 17 hr/wk, last day worked October 4, 2023.

Pay rate change for FY 2024-2028

Error in the part-time pay scale which has been corrected from the 9/27/23 approved pay scale. Correction needed due to formula error on payscale sheet, corrected rate reflects a forty cent increase per year over the base year of 2023 which was intended and consistent with other flat rate changes.

		Corrected Rate (10/25/23)	Previously Approved Rate of 9/27/23
Librarian II (part-time)	FY 2024	\$24.0500	\$23.4637
	FY 2025	\$24.4500	\$23.8637
	FY 2026	\$24.8500	\$24.2637
	FY 2027	\$25.2500	\$24.6637
	FY 2028	\$25.6500	\$25.0637

Mr. Granto asked if there were any questions or comments on the personnel report, hearing none he asked for a motion to approve the personnel report.

The acceptance of the personnel report was adopted as presented upon a motion by Ms. Glaser, seconded by Ms. Bailey and approved unanimously.

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Granto said a meeting is scheduled for Friday 10/27/23 with NIOGA Director Tom Binderman and Board Chair Charles Begley per their request to discuss NF representative as trustee on NIOGA board and questions about our role of Central Library as member libraries are asking about the benefits they receive and what is provided, how money is spent etc. Mr. Granto asked Mr. Begley if meeting has anything to do with removing the Falls Library as the Central Library and was assured it isn't about that or taking away Central Library aid. Ms. Bailey asked isn't the Central Library funding reported on in the annual report, Ms. Potwin said it is. Mr. Granto will be joined at the meeting by Ms. Potwin who prepared a list of services for member libraries provided by Central Library to be discussed.

OLD BUSINESS.

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

Xa. FY 2024 budget was presented for review and discussion, no action required at this time. Ms. Potwin reviewed the city funding increase of 2% (\$38k) over last year and planned use of fund balance of \$260,141 which is too high. The city funding still left a deficit for the library of approximately \$47k so amount of fund balance to be used had to be increased. Mr. Granto said he

spoke with the city administration about obtaining additional funding and was told the library received the amount of funding they requested.
Budget will be approved most likely at December '23 meeting.

Xb. FY 2024 meeting dates were received and filed

Xc. Approval of Local History Deaccessioning list of items

List of items was prepared by Courtney Geerhart, Mr. Granto asked if there will be additional items and if so when will board receive list so that we don't spend money digitizing items that ultimately will be deaccessioned or disposed of. Ms. Potwin said it will be ongoing work, Mr. Granto asked that this work be completed as soon as possible and would like the next list by end of December '23 as this has to be a priority.

Mr. Granto asked if there were any questions/comments on the deaccessioning list or process, hearing none he asked for a motion to approve the list.

A motion to approve the local history deaccessioning list as presented was made by Ms. Glaser, seconded by Ms. Bailey and approved unanimously

Xd. Digital Printing Service (added to agenda)

Ms. Potwin requested approval of this purchase costing approximately \$19k to assist both patrons and staff, machine will better manage jobs, no coins will be needed as electronic payments accepted and it will be more efficient and confidential. Mr. Granto asked if this purchase was in the budget, Ms. Potwin said it wasn't but available funding within the budget will be used from other expense lines that are well under budget. Mr. Granto asked Mr. Roscetti if a resolution is required, Mr. Roscetti said should as it is spending money.

Mr. Granto asked if there were any other questions or comments, hearing none he asked for a motion to approve this purchase. A motion to approve the digital printing service as presented was made by Ms. Bailey, seconded by Mr. King and approved unanimously.

Mr. Granto went around the room asking each in attendance if they had anything else to discuss. Mr. Brown spoke to clarify the 2024 budget presentation (item Xb) with the city and city's position that the library received what they asked for. He said Ms. Potwin met with city administration to review her budget on August 1 with her request of city funding based on several unknown expense items that were estimated that we have no control over and the budget the city based their funding on had left a deficit of approximately \$47k. About a week after this meeting Ms. Potwin sent an e-mail to the city administrator and mayor requesting an additional \$47k of city funding to address the deficit and/or removal of the property insurance expense charged by the city to the library for the building that the city owns (approx. \$58k). Ms. Potwin did not receive a response or follow up to this request so it isn't entirely accurate for the city to say the library received the amount of city funding that it requested.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NONE

NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT. The next regular meeting of the Library Board is scheduled for 11/15/2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the conference room. The next Dunlap-NF Library Collective Trust meeting is scheduled for 2/24/24 at 2.30 pm in the conference room.

The meeting adjourned at 3:34 pm by Mr. Granto, seconded by Mr. King, and carried.

Recorded by: Patrick D. Brown
Patrick D. Brown, PT Finance Manager
Approved by: Don King
Don King, Secretary