

Niagara Falls Public Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of Regular Board Meeting

Library-Conference Room

1425 Main Street, Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

CALL TO ORDER. The regular meeting of the Niagara Falls Public Library Board of Trustees was held in person on Wednesday, December 14, 2022, in the Conference Room 2nd Floor Main Library. The meeting was called to order by Board President Carmen Grant at 3:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present

Absent

Ms. Bailey

Ms. Glaser

Dr. Foote

Dr. Rahman

Mr. Grant

Mr. King

Also present were Ms. Sarah Potwin, Executive Library Director, Mr. Pat Brown, PT Finance Manager-Library, Mr. James Roscetti, Library Attorney, Ms. Cecilia Driscoll, Librarian 1/union steward and Mr. Robert DiFrancesco, Friends of the Library.

OPEN HEARING.

Mr. Grant noted there were no other guests or speakers.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA.

The agenda was adopted upon a motion by Mr. King, seconded by Dr. Foote and carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

The October 26th, 2022 regular meeting minutes were presented and reviewed. Adopted upon a motion by Mr. King, seconded by Ms. Bailey, and carried unanimously. It was noted that the November 30, 2022 meeting was cancelled due to lack of quorum.

FINANCIAL REPORTS.

Mr. Brown reported on the September 30, 2022, financial reports which were provided in the November 30th, 2022 agenda packet consisting of operating and special revenue fund balance sheets, income and expense reports with comparison to budget and prior year and Dunlap Trust balance sheet. He provided a detailed narrative analysis to supplement the financial reports, which was included in agenda packet, explaining balance sheet amounts, revenues and expenditures for operating fund and shared that the cash and financial position of the Library is good and there are no unusual accounts payables or liabilities. Being the 9th month of the year expectation would be generally for most revenues and expenses to be about 75.0% of budget (9/12 of budget) if budget evenly spread over the year but noted some items in both revenue and expenses come in once and not evenly throughout the year. The Library is operating within budget for 2022 and he doesn't see any major issues or problem areas.

The Library budgeted to use \$120,823 of fund balance (operate in the red) for 2022 and is operating within budget. Mr. Brown noted receipt of \$675,618 Rebello bequest is reflected as a revenue in the September financials.

Mr. Granto asked if there were any questions on the financial report.

The acceptance of the September 30, 2022 financial reports was adopted unanimously as presented upon a motion by Mr. King and seconded by Ms. Bailey.

EXECUTIVE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

Ms. Potwin referenced her written report which was included in the November 30, 2022 agenda packet.

Upcoming Holiday Closures and Director time off

The Library will be closed:

- Saturday December 24-Christmas Eve
- Monday December 26-Christmas Day (observed)
- Saturday December 31-New Year's Eve Main to close at noon
- Monday January 2, 2023-New Year's Day (observed)

Ms. Potwin reported that she will be off December 28th-the 30th, staff have her contact information.

Meetings attended and upcoming

- A list of meetings attended or to be attended by the Library Director from Oct. 29-Jan. 12 was provided.

Furniture/Furnishing Purchases

19 steel shelving units were purchased for the 1st floor storage room to house a portion of the Local History collection. Additionally, 2 steel cabinets have been purchased to house in our workroom, hot spots and chrome books for loaning out.

12 Hon office chairs were purchased to replace current staff desk chairs, many of which date back to the origin of the main building. The new chairs will enhance employee health as well as build staff morale.

Annual Appeal

Letters were mailed out November 4, 2022, thank you to Sharon and Judie for taking the reins on this and making it happen. As of Nov. 15th \$1,500 has been collected.

Grant Applied

Western New York Library Council (WNYLRC) Digital Resource Grant-\$8,458 + \$390 in kind total \$8,848

- NYS Historical Newspapers to digitize film of local newspapers from 1823-1908

Grants Received

- 1) Federal communication commission grant \$58,400, applied May 2021 received November 2022
 - o \$52K To fund purchase of 10 Microsoft surface tablets Main Library
 - o \$6,400 To fund purchase of 10 Microsoft surface tablets LaSalle Library

- Western New York Library Council (WNYLRC) awarded \$5,000 Diversity and Inclusion grant applied for in Sept. 2022 and outlined in October 2022 minutes.

Grant put off for next year

NF National Heritage Area to apply for the National Endowment of the Humanities "Landmarks in American History" grant of \$300K. Ms. Potwin said she hasn't been able to connect with NFHA and it is a lengthy application and will not be able to make the Dec. 1, 2022 deadline; hopeful for 2023.

Trust funds

\$525,938.06 was deposited to the Bank on Buffalo checking account on October 31, 2022. As discussed and acted on at the Sept. 28th board meeting this account is a holding account for the funds until the board decides where/how to invest and/or possible uses of the funds. These funds were in a checking account with Northwest Bank. Possible options for short term earnings, 1.1% interest savings as well as 3 month CD.

Other Items:

- Monthly reports for adult, youth/childrens departments activity and meeting room use for Sept. & Oct. 2022 provided with Directors Report.
- Purchases in addition to the 19 shelves from Home Depot, 2 Christmas trees, 2 microwaves to replace old ones that are flaking.
- Giving tree in conjunction with the Salvation Army for the holidays
- Electrical issues continue to be an issue on 1st floor Main Library. We are unable to turn off lighting so lights are on 24/7 eating up any savings from new lighting waiting on City trades to fix.
- Library industry issues website references provided for ones reading pleasure.
- NY Times article provided "Thankful for Libraries"

Comments and Questions on Directors Report:

Mr. Granto asked if there were any questions or comments; no questions or comments the Executive Library Director's report was received and filed

PERSONNEL REPORT.

The report provided job class change for one-part time employee, Kevin DiCamillo, from Clerk to Librarian Trainee (code 1590) pay rate \$19.65/hour, 17 hours/week effective Jan. 1, 2023. Additionally, annual salary changes for all full and part time employees for 2023 were included. New hires included Hannah Krull, PT Librarian Trainee effective 1/18/23, Donna Thomas, PT Clerk effective 1/3/23 and Gabriel Fox, PT Librarian Trainee effective 1/3/23. Number of part time and full time employees 19 (9.2 FTE) and 11 respectively.

Mr. Granto asked when the Library will meet the state mandated minimum wage rates as established in part time pay chart in 2017; Ms. Potwin said by end of 2024.

The acceptance of the personnel report was adopted as presented upon a motion by Dr. Foote, seconded by Mr. Granto and carried unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Granto said he will be asking for executive session, nothing to report at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

a) Noreen Kim Hill Scholarship Update

The Niagara Falls Educational Foundation will handle the donations and administration of the scholarship process based on the criteria outlined. Mr. DiFrancesco said the selection process begins around April 2023 and all is in place but \$1,500 has to be on deposit with the Foundation which he thought was already in place. Ms. Potwin explained funding is not yet in place, seeking donations. Dr. Foote inquired about donations (who would they be made payable to, how will funds be raised). Ms. Potwin said donations should be made payable to the NF Educational Foundation, may be given to her and she will pass on to the foundation; seeking board member participation.

b) Resolution for funding Phase III History Associates invoice for the local history inventory project was discussed (page IX b,c in agenda packet). Mr. Brown explained that a resolution from February 2022 Dunlap meeting and March 30, 2022 board meeting was approved to fund \$30,000 of this invoice from Dunlap Trust funds. Instead of using Dunlap Trust funds, bullet aid funds may be used with other sources of funding of invoice remaining the same. The actual amount required is \$29,944.32 not \$30,000.

Resolution:

Mr. Granto asked for a motion to approve the resolution rescinding the March 30, 2022 board resolution of funding from the Dunlap Trust of \$30,000 and instead fund the \$29,944.32 required to pay the invoice from bullet aid funds in special revenue account. The funding of Phase III would be as follows:

NF National Heritage Area	\$ 50,000.00 (special revenue fund account)
Friends of Local History	10,000.00 (special revenue fund account)
American Library Association	10,000.00 (special revenue fund account)
Bullet Aid	<u>29,944.32</u> (special revenue fund account)
	<u>\$ 99,944.32</u>

The motion was adopted as presented upon a motion by Dr. Foote, seconded by Mr. Granto and carried unanimously.

c) Resolution for funding Phase IV History Associates final invoice for the local history inventory project was discussed (page IX b,c in agenda packet). Mr. Brown explained that a resolution from May 25, 2022 board meeting was approved to fund up to \$192,000 (estimated amount) of this invoice from Dunlap Trust funds. Instead of using Dunlap Trust funds, other sources of funding were identified-Dimit funds, bullet aid and NF National Heritage Area. The final invoice from History Associates for the local inventory project is \$189,738.46 not \$192,000 as estimated.

Resolution:

Mr. Granto asked for a motion to approve the resolution rescinding the May 25, 2022 board resolution of funding from the Dunlap Trust of up to \$192,000 and instead fund the actual required amount of \$189,738.46 as follows:

Dimit Funds	\$ 120,000.00 (Library operating account-restricted fund balance)
Bullet Aid	34,738.46 (special revenue fund account)
NF National Heritage Area	<u>35,000.00 (funds pledged not received)</u>
	<u>\$ 189,738.46</u>

Mr. King asked about the use of Dimit funds since they are restricted. Mr. Brown explained the restriction was not part of the original gift/donation but internally imposed on advice of auditors due to a notice of claim asserted against the estate with an unknown value and that the Board had designated these funds for the relocation, preservation, storage and maintenance of the Library's historical collection. If the estate does not have sufficient assets or property available to fund the claim, the Library may be required to return some or all of the bequest. Mr. Roscetti said any legal decision will most likely not be determined for several years and he doesn't feel it is likely that the Library will have to return any funds. Mr. Brown said the auditor's report explains this restriction and describes the claim against the Library as remote and no liability is recorded. If the court does decide against the Library, funding of \$120,000 is readily available from Trust funds consisting of Rebello and Rawyne funds so funding shouldn't be an issue.

The motion was adopted as presented upon a motion by Dr. Foote, seconded by Mr. Granto and carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

- a) Computer mobile device loan to employee policy (page Xa)
 - Tabled until Jan. 2023 on motion by Mr. Granto, second by Ms. Bailey approved
- b) Collection Development Policy (page Xb)
 - Tabled until Jan. 2023 on motion by Mr. Granto, second by Ms. Bailey approved
- c) History Associates inventory project cost and funding sources report (page Xc) was reviewed by Mr. Brown. The report showed that a total of \$405,864.41 was paid to History Associates, Inc. for the local history inventory project phases I-IV funded by:

Dunlap/Rawyne (all Rawyne)	\$ 56,181.63 (13.84%)
NF National Heritage Area	\$ 145,000.00 (35.73%)
Friends of Local History	\$ 10,000.00 (2.46%)
American Library Assoc. (ALA)	\$ 10,000.00 (2.46%)
Library (Dimit/Bullet Aid)	\$ 184,682.78 (45.51%)

The history inventory project was received and filed.

Mr. Granto asked Ms. Driscoll as union steward if she had anything she wanted to discuss, Ms. Driscoll said no. Mr. Granto went around the table asking all in attendance individually if they had any additional comments, questions on the agenda or other issues/matters they wished to discuss.

- Ms. Potwin discussed the need to repair the boiler at the Main Library of approximately \$700 and difficulty getting the City to address it and she may have to contract it out to get it done. Mr. Granto said these are City responsibilities and they should fix it and asked if it would force closing of the library if not repaired. Ms. Potwin said if it stays as is shouldn't have to close it. Mr. King asked if any materials are at risk of being damaged, Ms. Potwin responded there is no such risk.

Mr. Granto said if there is nothing else to discuss he would like to move into executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Granto moved for executive session at 3:16 seconded by Mr. King. The executive session ended at 4:14 pm and the regular meeting resumed.

Mr. Brown requested a resolution to transfer the Rebello bequest of \$675,617.53 to the Orrin E. Dunlap Collection Trust Funds for future expenses of the local history project which may include but not be limited to the relocation, preservation, storage and maintenance of the Library's historical collection since the original bequest had no restrictions on it as to use of funds.

Mr. Brown explained that the Orrin E. Dunlap Collection Trust Funds presently consist of remaining funds from the original Dunlap bequest and bequest by Lenore Rawnye. If the resolution is approved, the funds in the trust will consist of Dunlap, Rawnye and Rebello funds.

After some discussion regarding the Orrin E. Dunlap Collection Trust funds, it was generally agreed to amend the trust document and renaming the trust. Mr. Granto asked Mr. Roscetti to draft up the amendment and present it at the January 2023 board meeting for further consideration and discussion.

Resolution:


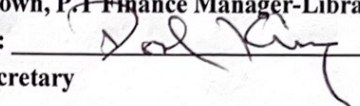
Mr. Granto asked for a motion to approve the resolution as presented to transfer the Rebello bequest of \$675,617.53 to the Dunlap Trust Funds for future expenses of the local history project which may include but not be limited to the relocation, preservation, storage and maintenance of the Library's historical collection.

The motion was adopted as presented upon a motion by Dr. Foote, seconded by Ms. Bailey and carried unanimously.

NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT.

The next regular meeting of the Library Board is scheduled for January 25, 2023, 3:00 p.m. in-person Main Library Conference Room, 2nd floor. The next Dunlap Meeting (First Quarterly meeting 2023) is scheduled for Wednesday February 22, 2023 at 2.30 pm in person, Main Library Conference Room, 2nd floor.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm on a motion by Dr. Foote, seconded by Ms. Bailey, and carried unanimously.

Recorded by: 
Patrick D. Brown, P.T Finance Manager-Library
Approved by: 
Don King, Secretary