

City of Oregon City Meeting Minutes Library Board

December 9, 2020

5:32 PM

Online via Zoom

- 1. Call to Order-** Scott Edwards called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

Members Present: Larry Osborne, Cynthia Andrews, David Goldberg, Nick Dierckman, Kari Linder, and Scott Edwards.

Members Absent: Ken Hall

Staff Present: Gregory Williams, Library Director, and Denise Butcher, Library Operations Manager represented the Library staff.

- 2. Approval of Minutes**

Nick Dierckman motioned to approve the minutes from the Library Board's October 14, 2020 meeting with no changes. Larry Osborne seconded the motion. Larry Osborne, Cynthia Andrews, David Goldberg, Nick Dierckman, Kari Linder, and Scott Edwards all voted aye. The motion carried.

- 3. Library Director's Report**

Greg Williams thanked the Library Board for their support and care during a personally difficult time.

Greg stated that he had included a new section comprised of statistics and stated that he would try to provide context with the differences in monthly statistics. Greg pointed out that jumps in programming and circulation statistics were likely attributable to a high volume of Halloween related programming and the introduction of grab and go bundles. Greg explained that the decline in registered library borrowers was due to the Libraries in Clackamas County (LINCC) purge of inactive accounts which occurs annually in October.

Greg explained that he was unable to provide the November statistics in time for this Library Board meeting because the library statistics were not available until several days into the new month. In instances where Board meetings fall earlier in the month, these statistics were released after the Board packets were due for distribution. Greg stated that he would have two months of statistics at the January meeting.

Greg and Denise shared that interviews for on call Library Assistants had concluded with five new hires. Greg stated that this would not have an additional budget impact but would allow for better coverage of existing budgeted hours and spoke positively of the new hires.

Greg explained that the Carl Clapp memorial plaque had been installed on the concrete near the reading circle rather than in the originally planned location next to a tree near John Adams Street. This decision was reached after consulting with Parks and Recreation and determining there was a high likelihood the tree near the anticipated site would need to be removed in the coming years and placing the plaque there would necessitate later relocation. The current location of the plaque also allowed for easier maintenance. Greg expressed hope that a dedication ceremony might occur in the next month.

Greg shared that discussions were underway with Facilities to add additional handrails to the concrete steps near the splash pad in order to deter skateboarders from performing skateboarding tricks on the step. Despite posted signage in the area indicating skateboarding is not allowed, the concrete has sustained damage. Denise shared that earlier in the day skateboarders had been atop the bookdrops.

Greg anticipated having more information for the next meeting about people counters to provide real time occupancy monitoring. Greg said that the system under consideration was projected to help the library function in an environment where capacity restrictions were essential to library operations and that it should be reimbursable under the CARES act as a Covid related expense. Vendor selection was underway.

Greg updated the Board on Covid related procedures, highlighting the State's move away from phased reopening and migration to a county by county risk evaluation model. Greg shared that the Library's phased reopening plan was being revised to fit with the new rubric. Greg shared that the Library and City were updating practices to be in accordance with new OSHA guidelines and that more details were to follow at next month's Board meeting.

Greg shared that new services had been implemented and that the most popular part of the to go bundles were the popcorn packs included with the movie bundles. Greg shared that holiday themed bundles were forthcoming. Bookflicks, an ebook resource tailored for younger readers, was a new resource that had been added to fill a gap in electronic resource offerings. A children's trivia program had been added too. Greg reported that Barratt Miller, Youth Services Librarian, led the effort to get the undistributed Summer Reading books to the school district for distribution to students via lunch delivery routes and in person delivery.

Greg highlighted the countywide library initiative, “We are your LINCC to...” and shared that Adult Services Librarian Gina Bacon had designed the graphic.

Greg shared positive feedback received and reflected that the feedback was not limited to people in Oregon and that the library has widespread impact.

Scott Edwards asked what additional electronic content might be added to the library’s offerings. Greg stated that the Adult Services and Social Media staff were constantly looking for and collecting econtent to promote. Greg offered to bring back more concrete examples.

Scott spoke positively of the existing online resources, particularly Kanopy and the language resources. Greg provided some distinction between the resources that all LINCC libraries agreed to participate in and the more individualized nature of Oregon City Public Library’s social media presence.

Scott asked if the mailing of library materials might be expanded in the future. Greg stated that materials were still being mailed, and it is currently an unadvertised service. Greg said that the expansion of this service was a long-term goal and that the possibility of a county wide books by mail service was also being discussed but at present nothing was definitive.

David Goldberg noted that the circulation statistics indicated that 2020 year to date circulation was down approximately 70% from 2019. David expressed curiosity as to what other libraries were experiencing. David also pointed out that growing numbers back to preCovid levels would likely take time even after people were vaccinated. Greg concurred and explained that Oregon City Public Library’s efforts to be open physically and digitally was an effort to remain visible and part of people’s lives. Greg stated he would bring other statistics and acknowledged that with the reduced hours and staff there was no physical way to move preCovid amounts of materials.

Nick Dierckman noted that electronic checkouts were about 15% higher than last year and expressed surprise that this increase was not greater. Greg shared that this may be attributed to patron screen fatigue and patrons who are not comfortable accessing digital materials, based on some patron feedback. Greg explained that this may also be an issue of limited availability of electronically available titles due to finite funding.

Scott Edwards expressed appreciation of the new book drop and always having space available to return things. Greg and Denise acknowledged that this was the first year that staff did not need to come in on Thanksgiving weekend to empty the bookdrop and that there was room left over at the end of the long weekend.

4. Public Comments

None were submitted.

5. 2020 Oregon Public Library Statistical Report

Greg acknowledged that the report may not have been provided to the Board prior to submission to the State and apologized.

Greg stated that 2.04 of the report appeared to show an increase in staff positions by two employees, but that was this was because previously the number of filled positions, not budgeted positions, had been reported.

Greg remarked that 2.07 showed a drop in volunteer hours, which was partially explained by the lack of volunteers following the library's closure in March and subsequently not having volunteers in building. Additionally, the previous year's statistics had included the hours worked by Friends of the Library volunteers. These hours were not included in this year's statistics as Friends is a different organization.

Greg pointed out that the money reflected in 3.09 reflected the federal funds received as part of Covid related reimbursement from the CARES act.

Greg explained the discrepancy in numbers for 8.17 (relating to library visits) was a combination of last year's numbers likely having been sourced from a double counting people counter combined with closure and pandemic related limitations of patron visits during 2020.

Greg highlighted that despite all of the declines, the programming statistics with regard to number of programs and number of attendees were fairly steady.

The Board had no questions.

6. Library Board Interview Questions

Greg shared that there would be one open Board position at the end of the year.

Scott asked if Ken was not reapplying; Greg confirmed that that was the case.

Nick asked how many had applied. Greg replied that there was one applicant so far.

Greg noted that he had submitted the questions with some suggested changes. Greg pointed out that the question about Library of Things might need some adjustment since at the point that it was last used, the collection was just getting started.

Scott expressed support for the revisions. Kari Linder expressed support for removing the Library of Things question in its entirety.

Scott asked if anyone had ideas for a replacement question; there were no suggestions. Greg expressed appreciation for the question about the service area.

Greg asked if there was support for the removal of the Library of Things question. There was general assent. No formal motion was made.

Kari asked how interviews would be conducted.

Greg said that under normal circumstances the interviews would occur during a normally scheduled Board meeting, Greg would contact the applicants and let them know of their scheduled time, and the interview would be recorded. Greg needed to check in with the City Commission to see if they wanted to be involved in the process. The applicant would have time to answer the questions and then the Board would have a chance to discuss later. The Board's recommendation would be sent to the City Commission, the City Commission usually appoints the recommended person, and the Mayor retains authority over appointments.

Scott asked if the discussion about the candidates would be recorded and be part of the public record. Greg shared that that was current practice. Denise clarified that in the past audio recordings had been acceptable.

Nick asked if Ken's position was an in City position; Greg stated that as of right now that was the case.

Greg stated that in talking with Kattie Riggs there were a few options: the Board could go forward with just one applicant, outreach could be made to applicants for other Boards, and it could remain open for more applicants.

Scott inquired as to the cutoff date for the position; Greg replied that the advertised cut off date had been in November and that it was not unusual for this situation to occur. Scott expressed support for increasing the applicant pool.

David asked if the open position was being posted on social media; Greg replied he'd check on it.

Nick suggested an email be sent to the email list.

Cynthia suggested a clarification to know that the meetings are currently occurring remotely and ensure potential applicants be comfortable utilizing technology to conduct Board business.

Nick stated that phone call in would suffice.

Cynthia agreed that a phone call would suffice and reiterated a desire to be upfront about the changes to how meetings were conducted and that this change in criteria be advertised in the recruitment communication.

Greg sought confirmation that it was the pleasure of the Board to continue to develop a pool of candidates. The Board affirmed this.

7. Communications

Scott thanked Ken for his time and energy serving on the Board.

Denise reported that the Friends of the Library's November meeting was focused on ways to increase membership. Greg shared that Friends of the Library would be having their annual meeting online via Zoom on December 16 at 4:00 pm. Greg anticipated giving a presentation of library functions during Covid as well as projections for library functioning in post Covid times.

Scott encouraged the Board and anyone watching the meeting to visit the Friends of the Library Bookstore for affordable books.

Cynthia reported that the Library Foundation did not meet in November but was scheduled to meet on December 17. Karen Martini, Foundation Director, reached out to prior donors via letter. Cynthia shared that two new members would be filling Foundation Board positions made open by retirements and stated that the members' names would be shared once they had officially joined. Cynthia stated that a memorandum of understanding with the Oregon City Schools Foundation concerning support for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and more details would be shared at the next meeting.

Scott stated that with Ken's departure that a new liaison to Friends of the Library would be needed and invited the Board to consider assuming this role.

Greg shared that Friends of the Library meetings occur at 3:00 pm on the same day as the Library Board meetings, that Greg gives a brief version of the Director's Report, and that finances, marketing, and membership are discussed, and the meetings occur online and rarely exceed 30 to 45 minutes.

Nick stated that LDAC was working on organizing a Zoom meeting and that specific dates were forthcoming.

Nick asked if the Board anticipated having interviews at the January meeting. Greg asked if the Board would be comfortable with three to four applicants in the interview

process. Scott affirmed that the most applicants he had seen at an interview was three or four. Greg said he would try to reach out to get more applicants so that a robust interview pool could be interviewed at the January meeting and would provide updates.

Nick shared the thought that if more applicants did not materialize in the next two to three weeks that there would likely not be any additional interest.

8. Future Agenda Items:

Greg shared that the annual update to the City Commission would occur January 6, 2021. Greg asked about the practices and logistics of the creation of the report. Scott responded that previously the Chair and the Library Director attend the meeting whereupon the Chair gives the report. Scott said that previously other Board members had attended, but as the meeting was scheduled on Zoom this year, that would not be possible.

9. Adjournment- The meeting adjourned at 6:26 pm.