

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**ORANGE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**April 13, 2023 ~ 6:00 p.m.**

**Orlando Public Library**  
**101 East Central Boulevard**  
**Orlando, Florida 32801**

Library Board Present: Crockett Bohannon (4/0); Nicole Benjamin (7/0 – City);  
 Danielle Levien (7/2 - City); Lizannette Tam (4/0);  
 Sharon Smoley (4-1)

Administration Present: Steve Powell; Bethany Stone; Kris Shoemaker; Yvonne Hartley;  
 Danielle King; Erin Sullivan; Lynette Schimpf; Sara Gonzalez;  
 Leasha Tavernier; Milinda Neusaenger

- 23-040 I. **Call to Order**  
 President Bohannon called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.
- 23-041 II. **Public Comment Policy & Procedures**
- 23-042 III. **Approval of Minutes: Library Board of Trustees Meeting – March 9, 2023**  
 Trustee Smoley, seconded by Trustee Tam, moved to approve the minutes for the March, 9, 2023 Library Board of Trustees Meeting. Motion carried 5-0.
- 23-043 IV. **Staff Presentations:**  
**Friends of the Library Update – Melissa Stillman, President**  
 Friends of the Library President, Ms. Stillman briefed the Board regarding the many initiatives in which the Friends support OCLS.
- Horizon West Update – Danielle King**  
 CBO King gave a presentation regarding the Horizon West Branch project.
- Organizational Chart – Steve Powell**  
 Director Powell gave an overview of the new OCLS Organizational Chart.
- 23-044 V. **Financial Statements and Summaries: March 2023**  
 CFO Shoemaker reviewed the March 2023 financial reports for the Board. He reported that the Melrose lighting project and the Photo Lab project are both completed, the North Orange roof is almost done and the Windermere Expansion project will be completed in time for the *Summer at Your Library* event.
- 23-045 VI. **Dashboard March 2023: Leasha Tavernier**  
 CBO Tavernier reported to the Board that in March there was a 29% increase in door count, 33% increase in new library card registrations, 28% increase in physical items checked out, and a 14% increase in digital items checked out. In fact, this was a record-setting month for digital checkouts, at 249,850 checkouts, which is an average of 8,000 per day.
- Additionally, event attendance went up 57% and technology class attendance went up 67%. Out of those attendance numbers, over 31,000 were for in-person and over 1,900 events were hosted offsite. Compared to 2019, the events numbers have increased and although the class numbers are still below pre-Covid level, when the attendance is combined, the total is higher than 2019.

She also gave an update on hotspots. Since the start of the hotspot lending program on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, over 800 hotspots have been checked out. In March, staff did some target marketing and sent out postcards to specific communities that have a need for internet service in areas such as Pine Hills, South OBT and Parramore. This marketing has paid off and since March 1<sup>st</sup>, over 448 hotspots have been checked out. In fact, the South Trail and Main library ran out of hotspots and we had to re-allocate devices from other locations to meet the demand in these service areas.

Ms. Tavernier shared two customer stories from March:

First - A customer, Ivan, wrote and read this letter aloud during an English Conversation class at our Southwest Branch: *When I began to live in Orlando, I was very surprised how wonderful the Orlando Libraries are. The classes and the teachers are lovely, and I had the opportunity to experience new knowledge, review some others and also have an English class parallel. I did Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Photoshop, 3D printing, web design, tai chi, meditation, English and other classes that I don't remember. Another special feature that we have is the possibility of having rented books to be delivered at our door. And for those who like to read digital media, the amount of books and magazines is really huge! They also have some agreements with other media sites, giving us more options. I love the narrated books where we can read and listen to books, which is very interesting for those who are learning English like me. I had the opportunity to go to several units of the library, including the Melrose Center, and I can say that all the staff of the units are very professional and always happy to help us. I also should say a "Thank You" to the volunteers that help this library work fine!*

The second story she shared is through a video. It is part customer story, part staff story, and it also highlights the marketing efforts for a unique class that is offered.

[Learn it at the library: Sashiko Hand Sewing!](#) by Rebecca Sung at Southwest.

23-046 VII. **Action Item: None**

23-047 VIII. **Discussion and Possible Action Items**

23-048 IX. **Information**

23-049 **Director's Goals FY 2023: 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Report – Danielle Levien**

Trustee Levien reviewed Director Powell's progress with his goals and stated that he is on track to meet or exceed them. She discussed some of the many initiatives that are in progress such as: the new Strategic Plan project, the new Organizational Chart, the trip to Tallahassee to meet with the local legislative delegation, the removal of overdue fines which resulted in almost 12,000 customers returning, the Horizon West Branch project, and the upcoming FY 2024 budget just to name a few.

23-050 **Strategic Plan FY 2023: 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Report**

Director Powell offered the following update of the FY 2023 Strategic Plan: In section, *Improve the Customer Experience, establishing OCLS as a friendly, welcoming and community-centric service* and under, *Update Inclusiveness Training for all staff*, the update is that two, not one, DEIA Specialists have been selected and started in early April. Once in place, they will review the inclusiveness training course package and work with the training department to determine the best sequence for course assignments based on current DEIA goals and strategies.

In section, *Provide inviting facilities to fulfill community needs* and under, *Explore the possibility of a center for nursing mothers at Main*, a nursing station has been ordered and delivery is scheduled for the end of April.

Under, *Increase awareness of OCLS and what is offered and within, Develop a strategic marketing plan* and in, *Create and execute a plan to market the library's 100th anniversary*. On January 7<sup>th</sup>, the first event surrounding the 100 Year Celebration was held. It featured a ribbon-cutting in the lobby of the Orlando Public Library, where library leadership shared a special announcement about new library services on the horizon and rededicated the library to the community for the next 100 years.

After the event was over, MPR staff found their goals were met:

- A total of 101 adults watched the ribbon-cutting ceremony and announcement in person, and 29 people used the QR code on the VIP box to submit their RSVPs for the event.
- More than 200 people attended a musical performance that followed the ribbon cutting.
- Five local officials participated in the ribbon cutting. They included Mayor Jerry Demings, Mayor Buddy Dyer, City Commissioner Patty Sheehan, County Commissioner Nicole Wilson, and State Representative Anna Eskamani.
- The event resulted in multiple earned media stories, including two stories in Orlando Sentinel, and stories on WFTV, Orlando Weekly, Orlando Times, and Community Paper.
- The event was also live-streamed on Orange TV.

Then under, *Look for opportunities to increase the number of staff to share responsibility for outreach*, the Branch Outreach Specialist Committee conducted interviews with internal and external candidates to fill the new Branch Outreach Specialist positions for the system. So far, six internal candidates have been hired and started their roles on March 13, 2023.

Also under, *Deliver experiences that offer opportunities to help the community learn and grow and within, Foster Innovation & New Services* and in, *Seek out new opportunities for delivery of library services outside library walls*. The library has made a concerted effort to bring library programming and services to the community to help reduce transportation barriers. During the second quarter, OCLS hosted 256 library events at community partner sites, reaching over 11,500 residents. Staff offered regularly scheduled programming at the following offsite facilities: RCMA, Hope Community Center, Waterleigh Clubhouse, Brixton Landing Senior Center, Rosemont Neighborhood Center, Silver Lakes Community Center, Gentry Park, Madison Assisted Living, Wellington Park, Brixton Landing, South Orlando YMCA, Brooksdale Assisted Living, Lila Mitchell Head Start, and Leu Gardens. Event offerings varied based on the needs of the community. Examples of programs presented were senior crafts, knitting, storytelling, technology classes, field trips, and themed educational activities.

Additionally, OCLS participated in 85 outreaches, reaching over 6,000 people. Staff attended several large community festivals such as “Horizon West Fest,” Mayor Deming’s “Jazz in the Park,” “Paws in the Park,” “OCPS Parent Academy,” “ZORA!Fest,” and the “Mayor’s Open House and Job Fair.”

Then in, *Explore opportunities to checkout non-traditional items*, the Library of Things committee have met several times this quarter to discuss plans for this project. The team sent out a survey to all locations asking staff to provide feedback about what “things” customers request at their location. The list was categorized and sorted based on type. The team discussed the list and decided to focus on more feasible items to start with first such as fiber arts, educational kits, technology support, and health kits.

In closing, there is far too much in the March update to cover here but it is well worth the read. Staff is putting every effort into making OCLS an outstanding library and Director Powell commended and thanked them for their efforts.

On March 21-22, Director Powell joined Friends of the Orange County Library System board member Mike Donohue, Chief Marketing and Public Relations Officer Erin Sullivan on a trip to Tallahassee to participate in Library Legislative Day. Every year, Florida Library Association organizes this event to encourage libraries across the state to meet with their legislators, talk to them about the value libraries bring to the community and ask them to support continued funding for key programs, such as Career Online High School, the library construction fund, and state aid for libraries, which has been on the decline since the early 2000s.

On March 22, they met with most of the members of Orange County's legislative delegation and shared information with them about the library's social workers, Career Online High School, the partnership with Orange County Public Schools and plans for new branches in Horizon West and Lake Nona. They also left them with copies of *Books and Beyond* and rack cards with information about other services.

They received a warm welcome from the legislators, as well as some requests to send additional information about the library's programs and an invitation to participate in a 2023 Juneteenth community event. It was an excellent opportunity to connect with the elected officials and give them a fresh perspective on what OCLS does. The new legislators have been added to mailing lists, and staff plan to remain in touch with those who expressed interest in receiving more information about how the library serves Orange County.

Staff are beginning another round of deliveries through Orange Crate, the program that provides a subscription box service for people who want a curated selection of library materials delivered to their doorstep. From April through July, the *Parents & Preschoolers* box will be on the way to homes across the county. The program was promoted on social media and filled all the spots in just 24 hours. Staff registered 53 children for the program and generated 16 new library card registrations. In each crate subscribers will receive the following:

- Four Easy Reader titles following that month's theme
- One fun craft for the child
- Library promotional items for children and adults
- Information regarding the library and its services

The Florida Daughters of the American Revolution visited the West Oaks Branch and Genealogy Center for their annual Research Day event on March 2. The local Adams-Onís Treaty DAR Chapter joined others from throughout the state to collaborate and get assistance from the Genealogy Specialist as they continued to research their families.

On March 15, Youth Services hosted a drop-in Family Volunteering event. Families in attendance rotated between three stations: packing craft activity kits to be distributed to customers; creating kindness messages to supplement summer displays related to the Summer at Your Library "All Together Now" theme; and creating fun, custom bookmarks that will be used as small prizes for children participating in activities and scavenger hunts in the department. A total of 17 children and caregivers were present at the event.

South Trail Branch Outreach Specialist Arthur Ugalde and Customer Service Lead Sharon Payton attended the Mayor's Jazz in the Park event at Cypress Grove Park on Saturday, March 4. They spoke to over 200 people about library services. During the event, Mayor Jerry Demings stopped by their table, and Arthur asked him if he had a library card. The mayor responded that he did, and Arthur asked him to prove it. The mayor was happy to comply, and after showing his card, he posed for a photo at the library's table.

Alafaya Branch Technology Trainer Daniel Meyer reported that in early March, just before a class, a customer stopped to say hello and let him know that she was starting a new job.

She wanted to thank him and Alafaya's other Technology Trainer Gus Padron Sarachaga for the classes she has taken with them, which she said helped give her the confidence to apply for and get her new job. "It was wonderful seeing her," Daniel said, "and a nice reminder of the impact of what we do can have on our community."

Last month Director Powell mentioned that Southeast Technology Trainer Brenda Santana had been approached by Congressman Darren Soto's office to be recognized in the Congressional Record for her contributions to the Central Florida area. On March 20, Brenda participated in a special ceremony with Congressman Soto, during which she was honored for teaching classes at Southeast and for pioneering English and Spanish language workshops for adults and children.

Director Powell shared that staff have spoken a lot over the past several months about bringing mobile services back to the county. The plan, since receiving the \$100,000 donation from Sorosis of Orlando Woman's Club, has been to purchase two book bicycles to get things started while staff work out a plan to design and purchase a bookmobile. He was happy to report that the first book bicycle has been ordered from Icicle Tricycles, and hope to have it available for use this summer.

23-052

**Public Comment: Non-Agenda Items**

Jonathan Blount – addressed the Board regarding equity and inclusion of staff.

Trustee Levien resigned from the Board.

Trustee Smoley, seconded by Trustee Tam, moved to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried 5-0. President Bohannon adjourned the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

X. **Adjournment**

**Next Meeting Dates:**

**May 11, 2023 ~ Orlando Public Library; 101 East Central Boulevard; Orlando, Florida 32801 --- June 8, 2023 ~ Orlando Public Library; 101 East Central Boulevard; Orlando, Florida 32801.**

**Florida Statutes section 286.0105: If any person desires to appeal any decision with respect to any matter considered at a Library Board of Trustees meeting, such person will need a record of the proceedings; for this purpose, such person may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made to include the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.**

**In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person requiring special accommodations to participate in this proceeding due to a disability as defined by ADA may arrange for reasonable accommodations by contacting the Director's Office on the fifth floor of the Main Library in person or by phone at 407.835.7611 at least two days prior to the meeting.**