

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

**August 17, 2023 ~ 6:00 p.m.**

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

Library Board Present: Crockett Bohannon (8/0); Nicole Benjamin (11/0 – City);  
Lizannette Tam (8/1); Ashley Cisneros Mejia (1/0)

Library Board Absent: Sharon Smoley (8/2)

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

- 23-095 I. **Call to Order**  
President Bohannon called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.
- 23-096 **Oath of Office: Ashley Cisneros Mejia - New Board Member**  
President Bohannon swore in Ashley Cisneros Mejia as the newest member of the Library Board of Trustees.
- 23-097 II. **Public Comment Policy & Procedures**
- 23-098 III. **Approval of Minutes: Library Board of Trustees Meeting – July 13, 2023**  
Trustee Tam, seconded by Vice President Benjamin moved to approve the minutes for the July 13, 2023 Library Board of Trustees Meeting. Motion carried 4-0.
- 23-099 IV. **Staff Presentation: IT Support – Thomas Beaver**
- 23-100 V. **Financial Statements and Summaries: July 2023 Reports**  
CFO Shoemaker reviewed the July financial reports for the Board and stated that the financials are in very good shape and on target.
- 23-101 VI. **Dashboard – July 2023: Leasha Tavernier**  
Chief of Neighborhood Services Tavernier shared some highlights from the dashboard. In July, there was a 22% increase in door count, library card registrations, and computer usage as compared to last July. Digital checkouts continue to be high, with a total of 272,638 checkouts which is an average of 8,795 per day. This is an 18% increase over last July.
- There was a 519% increase in Community Event attendance. This large increase is directly related to the efforts of our new outreach specialists. Staff were able to attend 30 more community events than last July. Event attendance was up 30% with a total attendance of 55,390. Out of those numbers, 51,686 were for in-person and 3,704 were for offsite events.
- She also updated the Board regarding the Rules of Conduct. In February, staff came to the Board to make one small change to the Rules of Conduct and said that staff would be reviewing all of the rules and bringing them back to the board this year. With the changes in organizational structure that are being working on, that project has been postponed. A new customer service department is being created here at Main and staff from that department need to be involved. The plan now is to bring refreshed Rules of Conduct back to the Board during the next fiscal year.

CNS Tavernier highlighted two customer service stories this month: The Alafaya Branch hosted “Meet the Author: Ana Menendez” on July 19. This event was a result of an organic conversation, when the branch manager, Edward Booker, reached out to the author after her most recent book was released. Ana graciously accepted Edward’s invitation to visit the branch and promote her book, *The Apartment*. The author was accompanied to the event by her mother, who traveled with her from Miami. Ana read an excerpt from her novel and then engaged in an intimate Q&A with the attendees. After the event, Ana sent a handwritten card stating that she appreciated the gracious welcome she and her mother received, the careful planning that had been invested in the event, and “the friendships we made.” Ana also mentioned how much they enjoyed the attentions of staff member, Joanne Southworth, who shared the details of Alafaya’s “Knit and Crochet Meetup” with Ana’s mother. Books were generously provided by the Friends of the Library for sale at the event.

OCLS hosted the first hospital takeover with community partner, the Orlando Health Arnold Palmer Hospital. The event began with a “Choose Your Own Adventure” storytime. The storytime, hosted by outreach specialist, Arthur was broadcast live to all patient rooms and hospital public televisions from the Arnold Palmer Hospital Seacrest Studios. After the storytime, outreach staff Arthur, Nathaly, and Erica hosted six stations with activities for families in the hospital atrium. There was also a “to-go” component for any patients that were unable to leave their hospital beds. The hospital staff were happy to have the library present and the director of the hospital personally voiced her thanks. The event was so well received that another is being planned for this October.

23-102 VII. **Action Items: Consent Agenda**

23-103 **Board Meeting Schedule: FY 2024**

President Bohannon pulled the FY 2024 Board Meeting Schedule from the Consent Agenda and requested that the January 2024 meeting be moved to the 18<sup>th</sup> of the month from the 11<sup>th</sup>. Vice President Benjamin, seconded by Trustee Tam, moved to approve the FY 2024 Board Meeting schedule with the change to the January 2024 meeting date. Motion carried 4-0.

Vice President Benjamin, seconded by Trustee Tam, moved to approve the remaining items on the Consent Agenda. Motion carried 4-0.

23-104 **Strategic Plan FY 2024 – FY 2026 Approval: Steve Powell**

The Board voted to approve the FY 2024 – 2026 Strategic Plan.

23-105 **Public Library Construction Grant Application Approval – Horizon West: Danielle King**

The Board voted:

- to authorize the submission of the application for the Public Library Construction Grant for the Horizon West Branch;
- to authorize Steve Powell, Library Director/CEO to sign the application and provide required certifications;
- to assure the required match of a dollar-for-dollar of the grant request will be available and unencumbered at the time of the grant award;
- to assure that funding is sufficient and will be available in order that the project will result in a completed library building;
- to assure that upon completion of the project, sufficient funds will be available to operate the facility;
- to assure that the building will be used exclusively for the public library purposes for which it was constructed and submission of proposed changes in use to the Division for approval if within 20 years of the completion of the construction project.

23-106

**Computer & Equipment Purchase to Update Technology Classrooms:****Thomas Beaver**

The Board voted:

- to approve the purchase of computers and equipment to update all technology classrooms from Dell at an estimated cost is \$257,648.42;
- to approve a not to exceed budget of \$275,000;
- to authorize staff to issue purchase orders for the project.

23-107

**Southwest Branch Air Conditioning Replacement: Kris Shoemaker**

The Board voted:

- to approve the OCLS Southwest Branch HVAC Replacement Project;
- to approve a not-to-exceed budget of \$225,000;
- to authorize staff to issue purchase order to Greens Energy Services for the project.

23-108

**State Aid FY 2024 Document: Annual Plan of Service: FY 2024**

The Board voted to approve the FY 2024 Annual Plan of Service as required by the Florida Department of State, Division of Library and Information Services, in order for the Orange County Library System to be eligible for a State Aid to Libraries Grant for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2024.

23-109

**Agenda Items: Non-Consent Agenda**

23-110

**Budget FY 2024 Approval: Steve Powell**

CEO Powell presented the updated FY 2024 Budget to the Board for their approval.

Trustee Tam, seconded by Vice President Benjamin, moved to approve the revised FY 2023-2024 Operating, Capital Projects, Sinking and Permanent Fund budgets and to Recommend to the Governing Board that the Library District's millage rate be maintained at .3748 for FY 2023-2024. Motion carried 4-0.

23-111

**Strategic Plan Project Firm Selection: Lynette Schimpf**

Chief Project Officer Schimpf presented the plan to hire a strategic plan consulting firm to assist OCLS with planning for the future. After presentations by two firms to the procurement committee, it was determined that FastForward Libraries was the firm most closely aligned with the library's objectives and goals for this project. The ranking for the two firms is as follows:

- 1 - FastForward Libraries
- 2 - Godfrey's Associates, Inc.

Discussion ensued regarding the timeline and the contingency in the budget. The projected timeline is to have the new strategic plan completed and ready to begin in FY 2025. The contingency was included as an internal budget item in case additional travel is necessary. FastForward Libraries will conduct focus groups and surveys of the community, staff, users and non-users. Trustee Tam, seconded by Trustee Cisneros Mejia, moved to offer the following:

- to approve strategic plan consulting project
- to approve the ranking of strategic plan consulting firms
- to approve the project's budget of \$135,000
- to authorize staff to execute the contract and issue a purchase order for the project to FastForward Libraries.

Motion carried 4-0.

23-112

**Melrose Center Sound Booth Purchase & Installation: Bethany Stone**

COO Stone briefed the Board regarding the need for two additional ADA compliant sound booths, as the existing sound booths are not ADA accessible. Brief discussion ensued. Vice President Benjamin, seconded by Trustee Tam moved to offer the following:

- to approve the sound booth purchase and installation.
- to approve a not-to-exceed budget of \$120,000.
- to authorize staff to issue a purchase order to WhisperRooms, Inc for the new booths.
- to authorize staff to issue a purchase order to Gomez Construction for the project.

Motion carried 4-0.

23-113 VIII. **Discussion and Possible Action Items**

23-114 IX. **Information**

23-115 **Holiday Schedule: FY 2024**

23-116 **Horizon West Update: Danielle King**

Chief of Neighborhood Services Officer King shared some updates on the progress of the Horizon West Branch. Positive progress is being made and all is on track to meet the deadlines. Staff have been meeting regularly with the architects Borrelli & Partners and the construction team H.J. High to discuss the project. They have met and reviewed details about the design, LEED certification, landscaping, and interior. Sustainability and functionality are a focus in the design plan. The Horizon West Branch will offer all OCLS services but will specialize in offering environmental, science, and outdoor programming to maximize the location of the branch and the natural habitat surrounding it. The images shared are renderings and concept ideas and are not the final product.

The branch will be surrounded by nature and will feature native plants and a Florida native flower teaching garden. The site will also include a nature path with a permanent StoryWalk® The outdoor performance space will feature a small stage with a sound system and grassy area for attendees. The outdoor area will feature a large native specimen tree picked to be a focal point connecting nature with the library building.

The nature theme will carry over inside the branch with earthy textures, organic materials, and a color palette inspired by the surrounding. Here is a concept for the lobby & reception desk concepts.

The children's area will be themed with oversized images of flora, fauna, and native species such as the rare blue calamintha bee unique to this region. The children's area will have interactive features such as sensory experiences and a digital floor that will encourage creativity, play, and learning.

The branch will have two training rooms, a virtual lab, study rooms, and three large meeting rooms.

The meeting rooms can be used as three independent rooms or opened to be used as one large 1,500 square foot space.

Here is the furniture plan concept to give you an idea of what the overall floorplan will look like.

The 30% construction documents were submitted in June, and staff have reviewed and provided feedback and updates. The team is now working on the 60% construction documents which are due October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ms. King stated that she is also working on submitting a Public Library Construction grant through the State of Florida for \$500,000 which is due at the end of this month.

23-117

**Lake Nona Update: Bethany Stone**

COO Stone reported to the Board that the Lake Nona project is moving along and that the City of Orlando led the LEED charette that was held on August 15<sup>th</sup>. She stated that not many changes are anticipated and that there will be a berm in front of the property at Dowden Road, which will buffer any noise and traffic.

23-118

**Director's Report**

Silence Bourn, Assistant Manager of the Events and Programs Department, was selected to participate in the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Sunshine State Library Leadership Institute (SSLLI), administered by the Florida Department of State's Division of Library and Information Services. The primary goal of the Institute is to assist in preparing library leaders to provide the highest-quality library services to the citizens of Florida, in the most effective and innovative manner, to meet today's needs and tomorrow's challenges.

On July 8, accomplished multi-instrumentalist Patrick Frost performed musical pieces on steel pans, eight-string ukulele and conch shells for 87 attendees during a Music at the Library event at the Orlando Public Library. This event featured a special surprise performance from Congressman Maxwell Frost, who joined Patrick on stage.

South Trail hosted a Citizenship Celebration on July 8 for students who have passed the naturalization test since COVID. Before COVID, students recited the oath of citizenship and received their naturalization certificates in large groups, and it was a festive occasion. During the pandemic, many of the oaths were taken in small groups without celebrations. OCLS is proud to offer our naturalized students a chance to participate a large celebration of their new citizenship. Attendees were led through the Oath of Citizenship by me. Shally Wong, a naturalized citizen and Special Assistant to Orange County Mayor Jerry Demings, presented letters from the mayor to attendees. County Commissioner Mike Scott attended the event to share his congratulations, as did Board of Trustees President Crockett Bohannon. Between May 2020 and May 2023, OCLS has led 531 Citizenship Inspired classes, which prepare students for the naturalization exam, to a total of 6,517 people.

The Hiawassee Branch partnered with the Orange County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) this summer to offer some unique experiences for the community. On July 14, children had the opportunity to read to Pegasus, OCSO's comfort dog who provides emotional support to victims of crimes. On July 29, the Sheriff's Office hosted Books and Badges at the branch and brought their Mobile Video Game Theater and crime unit SUV for attendees. The Game Theater features 11 screens of the latest gaming consoles, such as Sony PlayStation 5, Xbox and Nintendo Switch. Sheriff John Mina conducted a storytime for the children and officers gave away over 60 backpacks filled with school supplies. One lucky child won a gift basket and lunch with Sheriff Mina. The event was attended by 120 people, including Commissioner Mike Scott. This partnership was well received by the community and the library is hoping to plan more events with OCSO in the future.

On July 14, Southeast had a successful double program. The first program, Box Engineers, helps kids learn to design and build structures out of cardboard boxes using child-friendly tools. During the program, 21 participants built cars out of boxes. After they were finished, they were able to attend a second program, called Drive-In Movie, during which they could sit in their cardboard cars to watch a movie.

In July, the National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC) hosted their 51<sup>st</sup> annual conference in Orlando. The NDSC has a tradition of giving the host city a gift of books which presents individuals with Down Syndrome in a positive light. Members from the congress reached out to the Southwest Branch to coordinate the giving of 20 books that will help diversify the collection. On July 28, Branch Manager Sarah Qronfleh attended the conference's opening session to accept this donation. The library is thankful for this

wonderful gift and is excited to make these materials available to our community to help ensure that everyone can see themselves reflected in the literature they read.

On July 29, all library locations hosted an End of Summer Celebration event. Across the system, 2,727 children, teens and caregivers attended one of these events, which recognize children who completed a 600-minute Reading Challenge over the summer. This year's celebration marked a significant expansion from previous years, as it was the first time that all 15 library locations participated. This expansion aimed to improve the equity of access, making it possible for children from various neighborhoods to take part in the celebration. The age range for eligibility was also extended from ages 6-12 to ages 0-18, so even more families could take part. Those who completed the challenge were invited to a party with live music and the opportunity to win a variety of prizes.

Second Harvest Food Bank has added the Hiawassee Branch as an additional food-distribution site as part of our agreement to help them provide shelf-stable breakfast and lunch boxes to families. Boxes are being distributed at Fairview Shores, Chickasaw, South Trail and Hiawassee branches now through the end of the year. Each box contains a mix of non-perishable ready-to-eat foods and grocery items.

The library finished up its most recent Orange Crate series in July. This session had 53 children participate in the program, which sends four easy-reader books, a craft, library promotional materials and giveaways to subscribers every month for four months. We are excited to share that this series resulted in 16 children registering for their first library cards and over 800 checkouts of easy-reader books. The library received a lot of positive feedback from participants. One parent wrote, "This is a wonderful way to participate in library programming as a working parent. My daughter and I looked forward to our monthly books and crate activities."

23-119

### **Public Comment: Non-Agenda Items**

#### **X. Adjournment**

Vice President Benjamin, seconded by Trustee Tam, moved to adjourn the meeting. President Bohannon adjourned the meeting at 7:41 p.m.

#### **Next Meeting Dates:**

**September 14, 2023 ~ Orlando Public Library; 101 East Central Boulevard; Orlando, Florida 32801 --- October 12, 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.**