

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

**January 12, 2023 ~ 6:00 p.m.**

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

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

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

- 23-001 I. **Call to Order**  
 President Bohannon called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.
- 23-002 **Oath of Office: New Board Member**  
 President Bohannon swore in new Trustee, Sharon Smoley.
- 23-003 II. **Public Comment Policy & Procedures**
- 23-004 III. **Approval of Minutes: Library Board of Trustees Meeting – December 8, 2022**  
 Trustee Tam, seconded by Vice President Benjamin, moved to approve the minutes for the December 8, 2022 Library Board of Trustees Meeting. Motion carried 5-0.
- 23-005 IV. **Staff Presentation: DEIA Committee – Yvonne Hartley**  
 CHRO Hartley gave the Board a presentation regarding the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee and the DEIA staff survey that was conducted. She reported that the majority of staff submitted positive answers to the survey questions. She also stated that the committee meets once a month and is planning more DEIA surveys as well as the annual staff survey and stay interviews. The Board requested the meeting calendar be shared with them in case a Board Member would like to attend. They also requested information about the initiatives. Trustee Levien inquired about the stay interviews and Ms. Hartley explained that these are interviews of current staff, asking why they are at OCLS and what keeps them here.
- 23-006 V. **Financial Statements and Summaries: December 2022**  
 CFO Shoemaker reviewed the December 2022 financial statements for the Board. He reported that the Melrose Stage & Lighting project and the North Orange Roof project are substantially completed and both have a few punch list items that remain outstanding. The Windermere Branch Expansion project construction began January 4, 2023 and is scheduled to be completed by June 1, 2023.
- 23-007 VI. **Dashboard: Danielle King**  
 • **December 2022**  
 CBO King shared some highlights from the Dashboard. This month there was a 34% increase in door count, 36% increase in physical items checked out, and a 7% increase in digital checkouts. Overdrive’s circulation for the year was over 1.9 million, 93,000 more than last year. In addition, event attendance went up 44% and class attendance went up 197%. Some locations saw significant increases in attendance by making a concerted effort to bring library programming offsite into the community. To help with this effort, the

library just posted 13 new Branch Outreach Positions and the focus of these positions is to bring library services to the community.

The hotspot lending program funded by the Emergency Connectivity Fund began last week on January 3. This service provides wireless broadband internet to customers who do not have access to the internet and need this service to meet their educational needs. CBO King shared a story about the first hotspot that was checked out to demonstrate why this service is so important to the community: The first hotspot was checked out by a customer from the West Oaks Branch. She used to come into the branch multiple times a week with her elderly mother to use the computer and attend classes. She does not have internet access at home. Within the past year, the branch saw less of her and learned it was because her mother was having health issues and couldn't leave the house. The customer was still visiting the branch, but less frequently and each time she came in she was in a hurry. She also stopped attending classes. On the day the hotspot program went live, the customer visited the branch and staff told her about the hotspots. She was so excited, and she shared this was going to help her so much with being able to stay on top of things and still care for her mother. She also was excited for both her and her mother to be able to attend virtual classes. She shared that her mother missed taking the fiber arts classes and now she'd have a way to do that from home.

Library staff plan on bringing hotspots to various outreaches and community centers for checkout. North Orange staff will be visiting RCMA (daycare for farmworker's children) for their parent meeting on February 28, South Trail staff will be visiting Oak Ridge Neighborhood Center for their open house on Jan 27, and Winter Garden staff will be visiting the West Orange Neighborhood Center for Families for their Black history event on February 20<sup>th</sup>.

- **Horizon West Updates**

CBO King shared some updates on the progress of the Horizon West Branch. The library has had several meetings with architects Borrelli & Partners and the construction team HJ High to discuss library programmatic requirements, design, and LEED certification. Staff worked with Orange County Parks & Recreation for approval on a site plan and we are excited to share this site plan with the Board.

The site shows the library on the east side of the property's campus. The larger dark grey area of the building will be the library which will include material, training rooms, study rooms, customer service desk, public computers, and the children's area. The light grey area will be the meeting spaces, the plan is to have 3 large meeting rooms that can be opened into one large area or be used as 3 separate spaces and these will have access to the outdoor area. The space in-between is the reception area and can be closed off so the meeting rooms can be used after hours, while keeping the library area closed and secure. This will also connect to the outdoor performance area. This branch will have an outdoor stage area with a grassy seating to host large events and outdoor programming.

The remaining site plan includes the design for the future recreation center, shared parking, access road, walkways, and retention ponds for the entire campus as agreed upon with the County.

Currently, the architect team is working on the building & floor plan. Staff had a meeting with Borrelli yesterday and they shared some of their progress on the plan. Staff has some feedback for them that will be sent next week so that they can proceed with the schematic design. Staff hope to reschedule the community meeting soon.

23-009

**Director's Evaluation & Personnel Committee Meeting: Evaluation and Minutes****Approval: Danielle Levien**

Trustee Levien stated that it has been a breath of fresh air as Director Powell has taken OCLS under his wing. She commended his accomplishments during his time as Director which include: removing and lowering barriers to service and increasing accessibility, by removing overdue fines, increasing auto renewals from three to five, making DVDs available via Home Delivery, adding ways to appeal a trespass warning, creating group home cards, offering a hotspot lending program and authorizing the Farmworker's Association membership card as proof of residency. Trustee Levin recognized these changes that have taken place under Director Powell's leadership while he also held the dual role of COO. The recommendations of the Personnel Committee to the Library Board of Trustees are summarized as follows:

1. Rate Director Powell's overall performance as Far Exceeds Requirements.
2. Consistent with the FY 2022 Compensation Plan for staff, award Director Powell 60 hours of PTO based on his overall Far Exceeds Requirements rating.

Vice President Benjamin, seconded by Trustee Tam, moved to approve the Personnel Committee recommendations and to approve the Personnel Committee minutes.

Motion carried 5-0.

23-010 VIII. **Discussion and Possible Action Items**23-011 **Strategic Plan FY 2023 – 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Update: Steve Powell**

The first items Director Powell mentioned are the Horizon West and Lake Nona Branch updates. Those branches are moving forward and should gain momentum as the year progresses.

The Marketing and Public Relations Department has created a marketing plan that combines a variety of tactics to build awareness about the library's 100 Year Celebration. The campaign includes a yearlong digital billboard campaign, with messaging that can be adjusted on a monthly basis, some bus ads, partnership with Orange TV to highlight the 100 Year Celebration and paid advertisements in local media outlets, including WMFE, Fly 103.1 FM, WKMG TV, Orlando Weekly, Community Paper, W. Orange Times and Bungalower. This advertising initiative will be vital to getting everyone in the community thinking about their library.

The stopping and removal of overdue fines went into effect on October 16, 2022. The change resulted in 32,000 cardholder accounts becoming unblocked and as of today 9,317 people have resumed using their newly unlocked library cards. Executive Edge is currently looking into other fees the library charges and different procedures that might also create a barrier to library service for customers. The Executive Edge Team will be back at some point to present a summary of the barriers OCLS has lowered or removed.

Implement Digital Services: OCLS received \$447,800 from the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) to purchase 1,000 Wi-Fi hotspots from Premier Wireless and to enter into a service agreement with T-Mobile to offer broadband services. The hotspot lending program was rolled out to customers on January 3, 2023.

Director Powell mentioned OCLS' presence with the Orange County Public Schools. Library liaisons conducted 38 Teach-In event sessions during the week of November 14 with 2,532 attendees. The School Library Card Drive occurred from September 1<sup>st</sup> through October 12<sup>th</sup> which totaled 818 new library card registrations from 94 different schools.

Although these are just a few comments, implementing the strategic plan is off to a great start and there are already a lot of details for the first quarter that supports this year's plan. The work behind the plan involves a tremendous team effort and everyone at some point

this year will have a part in it. And Director Powell thanked staff for their efforts to date – thank you!

23-012 IX. **Information**

23-013 **Lake Nona Branch Update: Bethany Stone**

COO Stone briefed the Board about the Lake Nona Library and that she will continue to head up the project for OCLS. She stated that the City of Orlando is building the library and in the design phase and have included OCLS in the plans. Staff met with the City to discuss programming and other various aspects of the project. She stated that as the project moves further along, community meetings will be scheduled.

23-014 **Director's Report**

We were sad to learn that former board member and longtime library supporter Ted Maines passed away on December 14. Ted served on the library Board of Trustees for 11 years and 5 months, from July 2008 through December 2019. He served as both president and vice president of the board, and he was an enthusiastic library supporter. He was also a supporter of the Friends of the Library, and he always made it a point to donate to or attend the Friends' annual Booktoberfest fundraisers. Ted was also active in multiple other organizations, including Harbor House, the Holocaust Center, the Creative City Project and the Historic Preservation Board of the City of Orlando. He will be greatly missed by this community, to which he dedicated so much of his time and energy.

During the month of December, the Sunshine State Author Series, coordinated by the library's Youth Projects Coordinator, hosted a total of five author visits, both virtually and in-person. On December 14, Colleen AF Venable, author of the juvenile graphic novel *Katie the Catsitter*, attended two in-person author presentations at Sunshine Elementary School for third and fourth grade students. In total, 451 students and educators were in attendance. Later that day, Colleen attended Mayor Buddy's Book Club End of Book Party at the Orlando Public Library, which had 86 attendees. Additionally, Gillian Goerz, author and illustrator of *Shirley and Jamila Save Their Summer*, gave two virtual author presentations. Gillian discussed the process of illustrating and creating her book to 605 Orange County Public School students and educators from nine elementary schools. The series is funded in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, the Florida Council of Arts and Culture, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

In December, the Fairview Shores Branch received a donation of \$1,500 to support their "Beginner's Spanish for Kids" program. Staff member Liliana Palacio hosts a weekly class for kids ages 6-12 to learn basic Spanish vocabulary through games and activities. Liliana secured the donation from Victor Galvan, president of VMG Construction, Inc. to be used to purchase supplies and incentives for the students. Mr. Galvan attended the December 20<sup>th</sup> Spanish class and helped hand out the incentives to 46 students. He was so impressed with the difference the library is making in the community that he shared he would like to make this an annual donation to the library. Fairview Shores also hosted a Clothing Drive after recognizing the need in the community after several extended stay hotels and apartment complexes experienced flooding. Staff member Angela Kenon-Brown partnered with Florida Impact for clothing and food donations. 55 community members were served during this event.

The Hiawassee Youth Program Specialist (YPS) conducted 28 off-site "Storytime" programs at several local childcare centers, serving 425 children and adults. Of these off-site youth programs, three events took place at the Boys & Girls Club Walt Disney World Clubhouse in Pine Hills serving 71 youth. These numbers are significant for the Pine Hills

Community, since the library would not reach these youth unless we visit them in their community.

On January 3, we rolled out Wi-Fi hotspots, available for adult cardholders to check out from any library location. In order to be eligible to check out a hotspot, cardholders need have an active library card and confirm that they do not have internet access at home. Funding for the hotspots was provided by the FCC's Emergency Connectivity Fund.

On January 28 at 9 a.m., the library's first permanent StoryWalk® installation at Shadow Bay Park will have an official opening. The project is the result of a partnership between Orange County Parks and Recreation and the Orange County Library System, and it will feature large-scale reproductions of the pages of picture books installed along a one-mile stretch of the park. StoryWalk® fosters literacy, connection to nature and healthy movement. The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, Vermont, and developed in collaboration with the Kellogg-Hubbard Library.

As we announced on January 7 at our 100 Year Celebration kickoff, Sorosis of Orlando Woman's Club approached us to share that they wanted to make a significant donation to the library. Sorosis was instrumental in the founding of the library system, as they were the ones to organize and advocate for a taxpayer-funded library in the early 1920s, which led to a referendum being put before voters to decide whether they wanted a public library system. The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of a library, and the pieces fell into place from there. Sorosis donated 3,000 of the books that made up the original Albertson Public Library collection, and in 1949, they purchased the library's first bookmobile. Now, as we approach our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Sorosis is donating \$100,000 to help us re-establish mobile services for the community. We plan to match those funds and use them to purchase book bicycles as well as a bookmobile that can bring library services to places where accessibility is a problem. We're grateful to Sorosis for thinking of the library and making this generous donation, and we're proud to help their legacy live on in Orlando for generations to come.

23-015

**Public Comment: Non-Agenda Items**

X. **Adjournment**

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

Motion carried 5-0. President Bohannon adjourned the meeting at 6:51 p.m.

**Next Meeting Dates:**

**February 9, 2023 ~ Orlando Public Library; 101 East Central Boulevard; Orlando, Florida 32801 --- March 9, 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.**