

OHIO LIBRARY COUNCIL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Via Zoom
January 12, 2024
10:00 A.M.

- PRESENT** Kathy Bach, Cincinnati
Travis Bautz, Middletown
Julianne Bedel, Medina
Sarah Clevidence, Findlay
Aimee Fifarek, Youngstown
Sandra Hedlund Tunnell, Ashland
Mary Ellen Icaza, Canton
Robbie Jenkins, Gallipolis
Cheryl Kuonen, Mentor
Rick Rubin, Cuyahoga Falls
Stacey Russell, Zanesville
Jennifer Slone, Chillicothe
Laura Lee Wilson, Huron County, Willard
- GUESTS** Nick Tepe, ALA Councilor
Don Yarman, OPLIN
- STAFF** Michelle Francis, Executive Director
Jeanine D’Andrea, Director, Membership Services
Angie Jacobsen, Director, Communications
Denise Kise, Accounting/Data Services
Laurie Miller, Director, Professional Development
Jay Smith, Director, Government and Legal Services
- CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order by Chair Wilson at 10:02 a.m. Wilson welcomed new Board members, Travis Bautz, Sandra Hedlund Tunnell and Stacey Russell. Wilson noted that the Board would take a moment of silence in honor of Beth Ann Yablonski, OLC Receptionist. Francis thanked the Board members who sent emails and notes. Flowers were sent and a Spoonful of Comfort gift was sent to the family. Wilson noted that Jason Elvers, OLC’s Legal Counsel from Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP will be attending the March Board meeting for the Board’s orientation on fiduciary responsibilities and conflicts of interest.
- APPROVAL OF AGENDA** Wilson reported that Wendy Knapp will was unable to join the meeting, but a written report from the State Library is included in the background materials. ICAZA MOVED AND SLONE SECONDED APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.
- APPROVAL OF MINUTES** RUBIN MOVED AND CLEVIDENCE SECONDED APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 17, 2023, MINUTES AS PRESENTED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.
- FIFAREK MOVED AND CLEVIDENCE SECONDED APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 17, 2023, EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES AS PRESENTED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.
- ELECTION OF OFFICERS 2024** The Executive Committee submitted the following nominations for the 2024 officers:

Mary Ellen Icaza, Vice Chair of the Board/Chair-Elect
Stacey Russell, Secretary-Treasurer

No other nominations were received. FIFAREK MOVED AND SLONE SECONDED TO CLOSE THE NOMINATIONS. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

SLONE MOVED AND FIFAREK SECONDED TO ACCEPT THE NOMINATIONS AS PRESENTED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Wilson congratulated Icaza and Russell on their elections and thanked them for accepting their leadership roles in the organization. Wilson then turned the meeting over to Sarah Clevidence as the 2024 Chair of the Board. Wilson thanked the Board for their work in 2023.

RECOGNITION
OF OUTGOING CHAIR

Clevidence thanked Laura Lee Wilson for her service to the Board, and as 2023 Chair. A gift in honor of her recognition will be shared with her at the March meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORT
MONTH-END NOVEMBER
2023

Francis presented the financial report for month-end November 2023.

Revenue. Institutional Dues are over budget \$61,756 and Individual Memberships are slightly under budget \$572. Continuing Education was over budget \$30,060 due to increased attendance. Convention and Expo was over budget \$23,740 due to sponsorships. Contract income is over budget \$2,819 due to an increase in purchasing. Other Income is over budget \$80,410 due to returns on short-term investments and rebound in the market in value of long-term investments. Worker's Compensation is over budget due to timing of payments.

Expenses. Salaries and benefits are under budget due to the timing of payments. Consultants and Contractors are under budget due to timing of payments of Legal Services, and Speaker Honoraria. Expo Contractors are over budget due to the cost of Wi-Fi and security at C&E. Supplies are over budget due to kitchen faucet repairs. Communications are under budget due to decrease in mailings. Printing and design are under budget due to reduced printing and copying. Maintenance and Equipment are over budget due to C&E AV costs, and one-year AMS renewal. Space Rental over budget due timing of payment and CAM. On that note, we are now in our 4th year, we still have 3 more years on this lease. Travel and meals are under budget due to virtual meetings. Staff travel is under budget. Management expenses - Investment Fees were broken out under Banking expenses. Catering was over budget due to timing of payments and coding.

The net change in assets is over budget by \$167,611.

BEDEL MOVED AND FIFAREK SECONDED APPROVAL OF THE MONTH-END NOVEMBER 2023 FINANCIAL REPORT AS PRESENTED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

OLC BOARD
COMMITTEE
ASSIGNMENTS

RUBIN MOVED AND ICAZA SECONDED APPROVAL OF THE 2024 BOARD COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS AS PRESENTED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

OLC BOARD LIAISONS

RUSSELL MOVED AND SLONE SECONDED APPROVAL OF THE OLC

ASSIGNMENTS

BOARD LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS AS PRESENTED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2024 OPERATING BUDGET

Francis thanked the Finance Committee who met via Zoom on Jan. 5 to review the proposed operating budget for 2024. The Committee is recommending the following budget.

REVENUE:

Dues – Institutional \$1,068,000-based on the current dues formula of 0.27% of the 2023 PLF distribution plus the 0.055% of 2023 property tax receipts - assuming retention of 247 member libraries. We did see an average increase of PLF funding in 2023 of about 1.55% as compared to 2022. Other Institutions: includes membership dues for Associate Members and Other Institutions: assumes no increase in \$450 Associate Membership Dues; and assumes no increase in \$275 Other Institutional Dues category. Individual Dues assumes slight increase in membership revenue due to PLA. No increase is being proposed in Friends membership dues.

Publications – projections based on sale of publications in 2023. Most of our publications are free and downloadable.

Continuing Education – Legislative Day revenue is estimated at \$9,000 based on a registration fee of \$45 per person for 200 attendees to cover the cost of breakfast, space rental, AV equipment, etc. at the Sheraton in a non-state budget year. PLA Pre-Conference Workshop revenue is estimated at \$15,000 and assumes possible net revenue after expenses. Planning & Leadership Conference revenue is estimated at \$10,500 for an in-person event at Columbus Metropolitan Library Main with a \$60 registration fee to cover the cost of breakfast and lunch for 175 attendees.

Contract Income – Projected revenue of \$5,000 based on past performance and increasing use of services.

Other Income – Projected revenue of \$72,750 based upon past performance.

TOTAL PROJECTED REVENUE: \$1,551,500

EXPENSES:

Salary and Benefits:

Staff Salaries – Includes an average increase of approximately 4.5% in staff compensation as compared to 2023 (effective March 2024); no increase in Executive Director’s compensation. Includes bonus pool equal to 1.5% of salaries. Retirement Contribution – Maintains OLC's contribution to employees' 401(k) plan at 7% of salary for all qualifying employees. This was reduced in 2010 with the cuts to state funding from 10% to 5%. In 2023, the Board raised it to 7% in a good faith effort. Health Insurance assumes the possibility of a 16.73% increase in health insurance premiums for 2024; and no increase in dental or vision premiums.

Consultants/Contractors:

Auditor – Assumes a \$100 increase in audit fees for 2023 financials. Speaker Honoraria – Includes \$2,000 in anticipated costs for “non-library” speakers at stand-alone conferences and Leadership. Convention and Expo Contractors – Assumes no decorator contract and no Experient contract due to PLA (C&E cancellation).

TOTAL PROJECTED EXPENSES: \$1,493,155

FIFAREK MOVED AND RUSSELL SECONDED APPROVAL OF THE 2024 OPERATING BUDGET AS PRESENTED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. Clevidence thanked Francis and her team for their work on the budget.

AMAZON BUSINESS PRIME Francis reported the OLC staff has had several meetings with Amazon Business for Government regarding Amazon's Associated Accounts Program (AAP). Amazon Business currently has about 95 associations participating in AAP. Two other state library associations currently have AAP partnerships with Amazon Business for their member libraries. This would be a specialized program as a benefit to Institutional Members. They have a rebate program, as non-dues revenue source. There are different tiers to the rebate program. Most is 3%, the least is 1%. We would look at this partnership for one year. Many of our members already have an Amazon account. There is no cost to OLC, and no cost to Institutional Member Libraries. The estimated value for the Business Prime Medium Plan – up to 100 members would be \$1299.

Discussion

SLONE – Shared concerns about partnerships with Amazon and collecting digital data. She expressed concern about damages to publishers.

RUBIN – Asked about advantages/disadvantages. Rubin asked Francis about Amazon partnering with another organization in Ohio and if they would go to one of OLC's competitors. OLC would have an exclusive agreement for public libraries in Ohio. They will collect data, but OLC will receive aggregate data. Any vendor is going to collect data for purposes of marketing. Francis also mentioned ALA and publishers as an example. ALA still works with publishers for sponsoring authors, etc., but they don't necessarily agree with publishers on their terms. Recommended a one-year partnership to see how it goes.

RUBIN – If the Board does approve the partnership, he would like OLC to be the exclusive provider and it needs to be closely monitored.

BAUTZ – His library is already a Business Prime user. It is helpful for purchasing certain titles that are hard to find. There is some direct benefit to patron services. Individual libraries can pick or choose. They are a good vendor for non-traditional collections.

BEDEL – Her library has been in the program for number of years. Invoicing can be a nightmare. She asked about a reduction in benefit to the individual libraries who already belong. Francis indicated that staff would include that in the next meeting.

SLONE – Express concern with Audible and indicated that libraries don't have a chance to loan certain titles. She asked about the impact on book publishers.

FIFAREK – Noted awareness of the impact that Amazon has had on audiobooks, but there are things libraries can't get effectively without Amazon. Amazon can create content that is unavailable to libraries. The choices are exclusion or engagement. Libraries are assets to business.

CLEVIDENCE – If OLC doesn't agree to this partnership, Amazon will work with another organization. If it's going to happen, who do we trust to be the leader?

RUBIN – If we do this, how do we evaluate it after one year? A sub-group from multiple perspectives?

FRANCIS – Reminded the Board that it is a completely voluntary program and Institutional Member Libraries would have to opt-into the program to participate. They would not be automatically included.

WILSON MOVED AND BAUTZ SECONDED TO ALLOW OLC STAFF AUTHORITY TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE AMAZON ASSOCIATED ACCOUNTS PROGRAM AND INCLUDE IT AS A BENEFIT FOR INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP IN OLC FOR 2024. MOTION PASSED WITH 10 YEA VOTES, 2 NAY (SLONE AND BEDEL) JENKINS WAS NOT ON THE CALL AT TIME OF VOTE.

Francis noted that staff plans to highlight the program this week with a major launch March 1. She reported that as OLC moves forward, staff will keep track and evaluate the program. Rubin noted that Amazon needs to know that there are reservations with those of us who voted yes.

OLC CHAIR REPORT

Clevidence noted she is looking forward to a great 2024. She appreciates the Board's involvement and dedication.

ALA COUNCILOR REPORT

In addition to his written report, Tepe reported on the following:

LibLearnX 2024. ALA Council is meeting and there are some concerns about the revision of the ALA Core Values. A resolution is being put forward in response to a situation in another state where the official ALA Chapter is the state's public library association, with separate associations for school and academic libraries. The resolution seeks to have the ALA Chapter Relations Office work with the non-ALA chapters in states where this is the case, including Ohio. OLC has built connections with OELMA and ALAO and we give regular reports on ALA activities to them.

There is a memorial resolution moving forward for George Needham.

STATE LIBRARY REPORT

A written report was available in the absence of Wendy Knapp and Evan Struble.

OPLIN REPORT

Yarman reported on the following:

LSTA Funds. There is ongoing support from LSTA funds from the state library supporting NorthStar.

OPLIN Board – Jenny Eyink, Fiscal Officer at Auglaize County District Library has been appointed to a replacement term that ends June 30, 2025. This is the first Fiscal Officer on their Board.

Resource Sharing. OhioLink is migrating to a new ILS System. Innovative has some announcement of a product that is running these programs. There are discussions around the current state of resource sharing and planning what the next couple of years will look like.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In addition to her written report, Francis reported on the following:

Institutional Dues. Forms were sent out to 88 county auditors. OLC has had 73 responses to date.

Institutional Membership Survey. The Institutional Membership Satisfaction Survey results were shared with the Board. We received 79 responses. Francis will follow up with a few individually.

GOVERNMENT AND
LEGAL SERVICES REPORT

Staff Notes. D'Andrea's 31 Anniversary was on January 11.

Francis noted that some libraries have seen a spike in safety and security issues within the past few months. Within the past week OLC has received five calls on general grievances. We are having conversations at the state level.

PLA Registration. Overall registration for PLA so far is 3727. Registrations from Ohio residents was under 300 at the beginning of December. Determination of whether the pre-cons continue will be decided next Friday. The publishers are holding an event free to all on the day of the pre-cons.

Clevidence thanked D'Andrea and noted OLC is incredibly lucky to have her on staff.

In addition to his written report, Smith reported on the following:

PLF. The Ohio Department of Taxation posted the December 2023 PLF distribution of \$44,150,436 – which is \$1.3 million above ODT's estimates issued in December 2022.

CY 2024 PLF Certification Update. The Ohio Department of Taxation posted the December update to the Calendar Year 2024 PLF Certification. The official updated statewide PLF estimate of \$486,742,158 is \$5 million less than the initial estimate of \$491,781,756 that was provided in July 2023. According to ODT, the estimates reflect the current best projection of state tax revenues for CY24.

Joint Committee on Property Tax Review and Reform. The committee is authorized to hold hearings and make recommendations on pending legislation related to property taxation. A final report from the committee must be submitted to the General Assembly by Dec. 2024.

HB 187. Legislation seeking to counter the increases in local property values. The Senate moved forward with a substitute version of the bill offering a temporary expansion of the Homestead Exemption.

HB 344. Seeks to eliminate the authority of political subdivisions to levy replacement property tax levies beginning with the elections held on or after Oct. 1, 2024. The rationale for eliminating this option is to alleviate voter confusion over whether they are the same as a renewal levy.

Issue 2 – Marijuana Law. Legislation is currently being debated at the Statehouse that would make several changes to the new law, including increasing the excise tax from 10%-15%, altering the tax distribution, reducing THC content limits, modifying home grow provisions and prohibiting public consumption. It includes provisions that establish the Division of Cannabis Control within the Department of Commerce which will regulate and license where marijuana can be commercially cultivated, tested and sold.

HB 257 – Virtual Meetings Bill. Legislation to provide certain public boards, including library boards, with the opportunity to have virtual meetings. Since its introduction a few amendments have been added. HB 257 was voted out of the House chamber and now awaits further action in the Ohio Senate. Currently, trustees of library boards are still required to have their meetings in-person.

Legislative Day. OLC's Library Legislative Day is scheduled for Wednesday, April 24 at the Sheraton on Capitol Square.

Strategic Community Investment Bill. It is not too late to reach out to your House and Senate members regarding the one-time strategic community investment fund. Smith strongly encouraged libraries to make submissions.

Solar Eclipse 2024. We are 3 months away from the solar eclipse. The state is anticipating drastic increase in tourism. The Ohio Department of Homeland Security used OLC's Solar Eclipse resources from our website. Francis gave congratulations to Jacobsen, Annamarie Carlson, and Smith for their work on those resources.

PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT REPORT

In addition to her written report, Miller reported on the following:

PLA. Miller noted today is the last day for the PLA Early Bird discount. There is an additional fee attached to the pre-conference workshop. As OLC prepares for other workshops and conferences, we are mindful of costs going up between 30-35%.

COMMUNICATIONS
REPORT

In addition to her written report, Jacobsen reported on the following:

2024 Planning and Leadership Conference. Leadership resources were updated and posted to the website. Divisions and Committees continue to submit their meeting minutes, goals and objectives and annual reports.

PLA 2024 Conference. Information about the PLA 2024 Conference continues to be shared on the OLC website.

Book Challenges. Additional information was shared with members on how to prepare for and respond to book challenges. Sample policies and templates were also provided.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES
REPORT

In addition to her written report, D'Andrea reported on the following:

2024 Membership. Individual memberships are coming in at an increase mostly due to the early bird deadline for PLA. Jacobsen and D'Andrea are working on a plan so that new members see the value and keep their membership for years to come. The Membership Committee is scheduled to meet via Zoom on Jan. 25.

Awards and Honors. It was the sense of the Board to agree with the Awards and Honors Committee's recommendation to not present Awards in 2024, and for the Committee to work to review the criteria and processes for the Awards program.

Governance. D'Andrea thanked Jacobsen for her continued work on updating the website to reflect the Committees and Divisions Action Councils, 2024 Goals and Objectives and 2023 Annual Reports.

Clevidence thanked staff for mentioning each other in their combined efforts.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be March 15, 2024, at the OLC Office.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

FIFAREK MOVED AND SLONE SECONDED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 12:28. FRANCIS WILL ATTEND THE BEGINNING OF THE SESSION, AND THEN WILL BE EXCUSED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

FIFAREK MOVED AND ICAZA SECONDED A MOTION TO EXIT ADJOURN THE EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 12:53 PM. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADJOURNMENT

SLONE MOVED AND BAUTZ SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 12:54PM. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.