

MEETING MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

October 12, 2023 ~ 6:00 p.m.

Orlando Public Library
101 East Central Boulevard
Orlando, Florida 32801

Library Board Present: Crockett Bohannon (10/0); Lizannette Tam (10/2); Sharon Smoley (10/2); Ashley Cisneros Mejia (1/0 – City)

Library Board Absent: Nicole Benjamin (1/1 – City)

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

- 23-132 I. **Call to Order**
 President Bohannon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- 23-133 II. **Public Comment Policy & Procedures**
- 23-134 III. **Approval of Minutes: Library Board of Trustees Meeting – September 14, 2023**
 Trustee Smoley, seconded by Trustee Tam, moved to approve the minutes for the September 14, 2023 Library Board of Trustees meeting. Motion carried 4-0.
- 23-135 IV. **Staff Presentation: Melrose Pop Festival: Jim Myers**
- 23-136 V. **Financial Statements and Summaries: September 2023 Reports**
 CFO Shoemaker reviewed the September 2023 financial statements for the Board. He also reported that the Horizon West project is fully funded and that the Lake Nona project should be funded by the end of 2024.
- 23-137 VI. **Dashboard – September 2023: Erica Grant, Chief of Neighborhood Services**
 CNS Erica Grant reported that in September, there was a 31% increase in door count, a 45% increase in new library card registrations, and a 10% increase in physical items checked out. Digital checkouts have seen a 16% increase, with an impressive daily average of 8,966 items borrowed.

Event attendance was up 65% compared to last year. Staff hosted a total of 1,201 events, attracting a total attendance of 32,819. From that total attendance, 27,688 were in-person, and 5,131 were offsite. Our newly established Community Engagement Department has been busy. They have organized and presented 154 offsite events.

In addition, technology class attendance went up 44% compared to last year. Staff offered 1,034 classes with an attendance of 3,860. Last year, we offered 852 classes with an attendance of 2,686.

Ms. Grant shared two stories this month that highlight some of the amazing work staff are doing in the community:

On September 9th, the Southwest Library partnered with Bill Frederick Park to commemorate the 35th birthday of Tsaber (Saber), the beloved horse residing at the park. Library staff hosted an enchanting “Guided StoryWalk” experience, guiding a group of 40 participants along a picturesque nature trail as they delved into the pages of Paul Goble’s

tale *The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses*. After the “Guided StoryWalk,” participants had the delightful opportunity to meet Tsaber and feed him some of his favorite birthday treats.

The next event took place on the evening of September 8th. The Chickasaw Branch orchestrated an unforgettable experience with the “Romance, Wine and Chocolate” event, boasting a sold-out crowd of 150 enthusiastic fans. The dedication and effort of the Chickasaw staff was nothing short of exceptional. They transformed the library into a realm of regency elegance, adorning themselves in exquisite gowns that perfectly complemented the theme. The dedication of the Chickasaw team did not stop at the décor and attire. They obtained several donations for the wine and chocolate for this event. Additionally, the event was supported by several vendors, who generously contributed their time and products to ensure its success. Highlighting the event was the renowned best-selling author, Julia Quinn. Julia Quinn, who is celebrated for her Bridgerton series, gave her insights into the world of romance and her latest book, “Queen Charlotte.” She shared the journey of her writing career, engaging the audience with stories of how she got started and her amazing success with the Bridgerton series on Netflix. There was an interactive question-and-answer session and an opportunity for those who attended to take photos with the author. The “Romance, Wine and Chocolate” event was a remarkable and unforgettable evening for all who attended.

23-138 VII.

Action Items:

23-139

Election of Board Officers and Committee Appointments

Trustee Smoley nominated President Bohannon as President for another year, Trustee Tam seconded the nomination. Motion carried 4-0.

President Bohannon nominated Vice President Benjamin and Vice President for another year, Trustee Tam seconded the nomination. Motion carried 4-0.

Personnel Committee: President Bohannon stated he will continue to chair the Personnel Committee unless someone else would like to chair it.

The remaining committees, Finance, Marketing, Partnership and Planning, will remain vacant until further notice.

Trustee Smoley asked about the unfilled Marketing, Partnership, and Planning Committees and should the board amend them out of the by-laws. She also asked if the board should do a full review of the by-laws. Director Powell said he would review the by-laws and send them to the library’s counsel as a starting point.

23-140 VIII.

Discussion and Possible Action Items

23-141 IX.

Information

23-142

Human Resources Dashboard: Yvonne Hartley, Chief Human Resources Officer

CHRO Director Hartley reported to the Board that hiring will continue until all positions are filled and the library is fully staffed. This includes full time and part time positions. She further stated she will give this report on a quarterly basis.

23-143

Director’s Report

On September 10, the OCLS book bike made its first appearance at the Lake Eola Farmer’s Market. Staff registered attendees for cards and passed out free books, courtesy of the Friends of the Library. A total of 167 people interacted with staff and learned more about the library's mobile future.

Recently, the library's second book bike was delivered and is now on display in the lobby at Orlando Public Library. The second bike was funded by OUC, which is also celebrating 100 years of service. We partnered with OUC to cross-promote our 100th anniversaries, which has resulted in a partnership that has brought us a book bike wrapped with OUC and OCLS 100 Year logos and an OUC-themed book display at Main that features titles on water conservation, utilities, STEM careers, science and energy. The bike and book display will be in the lobby through December 31, and OUC has highlighted the partnership on collateral being distributed at some of its OUC100 events. The company will host a public unveiling of the book bike at the OUC Half Marathon on December 2.

Healthiest Employers is a trusted awards program that recognizes people-first organizations taking a more proactive approach to employee health. OCLS has been honored with a 2nd place finish for central Florida and an astounding 60th place rank amongst the 2023 Healthiest 100 Workplaces in America. To put our efforts into perspective, OCLS moved up 30 spots from 90th place last year.

This year, we partner with Orange County on the annual Orange County Mayor's Toy Drive, an initiative that collects and distributes toys to Orange County youth and family agencies, supporting residents in need during the holiday season. From November 6 through December 11, people can drop off new, unwrapped toys at drop boxes located in our branches, and staff will deliver these to the county's distribution warehouse. We're excited to contribute to the success of the mayor's holiday initiative.

On September 18, the North Orange Branch Technology Trainer introduced the BizKids program at the HOPE CommUnity Center in Apopka. The trainer worked with HOPE CommUnity Center's "Adelante Caminantes" program, a remarkable initiative that provides support to teenagers who escaped poverty and violence in their home countries and arrived in the United States without an adult caregiver. Recognizing the unique needs of the teens in the program, the trainer tailored the BizKids curriculum to support their needs. The trainer also translated the entire program into Spanish, ensuring that language would not hinder knowledge and empowerment. Named "Emprendedores" (Spanish for entrepreneurs), this program promises to be an enriching experience that will empower these teens with entrepreneurship, marketing, and public speaking skills.

The Branch Outreach Specialist for the Fairview Shores and Eatonville branches has been visiting Seniors First to host various classes. Here are some excerpts from a thank you letter received at the branch.

I am writing you in regard to Ahmad Muhammad, your Branch Outreach Specialist. He has been presenting classes to our clients as part of our pilot project, Project Connect, where we supply tablets to our senior clients in order to encourage socialization and fight isolation... Our clients LOVE these classes. We have a great turnout for his class, and they ask me about when the next one will happen! ...We at Seniors First really appreciate the services, classes and opportunities the Orange County Public Library offers. We also appreciate Ahmad Muhammad and him sharing his time and knowledge. We hope that this partnership can continue to grow and flourish!

Every September, the School Partnership Program actively promotes student participation in the library's School Library Card Drive. Representatives from the School Partnership Program, known as library liaisons, set forth a challenge to all Orange County schools, spanning elementary, middle and high school levels. Their challenge is to encourage students to obtain library cards between September 1st and 30th, coinciding with National Library Card Sign-Up Month. Each school is provided with a personalized registration link for library card sign-ups. The results for 2023 are impressive, with 1,099 new card registrations coming in from 76 different participating schools.

The Washington Park Branch Outreach Specialist and Assistant Manager visited Valencia College to meet about discussing a partnership. They were able to connect with the West Campus librarian and will begin to distribute OCLS marketing materials across their system. In addition, this has yielded tabling opportunities at their new student orientations and has also helped to promote the Melrose Center.

The Southeast Branch has seen a recent influx of well-overdue materials since going fine free. One item, an old VHS tape (The Empty House with Sherlock Holmes), was returned to the outside book drop on Saturday, September 30th. Southeast hasn't had VHS in its collection since the early 2000s!

I also want to share that there is a of a very detailed letter included in the Director's Report. A South Trail customer, Elida, gained her citizenship due the teaching and caring by staff members Niurka Olivera De Ojeda and Sharon Peyton. This from the letter, "*...So, I applied, and in a period of four months and 25 days, the whole process was completed. Last week, dear Niurka, I went to the interview and passed it. That achievement is not individual. And is there one that is? Your classes, your close but very respectful and considerate treatment, the systematization and enrichment of the course at every opportunity, my insistence on obtaining knowledge and correcting pronunciation, the appointments with the USCIS Officer in your classes, the answer to all questions we asked, your words of optimism, accompanied by the great collaboration of Sharon, all that, together with the discipline of the study that has characterized me and being examined on the day of the interview by an officer of great treatment and professionalism, were the perfect combination for the achievement. Thank you Niurka, extended to Sharon and to the Orange County Library System. Thank you for the support and trust in each session, thank you for the commitment and dedication you bring to Citizenship Inspired.*

Director Powell encouraged everyone to read the letter.

23-144

Public Comment: Non-Agenda Items

X. Adjournment

Trustee Smoley, seconded by Trustee Tam, moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 4-0.

President Bohannon adjourned the meeting at 6:39 p.m.

Next Meeting Dates:

November 9, 2023 ~ Orlando Public Library; 101 East Central Boulevard; Orlando, Florida 32801 --- December 14, 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.