



# OKLAHOMA Department of Libraries

## Minutes

ODL Board Meeting - *Special*  
November 15, 2024 | 10:00 a.m.  
Oklahoma Department of Libraries  
200 NE 18 Street  
Norman, OK 73105

*All participating members of the Board were in person at the above meeting location. The meeting was open to the general public and was conducted under the provisions of the Open Meeting Act as provided in SB 1031 approved by the Governor on February 10, 2021.*

*Public access to the complete Board Packet:*

<https://oklahoma.gov/content/dam/ok/en/libraries/documents/agendas/Board-Packet-20241115.pdf>

*Order of Business: The Board may discuss, table, defer, or vote to approve or disapprove or take appropriate action with respect to any agenda item. The sequence of the agenda may be changed at the Board's discretion.*

### 1. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Compliance with Open Meeting Act

Chair Jim Robison called the meeting to order at 10:04am and saw a quorum. Roll was called as follows: Chair Jim Robison, present; Kristen Ferate, present; Vice Chair Steven Gray, present; Maren Lively, absent; Ronda Smith, absent; Teresa Sutter, present; Natalie Currie, present.

Guests and staff present: Liz Stevens from the Office of the Attorney General, Ashley Welke, Tara McCleod, Nancy Hooper, Karma Campbell, Sadie Bruce, Marcia Hull, Holly LaBossiere, Courtney Rutledge, Adrienne Butler

### 2. Consideration and possible action on minutes for the special board meeting held September 5, 2024

Chair Robison asked if anyone had questions about the minutes. No questions.

Gray motioned to accept the minutes as presented, and Ferate seconded. Votes were as follows: Chair Robison, yes; Vice Chair Gray, yes; Ferate, yes; Lively, absent; Smith, absent; Sutter, yes. The motion passed.

### 3. State Aid for Fiscal Year 2024

#### a. Overview of process used to determine State Aid eligibility

Director Currie explained that state aid was one of the primary vehicles by which the ODL Board and agency supported Oklahoma public libraries. The process allows the agency to establish standards for adequate library service and recognizes libraries that



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meet those standards through the award of a state aid grant, funds for which are appropriated annually through the legislature. To determine eligibility, ODL consultants review reports submitted annually by public libraries and provide recommendations to administration on whether the standards were met. After review, administration makes a final determination on state aid eligibility.

Director Currie further advised that in 2019, an appeals process was introduced that allows libraries to request that the board reconsider eligibility determinations.

- b. Consideration and possible action on appeal from the Nowata City-County Library which was determined not to qualify for State Aid for SFY 2024 based on OAC 405:25-1-3(2)(B)(ii)

According to Director Currie, Nowata City-County Library was determined not to qualify for state aid for SFY 2024 based on their annual report that noted the facility did not include at least two hours after 5pm each week as stipulated in the rules for libraries.

Director Currie invited Nowata City-County Library Director Karma Campbell to address the board and explain their justification for appealing the eligibility determination. Director Campbell referred the board members to the letter of appeal previously submitted and advised the board that the library hours had been curtailed due to health issues and the retirement of previous staff members. Upon the assumption of her duties as Director on July 1, 2024, she addressed the deficiency in hours. The library now remains open on Thursdays until 7pm. Director Campbell emphasized the need for funding to support the library's current programming, including a weekly preschool program and senior exercise classes, as well as plans for a summer reading program.

Director Currie praised the library's efforts and stated that they are on track to meet requirements for SFY 2025.

Assistant Executive Director Ashley Welke stepped in and explained the strict interpretation of the administrative code that ODL must adhere to regarding what situations ODL can provide a waiver to state aid eligibility requirements. Director Currie advised that the avenues available for the board to select from are outlined in the statute and in the code.



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Sutter inquired about the board's authority to factor unforeseen hardships into the decision process. Sutter then asked if Nowata City-County Library received tribal aid due to Nowata's proximity to the Cherokee Nation. Director Campbell responded that the library does not receive tribal funds at this time.

Director Currie and Library Development Program Manager Adrienne Butler discussed previous appeals and the strict adherence to administrative code, including an appeal by Ada in which the library did not meet the required hours. The library added hours, and the board approved the appeal.

Finance Director Tara McCleod reminded the board that the time period under discussion, SFY 2024, ran from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. Ferate asked about the amount of state aid Nowata might receive. McCleod advised that Nowata did not receive state aid in SFY 2023, but in the four years prior, Nowata received an average of \$6,617 per year in state aid.

Gray inquired about Nowata City-County Library's succession planning and if contingency plans existed to address unforeseen staffing difficulties. Welke explained that succession and strategic planning are important for libraries, and ODL has consultants that work with public libraries to create and expand such plans, but they are not required. Director Currie clarified that there is currently no succession plan requirement for state aid eligibility.

Liz Stevens stepped in as legal counsel for the ODL Board from the Attorney General's office and reminded the board members that the board's general mission is to promote support and implement the development and maintenance of adequate public and special library facilities and services throughout the state, whatever forms or by whatever means may be most beneficial and feasible.

Ferate asked Director Campbell how the state aid grant would be used and what impact it would have on their community if they were not to receive the funds. Director Campbell said that the library needed the funds to expand their book section, update their children's books section, start after-school programming, plan a summer reading program, and more. Director Campbell explained that the funding they received from the city and the county did not cover their salaries. The rest of their funding came from private donations, foundation support, and other grants.



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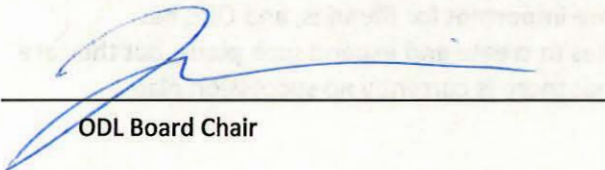
Chair Robison emphasized the importance of maintaining the integrity of the rules while considering the library's difficult situation and noted the importance of capturing the board's reasoning in the minutes for future reference.

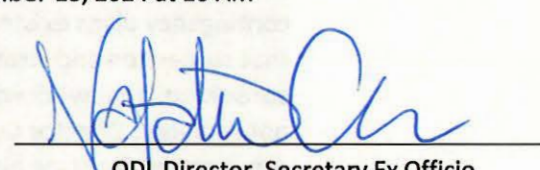
Chair Robison made motion to overturn the ODL decision based on Nowata City-County Library's efforts to rectify their deficiencies and future plans, and Ferate seconded. Votes were as follows: Chair Robison, yes; Vice Chair Gray, yes; Ferate, yes; Lively, absent; Smith, absent; Sutter, yes. The motion passed.

#### 4. Adjournment

Chair Robison made motion to accept, and Gray seconded. Votes were as follows: Chair Robison, yes; Vice Chair Gray, yes; Ferate, yes; Lively, absent; Smith, absent; Sutter, yes. The motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 10:42pm.

**Next ODL Board Meeting: Friday, December 13, 2024 at 10 AM**

  
ODL Board Chair

  
ODL Director, Secretary Ex Officio