

Oaxaca Lending Library, A.C. Board of Directors Meeting
APRIL 17, 2025

COMPREHENSIVE MINUTES

(Action items for future meetings are in bold)

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL at 11:03 am

Present: John Hunter (on screen), Gail Ament, Teresa Cokl, Bonny Weil, José Luis Zárate , Abraham Torres (Abe), Viviana Ruiz Boijseauneau, Ralph Gault, Ian Hawley.

Not present: Carol Ringold, who is in transit.

The board welcomes the new secretary, Bonny Weil.

Doug has set up the computer, would like the board to do this in the future. Coni and Mireya could take over this job. We'll need a couple of strong people here by at least 10:30 to help set up. John doesn't need the big screen, but the microphones are terrible. Gail moved hers away and that improved the sound. Abe will get up to speed on tech support setup for the meetings. Members can print out docs, or the librarians can do it. Gail will follow up with staff on the workload that presents

GUESTS: Kate Hart for the Book Committee

Kate: This is the 1st time the committee hasn't had a board member on it. They'll rotate as a group to attend the board meetings. Last report, 11,017 books came and went. See report for the rest of the numbers. Book sale items not sold move to free, shelves, after which they get tossed. This week started marketing on Facebook. Starting with Spanish language cookbooks. Sold one this morning. Maybe some of the books can get sold at the bazaar.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES

Motion to approve by Ralph, seconded by Ian, none opposed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Terrace inspection has been done, some money has been advanced to the architect & engineer, they've done most of their job & passed it on to the city.

Discussion on putting signage to delineate Libros Para Pueblos. "Silencio, Work area".

Jose Luis needs things next to his office to be super quiet. Maybe a strip of tape to delineate a boundary for the area. Gail will talk to facilities and Adriana about getting signage up for Jose Luis' peace of mind.

AGAM (Annual General Assy.) meeting will be held the 3rd Sunday in Feb next year.

Discussion about when the numbers will be ready to review for this meeting. **Let's bring this up again at the November meeting.**

Gail is pleased to have a new fundraising committee. Chair person to be decided. The committee hasn't formally met yet.

Terrace talks took in about \$15,600usd in 2024 for about 50 events. Each event takes 6 or 7 volunteers. That's essentially 350 volunteer slots, and every volunteer spends 2-3 hours. A tremendous community contribution. Dollar-wise, that's about \$15,000usd for almost 1000 volunteer hours, knowing there are donors who could write a check for that money or half of it. The fundraising committee could make those asks.

Staff vacations coming up. Adriana has 26 days
Coni & Mireya have 14-16 days ea.

Last year the June mtg was canceled. It's posted on the website that way. Do we want to cancel the June meeting this year? Discussion ensued. Everyone will be here, so let's plan on meeting every month and make that change to the website. Option to use zoom was requested.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The board welcomes Teresa Cokl, our new treasurer. In March, the Excursions Committee had low attendance on some hikes, & canceled others. Some Out and About events were canceled as well. This increased the expected income loss for the month. We've had fewer participants. This is looking like it is typical at this time of year (has happened in the past two years).

Discussion ensued. Should we budget differently in 2026? Is lower attendance on hikes attributable to a decline in membership? Can we lower transportation costs for hikes? What's the break-even point for these excursions? Newcomers are finding Hoofing It in Oaxaca but not connecting it to the library. We need more advertising for hikes, tours and membership. There could be more outreach at the Monday, *Welcome to Oaxaca* meetings. We want to at least break even on the programs each month. We can stress this at every point of contact and encounter. Gail will talk to Mike Bronn of Libros para Pueblos (LPP), he may have ideas for marketing and outreach. Continue this discussion in the finance committee meeting.

Motion to accept the Monthly Treasurer's Report by Ralph, seconded by Jose Luis. All were in favor.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

none

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion: Online workers using OLL space.

Right now we have a lawyer & language teachers using the space who pay 20 pesos per person per session. Bridge at the library costs 20 pesos. We need a policy for people who come for hours to work on their computers. We have maybe 3 or 4 come in at a time on a given weekday. Let's steer them towards a membership. Requiring membership for the use of library space should be the policy.

The going rate for internet cafes in Oaxaca is \$1200 / 4 hours per meeting for a group. A co-working space downtown Oaxaca can cost around 100 pesos per day. 500 per week, or 1500 per month. We need to be mindful of holding space for readers, youth

activities, workshops for creative writing, etc. We have clubs, that should take precedence

Ralph motions we table the rest of the discussion. No second.

Proposal from Ian: Do we hold a preference for existing clubs? Do we want to limit online workers? Consensus is no.

New proposal from Gail: Let's have membership be required, cost is 20 pesos per hour, add this to the existing policy that teachers and lawyers follow.

Motion by Abe, seconded by Teresa. Ralph is opposed. No discussion.

Digital Workers: Linda Farthing's focus group end of February
Shelve this till September.

Strategic Plan: a sluggish start

No progress yet. Gail can email committee chairs to weigh in. We wanted to put a manual together. How to get this moving? We have a draft plan. Remind committee members to review and get started. Board members and committee chairs have it. **Gail will send this out again, and ask for feedback by next board meeting.**

OLL/OLLF

The board is focused on a positive relationship & education w the finance committee and foundation. Finance has a list of questions: Foundation side: Jeff & Doug.

Finance committee to set up a meeting w/ OLLF.

Fundraising Committee

Gail is so pleased we created a fundraising meeting last month. They haven't fully met yet. Jeff Stewart has been sending out emails, there's a proposal for meetings but no meeting yet.

Membership

Membership has gone down. Fees seem reasonable. Discussion: Is there is price resistance on the family membership at \$850? Suggestion to lower the family membership to \$700. Should we reinstate the 1 and 2 month memberships? We've had a 20% loss from 2023 to 2024.

Let's feature a fall Special. Short-term 1 month memberships. Put signage up in the lobby. Children are free, students are free. During our terrace talks, hikes, and tours, we can point out everything a membership pays. "Benefits of Membership" on screen or on printed sheets.

Correction: Ian will fix the family membership total on his chart, for 2022 which should be 134. We will take up the change in the membership family price with the fundraising committee and report to the board after they meet in June. **We'll continue thinking about it at the next board meeting.** Gail wants to talk to Mike Bronn.

Donataria Autorizada

In 2025 Adriana and Isabel attended a workshop. The OLL certification form from the ministry of culture needs to be updated to reflect new changes. Our lawyers have presented the changes to the ministry of culture, and they will make the required changes. **Gail will ask for a clarification on our progress and what exactly has to be done next. Finance has asked Marirose to do the followup.**

NEW BUSINESS

Ian makes a proposal: Add membership to fundraising and promotions of short term discounts. Ian offers to draft an email to Gail on the topic.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Kate Hart for the Book Committee. See above.

OTHER

ADJOURNMENT

Ralph moved we adjourn and Teresa seconded. Meeting adjourned at 1:00 pm.