

**OAXACA LENDING LIBRARY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
NOVEMBER 20, 2025**

MINUTES (Comprehensive)

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Meeting Called to Order at: 11:05 am

Present: Ian Hawley, John Hunter, Gail Ament, Bonny Weil, Viviana Ruiz Boijseauneau, José Luis Zárate, Carol Ringold, Abraham Torres Fregoso, Ralph Gault

Absent: None

GUESTS: Doug Long, Jim Thompson, Marirose Lescher, Jeff Stewart, Harold Kooden

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

None

APPROVAL OF OCT. 16 MINUTES

Discussion: Ralph will be added to the absent list. Bonny will correct both sets and re-send.

Motion to approve by: John, seconded by Carol. None opposed

APPROVAL OF OCT.30 MINUTES

Motion to approve by: John, seconded by Jose Luis. None opposed

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The annual bazaar has been moved to Dec 21st. The Aguinaldo bonus money will come earlier this year for Oaxaqueños. We hope this accommodates more Oaxacans.

Election Nominating Committee

The committee has looked at 4 candidates for director at large. Two were chosen. Gail interviewed for re-nomination as president last week. Bonny will meet with the committee sometime after Thanksgiving.

Treasurer search

John Dumser has resigned as Treasurer

Gail posted an ad in the newsletter. John took care of the treasurer report for last month and Marirose will stand-in as acting treasurer going forward until we find a replacement.

OLL and Libros para Pueblos

Jose Luis has created a job description. **Viviana is searching for our new volunteer.**

There's a job fair at La Salle University that Viviana's team member will attend.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Marirose Lescher

Gloria Castellanos at OLLF usually sends reports to Gail and John around the 15th of the month. Jeff Stewart confirmed the amount of money in reserve at the OLLF is \$30,000 usd. Although the Board had agreed at the June meeting to hold off on additional transfers from the OLLF, someone made draws from the OLLF that we didn't need both in September & October. The BOD did not vote on or approve either draw, though two additional transfers

had been included in the original budget. It's showing up in "other income" as \$66,749 mxn for October. OLL will pay tax on these draws, as they were not taken against expenses.

[The Sept. treasurer's report shows "other Income" as \$56,528 mxn]

There are currently no transfers from the OLLF built into the 2026 draft budget though scheduled transfers will likely be included as the budget nears completion. Ralph has only received a few committee budgets to factor into next year's budget projection so far. **OLL operating procedures should indicate no draws without board approval. Let's put this into the treasurer's job description. Gail currently has 3 versions she is collating for this position.**

A motion was made by Bonny to compile an OLL operating procedures manual, starting with the treasurer and finance committee. Ralph seconded. Discussion: **Bonny will start out by interviewing Ralph and Marirose to gather information on procedures to be followed by the treasurer and finance committee.**

Each year for the last two years we've run a negative balance coming into December, and December has historically been a banner month in terms of income. We should not be waiting for one good month to get out of a financial hole. Numbers for this December do not look very profitable.

As previously stated, transfers are taxed (until the OLL receives Donataria). Contributions are also taxed, at a lower rate. **Marirose will forward two emails from 2021 she received from the accountant to Ian and Bonny.** The accountant has stated, contributions are taxed at 16%, as opposed to 33% for donations when they are not matched with expenses, or if the OLL does not report a loss for the month to cover the amount of the transfer. **Our lawyer has advised we take all draws from OLLF as contributions.**

Donations are considered a vulnerable activity subject to money laundering reports. No report is required for a contribution, and our lawyer has stated that these transfers should be recognized as contributions which are not subject to the same money laundering report requirements.

Excursions operated at a loss this year for Day of the Dead. The reconciliation with En Via for previous tours in 2 previous years is around -\$15,000 to -\$20,000 mxn. The payment process was never completed. Adriana was waiting for the factura and En Via wanted to meet with OLL just to be clear about the amount. **Bonny would like a copy of the contract with En Via.**

Is the *Ensuring our Future* line item on the current treasurer's report of \$10,500, in pesos or dollars? **Marirose will find out.**

From the Oct 16 minutes, "Today we're at \$7,000 usd so we've raised 10% already!"

The \$6,000 usd contribution was withdrawn. The new \$1,000 usd (from Joan) contribution at the OLLF remains.

Regarding last month's request to include year-to-date numbers along with rolling totals in the monthly treasurer's report: John did include a line chart. And we have YTD numbers. We are bringing numbers forward for income and expenses each month.

A sincere thank you to LPP for their \$12,000 mxn contribution. On Oct 9, LPP contributed an additional \$15,000 mxn that is not in the treasurer's report, for a total of \$27,000 mxn. They make contributions 3x per year. **We need to follow up on this and find the \$15,000 mxn pesos.**

Bonny will send minutes out sooner after each BOD meeting to aid the board with follow-up information on action items.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

none

OLD BUSINESS

Dialog with Afro-American companions: Jim Thompson

Jim, in Oaxaca since January, is a retired attorney, arbitrator and mediator/negotiator. He was introduced to a group at La Cosecha that meets on Sat. mornings. There has been some controversy about the white community at OLL. Jim was advised, as an African American, not to go to the OLL. Gail has asked him to facilitate between OLL and the community. He and his wife were introduced to John Hunter. Problems began with the 1619 presentation. Four from OLL and four African Americans met about 2 weeks ago. A productive meeting. Here are the salient points.

- No African American has participated on the OLL board in a 59 year history. John Hunter, (the first Afro-American member) joined the board last year.
- If African Americans want buy-in then they should participate. However, we need outreach to African Americans and both parties need to make the effort to interact.
- The African American community is 100 folks and growing. Let's integrate volunteers by recruiting more people from this group. They like that we are doing outreach as part of our 60th anniversary.
- HBCU historical black colleges and universities want to host groups to come to Oaxaca three to four times per year. **How can OLL capture their interest with some kind of program on a continuous basis?**
- There is an inclusive OLL mission statement on the, *What is the OLL?* page. **Should we incorporate inclusion education for our staff and volunteers?** African Americans have traditionally been put off by volunteer comments referring to them as "you people".
- The front desk is key and sets the tone whenever we walk in. **The board should examine the following: What do we have in our entrance? What do we have on the walls? What magazines do we have lying around?**
- Suggestion for an entry sign that says, "Welcome! Ask us about our collection of books in Spanish, on LGBTQ+ communities, on African Americans, etc.
- This library does not have an African American book section, (or a gay and lesbian section), but we will do an African history month. Any book that references LGBTQ+ currently, will come up on the website if someone plugs in the word 'gay'. We have the books, they have been tagged, and they're easy to find.
- **Gail will liaise with the book committee regarding searchable ethnicities on the OLL computer. We're asking folks to consider luminaries representing different ethnicities that can be made into posters.**
- **Marirose suggests an anti-racism training group.**

- A report will be coming from Jim. **John will send to the board as soon as completed.**
- **Carol will go to La Cosecha and recruit volunteers on a given Sat morning TDB.**

Donataria Autorizada Report:

Gail took testimonials in Spanish, & videos from the Saturday Intercambio, Ninos, and Jovenes, Adelante, & Out and About. Our lawyer is making a you tube site for us. The Ministry of Culture can't come to us. We're going to them. Two of the videos (the testimonials) can be used for fundraising. They need to be subtitled in English asap. The lawyers are looking to complete you tube and meet with a lawyer from the Ministry of Culture next week. **Abe will help with the subtitles; he'll get the videos from Marirose.**

NEW BUSINESS

2026 Budget: Finance Committee

Ralph has draft budget numbers from special events, the boutique, and welcome, committee input from books, tech, AV, salaries, facilities, social, and actuals he can plug in from last year. What is missing is programs— Excursions did an annual budget, and that needs to be resubmitted as a monthly budget.

Income from programs, all of them, the talks, the hikes, etc. is projected to be around \$1,100,000 mxn. The expense side, producing that income, is about \$500 000 mxn. The negative net income for 2026 is projected to be \$1,300,000 mxn. However, we still don't have numbers for talks, and only 5 committees have reported. We need hikes, out and about, and we have less than a month before the next scheduled board meeting on Dec 18th.

Ralph needs more data from the rest of the committees.

2026 Salaries:

Marirose Lescher

Historically salaries have been low. A living wage is the policy. In the last 2 years min wage has gone up 24%. Jose Luis says the non-profit salaries are reasonable, but we can give other types of benefits. Our staff should be invited to the Thanksgiving event. We should be inclusive with our events, supporting the costs to have staff attend. Volunteers can cover the front desk. **There's a tax-deductible gift card for food OLL can buy and distribute.**

Viviana can tell us how to get that. How do we include our staff and add perks? We should try and cover the front desk more often for the employees.

Social Media:

Guest Harold: I was at the task force meeting. Jose Luis talked about the Literary Calenda. It's typical to hand things out during a Calenda. Can we give out a bookmark? Ours needs to be updated. Harold will pay for a new one. The board reviewed a mock up. With young people you need to include a QR code. This gets attention. The English side should be redone, and include the QR code. Once we get approval, we can have it printed up. If the library doesn't go to social media and use it, we're missing generations of potential members.

Harold and Gail will work on the bookmark and send out to the board for approval by e mail. It needs to be voted on. Will it be an effective handout at the calenda? LPP is going to donate books so the bookmark with go out with books. Participants in the Calenda will use it.

60th Anniversary Celebration: task force or subcommittee?

Fundraising role? Ian Hawley has questions. What is the role between fundraising and outreach? There's no sign, poster, nothing indicating we have a fundraising activity going on. There are things in the newsletter (and on the website). Where are we at with the fundraising activity in general? The posters would be a good thing. Carol says we no longer have the budget to cover these expenses. Is Carol going to pay for it? It's not something that was put into the budget. We have to think it through. We're working on a budget for it. Do we need to make a motion to pay for posters? **Gail and Adriana are authorized for small expenditures and Carol will chat with Gail about funding signs or posters in the library.** Re-addressing the relationship between the two committees, one is clearly outreach, one is clearly fundraising. Should there be overlap?

The 60th celebration has been presenting information since August. **John Hunter passed out a new update. (See attachment)** Fundraising is going to coordinate with the task force on activities they think are suitable, to include fundraising. Carol's husband is working on scheduling musical concerts. They met with Alberto Rudia. There will be some kind of musical event every single month during the year; an opportunity for fundraising. Wherever fundraising can coordinate with the task force they will absolutely be doing that. For now, keep the celebration as a task force. There is not longer a fundraising subcommittee. It disbanded completely when Jeff resigned. Ian received a receipt for a donation, but doesn't know how donations are being tracked. **Let's check with Coni. All donations should be recorded as 60th anniversary fundraising.** Gail would like **any remaining board members who have not done so to donate** and will lend them 20 pesos for the purpose. Fundraising wants to be able to say that everyone on the board has donated and is behind this effort. **Carol has not started making fundraising calls yet; this is on her agenda for next week.**

ADJOURNMENT

We will review additional items we ran out of time for at the next meeting.
The meeting was adjourned by the president at 1:04 pm.

Next month's Agenda:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS?

Update from 60th Anniversary Fundraising Subcommittee:
Carol Ringold

From September Minutes: fundraising Should include donor gifts. Discussed possible gifts categories for varying donation amounts, like a tote bag, or a pass to attend any event for free during the year. Donors could choose one of three rewards. Let's consider a permanent "exhibit" of donors, or a 60th anniversary fundraising campaign board. Carol will work on this for a presentation next month under fundraising

Update from 60th Anniversary Celebration Task Force: John Hunter
Formalize policy on receiving packages for members. How to disseminate policies?

From August minutes: We have no data on Saturday intercambio attendees. Ask them what they would like in addition to the Saturday sessions. Maybe re-start the Café on Saturdays.

OLL and digital nomads/younger demographic

See following email attachments from Linda Farthing (03/11/25) and BJ Ferguson (10/13/25) (need to re-attach)

What makes OLL unique among libraries?

Use of Spanish and English on OLL signage and publications

Discussion: "Communication sucks at OLL."

Which donors receive a thank-you and from whom

Website: Seek underwriter to pay for the services of a professional to update website?

Training for Greeters. We are all Greeters. Use of name tags when volunteering.

Do we want to "grow" Niños/Jóvenes Adelante?

Celebrating staff birthdays

Doug Long's letter of Nov. 12

Who has "ultimate responsibility" for a balanced budget? (Article 23 on page 3)

Empower Finance Committee to set pricing

"apparent automatic renewal"

'leadership became financially complacent"

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Spotty compliance; we don't give feedback

The celebration and sub committees should submit a monthly report too. The new website update subcommittee is included in the latest revision of the OLL committee list.

From the Constitution:

TWENTY-THREE. DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT. To Legally represent the Association. unless the Board of Directors appoints another member to serve as the Legal Representative for a specific purpose. To exercise and watch over the statutes of this constitution. To approve monetary transactions presented by the Treasurer. To preside at General Assemblies and Board of Directors meetings. To convoke meetings according to the terms of these statutes. To authorize with his/her signature payments made by the Treasurer. To present an Annual Report to the Annual General Assembly. To promote economic and moral support for the Association from institutions, foundations, authorities and individuals. The President may attend all committee meetings except the Election Nominating Committee meetings.