



**OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
CHAIRMAN – THE HONORABLE RICK CARFAGNA
MAIN OPERATING BUDGET: FY2020-FY2021**

**OHIOANA BUDGET HEARING TESTIMONY
March 26, 2019**

David Weaver, Executive Director

Chairman Carfagna, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Ohioana Library Association (OLA). I am pleased to be joined by several members of the Ohioana Board of Trustees.

Since its founding by Ohio First Lady Martha Kinney Cooper in 1929, Ohioana has represented the model of a successful public/private partnership between the State of Ohio and a not-for-profit organization. This year marks Ohioana's 90th anniversary.

Through its collection, publications, educational partnerships, and events, including the annual Ohioana Book Festival and Ohioana Awards, Ohioana promotes and celebrates Ohio as one of the nation's leading literary centers while directly serving more than 150,000 Ohioans each year. It serves as the caretaker of our state's rich literary heritage.

Most importantly, with the support of the Governor, the General Assembly and citizens from across the state, Ohioana connects readers and Ohio writers and is a vital contributor to the dynamic educational, cultural, and economic environment that provides hope and opportunity to all Ohioans.

Ohioana's board is comprised of 20 elected members representing every region of the state, four appointees of the Governor, and Mrs. Fran DeWine, who as Ohio's First Lady, serves in an ex-officio capacity. A roster of our trustees is attached to this testimony.

All board members are volunteers and receive no reimbursement nor stipend for their services. Ohioana has a staff of four, headed by an executive director who is appointed by and reports to the Ohioana board. Ohioana staff are not state employees, and do not receive state-provided benefits, nor participate in PERS.

Although our state support comes via the State Library, and we share space with and collaborate with them on a number of projects, we are not part of the State Library.

Eleven Ohio Governors and 34 consecutive General Assemblies since 1949 have acknowledged Ohioana's important work and affirmed the public value of this unique partnership by providing annual operating support, as authorized under the Ohio Revised Code (3375.61).

We are grateful that in his first budget, "Investing in Ohio's Future," Governor DeWine has recognized our singular role in serving the state and its citizens by recommending continued support of Ohioana in FY2020 and 2021.

Mission and Programs

Mission: *Ohioana collects, preserves, and celebrates Ohio literature and other creative endeavors.*

Ohioana carries out its mission via three programs:

- Ohioana Collection and Reference
- Ohioana Educational Outreach
- Ohioana Public Programs

These are briefly described in the Blue Book as Program Series 4 under the State Library Board.

2020-21 Priorities and Programming

With operating support from the State of Ohio, our priorities in the coming biennium are to:

- Promote Ohio as one of the nation's leading literary centers.
- Connect Ohio readers and Ohio writers through the annual Ohioana Book Festival, Ohioana Awards, and other live and media events.
- Increase awareness of Ohio authors and literature through the Ohioana Quarterly, Ohioana Newsletter, Ohioana website, and social media.
- Develop, maintain, and make accessible to the public a growing collection of more than 80,000 items by Ohioans or on Ohio subjects.
- Support reading, writing, and literacy through educational partnerships with agencies and organizations throughout the state.

We will also be working with and supporting the literacy initiatives of Ohio's new First Lady, Fran DeWine.

2020-21 Objectives

Specifically, state funding helps Ohioana staff to leverage private support to:

- Produce the annual Ohioana Book Festival at Columbus Metropolitan Library's Main Library (where it's moving to this year) with participation from 150 authors, 4,500 attendees, and an outreach audience of 50,000 in each fiscal year.

- Produce the annual Ohioana Awards event to recognize outstanding achievement by Ohio writers and on Ohio subjects; with a live and virtual audience of 10,000 each fiscal year.
- Publish the *Ohioana Quarterly*, which serves as a resource for readers and libraries on new books by Ohio authors and on Ohio subjects, and has a print and online readership of 8,000 people per issue.
- Maintain and develop the Ohioana Collection of more than 80,000 items; research, solicit, process, and catalog 350 to 500 new books each year for the collection; provide access and service to more than 4,000 users of the collection each fiscal year.
- Collaborate with the State Library of Ohio and the Ohio Center for the Book at Cleveland Public Library to distribute 5,000 copies of the new Ohio Literary Map to schools, libraries, and the general public.
- Promote and participate with Ohio authors in live literary events and media programs around the state, reaching a live and virtual audience of nearly 30,000 people.
- Partner with the Ohio Arts Council on the Poetry Out Loud program and the State Library of Ohio on the Choose to Read Ohio program. Annually, these educational programs serve more than 12,000 students statewide.
- Use the Ohioana website and social media to communicate with Ohio readers, schools, libraries, and the general public about Ohio authors, books, literary events, and literary sites; reaching more than 40,000 people each year, including visitors from all 50 states and 112 foreign countries.

Budget Request

In the budget submitted on March 15, Governor DeWine recommended that Ohioana be funded in the next biennium as it's in this current fiscal year: \$180,000 in operating support and \$120,114 in rent, for a total of \$300,114.

In our letter to then-OBM Director Timothy Keen last September 28, we asked that our support be increased by \$22,942 for both FY2020 and FY2021 broken out as follows:

- an additional \$2,942 to cover an increase in rental expense (from \$120,114 to \$123,056)
- an additional \$20,000 in operating support for personnel (from \$180,000 to \$200,000)

If approved, this would bring the state's total support of Ohioana from \$300,114 to \$323,056, an increase of 7.6%. Per capita, it would come out to less than 2.8 cents per Ohioan.

The facility where Ohioana is located is rented by DAS. In 2018, this facility came under new ownership and management. Our rent and DAS fees, currently \$120,114, will increase in the next biennium by \$2,942 to \$123,056. We ask for support to meet this increase, ensuring that Ohioana can meet its obligations and have the necessary space for its collection; public space for researchers, students, and tour groups; and office space for staff and volunteers.

The largest portion of the state's support goes to cover a portion of salaries and benefits for the 4.0 FTE of the library. As mentioned earlier, Ohioana employees are not state employees; neither do they receive any state-provided benefits, nor participate in PERS.

While Ohioana has had great success in leveraging state funding to generate grants and contributions for programming and events such as the Ohioana Book Festival, operating costs such as salaries and benefits are much more difficult to generate support. Many corporate and foundation funders will not support operating costs.

Therefore, we are asking the state to provide \$20,000 in additional support for each fiscal year in the new biennium for these personnel costs. While it will not cover the entire amount, it will cover almost all base salaries for staff, in addition to mandatory payroll taxes (a total of \$207,250 in FY2019).

I would note that if our request is granted, the \$323,056 in state support for FY2020-21 will be nearly equal to the level of support we received a dozen years ago: in FY2007, the state's support for operations and rent totaled \$324,816 (adjusted for inflation, that would be \$402,339 in 2018 dollars). At that time, prior to the Great Recession and state budget cuts that were implemented to meet the crisis, Ohioana had a staff of 6.0 FTE's, versus 4.0 today.

We believe the programs and services we provide, despite the staff being reduced by one-third since 2007, is proof that we have used our resources prudently, particularly the support we have received from the State of Ohio.

We thank you and respectfully ask your consideration for this additional request.

Summary and Conclusion

We believe the collaboration between the State of Ohio and Ohioana has demonstrated how a successful private/public partnership can work to serve the people of Ohio. We believe Ohioana has proven itself a steward worthy of the state's continued support.

Governor DeWine has titled his budget, "Investing in Ohio's Future." Our is a modest investment that yields major dividends for Ohio, both in terms of direct service to the people and in terms of the state's image and reputation both here and beyond our borders.

I would like to close with words from author Anthony Doerr. A native of Cleveland, Tony won the 2000 Ohioana Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant for Ohio writers age 30 or younger who've not yet published a book. Since receiving that grant, Tony has gone on to become one of the world's greatest contemporary authors, and winner of the 2015 Pulitzer Prize. Here is the closing paragraph from a letter Tony sent in support of Ohioana in 2017:

"In a nation where reading is challenged on almost every front, from competing cultural entertainments, from deteriorating schools, from hyper-productive work schedules, and in an era when some state governments are basing estimates for their future prison populations on the literacy rates of their third-graders, the Ohioana Library Association is doing vital work to promote reading and writing all across Ohio, and they're doing it on an already razor-thin budget. With their collections, quarterly journal, book festival, grants, and awards, they enhance, secure, and bind both the literary community of Columbus and the great state of Ohio." – Anthony Doerr.

OHIOANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

(as of March 1, 2019)

EX-OFFICIO

Fran DeWine, Columbus

ELECTED

President – Daniel Shuey, Westerville

Vice-President – John Sullivan, Plain City

Secretary – Bryan Loar, Columbus

Treasurer – Jay Yurkiw, , Johnstown

Immediate Past President – Rudine Sims Bishop, Columbus

Gillian Berchowitz, Athens
Helen F. Bolte, Columbus
Katie Brandt, Columbus
Lisa Evans, Johnstown
Ellen McDevitt-Stredney, Columbus
Mary Heather Munger, Perrysburg
Louise Musser, Delaware
Claudia Plumley, Dublin
Cynthia Puckett, Columbus
David Siders, Cincinnati
Geoff Smith, Columbus
Yolanda Danyi Szuch, Perrysburg
Jacquelyn L. Vaughan, Dublin

APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR OF OHIO

Carl Denbow, Ph.D., Athens
Carol Garner, Mount Vernon
H.C. "Buck" Niehoff, Cincinnati
Brian Perera, Upper Arlington

TRUSTEES EMERITUS

Francis Ott Allen, Cincinnati
Ann Bowers, Bowling Green
Christina Butler, Ph.D., Columbus
James Hughes, Ph.D., Dayton
Robert Webner, Columbus

STAFF

Executive Director – David Weaver
Office Manager – Kathryn Powers
Library Specialist – Courtney Brown
Program Assistant – Morgan Peters

**OHIOANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
PROJECT PARTNERS & FUNDERS**

The Ohioana Library Association partners with many organizations in presenting its programming, some of whom are also funding partners. The list of these supporters includes:

- The Book Loft of German Village (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Books by the Banks (Ohioana Book Festival)
- CD102.5FM (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Cbus Libraries (Ohioana Book Festival, Ohioana Awards)
- The Columbus Foundation (Operating and project support)
- Columbus Metropolitan Library (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Tom E. Dailey Foundation (Ohioana Book Festival, Ohioana Awards)
- Dispatch Media Group (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Fort Hayes Metropolitan Education Center (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Greater Columbus Arts Council (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Honda of America, Mfg., Inc. (Ohioana Book Festival, Ohioana Awards)
- Huntington Bank (Ohioana Awards)
- Institute of Library & Museum Services (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Harry C. Moores Foundation (General operating support)
- Nationwide Children’s Hospital (Ohioana Book Festival)
- OELMA – Ohio Educational Library Media Association (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Ohio Arts Council (Ohioana Book Festival, Ohioana Awards, Poetry Out Loud)
- Ohio Center for the Book at the Cleveland Public Library (Ohioana Book Festival, Ohio Literary Map, Poetry Out Loud, Choose to Read Ohio)
- Ohio Humanities (Ohioana Book Festival)
- OGTV/The Ohio Channel (Ohioana Book Festival, Ohioana Awards, Book Notes)
- Ohio Poetry Association (Ohioana Book Festival)
- The Ohio State University Libraries (Ohioana Book Festival)
- The Ohio State University Press (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Ohio University/Swallow Press (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Pickerington Public Library (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Porter, Wright, Morris & Arthur (Ohioana Awards)
- The Reinberger Foundation (Ohioana Book Festival)
- The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Society of Children’s Book Writers & Illustrators (Ohioana Book Festival)
- State Library of Ohio (Ohioana Book Festival, Choose to Read Ohio)
- Thurber House (Ohioana Book Festival, Poetry Out Loud)
- Toledo-Lucas County Public Library (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Upper Arlington Public Library (Ohioana Book Festival)
- Vorys, Sater, Seymour & Pease (Ohioana Awards)
- Margaret Wong and Associates (Ohioana Awards, Ohioana Book Festival)
- WCBE (Ohioana Book Festival, Ohioana Awards)
- Westerville Public Library (Ohioana Book Festival)
- VoiceCorps (Ohioana Book Festival)