**Director’s Report**

**Prepared by Donita Ward:  April 7, 2025**

**Attachments: posted to website**

* Agenda
* Statistics & Digital Statistics
* Balance Sheet
* Profit and Loss Report
* HDL Report concerning sales tax trends
* Minutes from February meeting
* Annual Audit Report
* Branding Proposals (distributed separately)

**Budget Adjustment Requests and Financial Items for Approval:**

* None at this time

**Finance & Administration**

Sales tax income remains strong and we have healthy reserves available for the renovation. The audit was completed without incident. There will likely be a last minute adjustment to the report as our final bill from Travis County for the November 2024 election sharing did not come until April. The annual report was submitted to the Texas State Library, as were various other accreditation and legally required reports such as Comptroller Debt Transparency and Sales Tax collections for the first quarter.

**Operations**

Circulation numbers are back on the rise after a dip in February. The simplified borrowing rules approved in February have reduced barriers and confusion for patrons. One thing not circulating as we expected is the experience pass for the Wildflower center. Despite a wait list of several months, patrons are not collecting the pass at their turn, causing many of our weeks to go unused. As we will have accrued a surplus by summer, I plan to let out two per week in June and July.

Weeding is going very well. Nearly 2500 items have been deselected this year. Librarians completed the purging of DVDs, short stories, large type, YA biography and nonfiction, audiobooks, graphic novels, great courses, and juvenile fiction.

Inventory for April will be the children’s collection. This time around, we also need to have a full staff meeting, a technology Q&A for the document station, summer reading training, and I will be changing out the passwords and alarm codes. We are going to have to either upgrade or replace the server as well. It’s going to be a very full day.

**Internal Affairs**

Our adult services librarian tendered notice in March. Instead of replacing the position, I moved our Program Support Assistant Manager into a different post, Adult Program Coordinator. She was trained and ready to take over the heavy program load we carry. I moved one of our entry level assistants into the program support role and hired someone new for the entry level position.

This means that Adult Collection Development has reverted to my task list and the Guano Plan was updated to redistribute Leslie’s tasks to Katrina and Nick if I am unavailable. This is not a long-term sustainable solution, but it got the immediate needs under control while we decide what to do going forward.

I see an opportunity here to put an Assistant Director into place. That position would oversee Adult Collection Development and the program binder, manage staff scheduling, and serve as back-up for elections, the volunteer program, records management, and various administrative tasks. This person would also take over my public service desks and be an additional notary. To do this, we would need an additional $60K in the 2025 staffing budget.

I learned in January that we should be keeping two separate HR files for each employee. One lives in my office and contains job descriptions, goals, reviews, and that type of thing. The other should live with the bookkeeper and hold items related to benefits, direct deposit, taxes, garnishments, and work authorizations. I am in process of taking apart our employee files. Some are easy. Most of our staff have been here 8+ years, though, and those files are dense.

Volunteers are difficult to keep as I have made a habit of hiring them for entry level positions, much to Michelle’s frustration. That said, we have a good crew and they do a lot. Our next appreciation event is in May with Tiny Tails. They love Tiny Tails.

I created a beanstack training for volunteers to complete for tabling/advocacy or even the greeter position. Ideally, all trustees and FoL board members would complete this training and be able to serve as ambassadors for the library.

I went to a Texas Library Association training outside Houston about legal issues for public libraries. It covered things like obscenity, public information, open meetings, and so forth. Happily, much of it was a reminder of things I already knew and policies/procedures we already have in place to maintain legal compliance.

I was at the Texas Library Association annual conference last week and toured 9 additional libraries in the DFW area. There is a Texas Workforce Commission conference in Round Rock in August and a meeting of the Special Purpose District Coalition in Austin in July. I hope to be able to attend both of those, since trainings in the area don’t require the travel time and costs that make other conferences so difficult.

**Technology**

The new Library Document Station (LDS) w/ card reader is up and running. There are quirks. We are working through them. Our server is older and has come to end of support on the software. We can upgrade our server software or upgrade the physical server. Katrina and I are working with Technology for Education to determine the best approach.

**Facilities**

Asbestos inspection was completed and (surprise) we have no asbestos. We are now trying to schedule the fire suppression sprinkler system repair. It is not an urgent work order.

Replacement shelving has been ordered from Library Interiors of Texas. I wanted to get the new shelving in place before renovation begins since we are moving to castered stacks. This means that we will be able to shift the collections during renovation instead of having various sections unavailable for extended periods.

We are going to need to close the main library for 7-10 days to replace the shelving. Library Interiors will come in with the new pieces, assemble them, move our collection onto the new shelves, and disassemble/remove our current steel shelving. We cannot have patrons around for that. We will be able to have the meeting building available for programs and reserves. Staff will be able to go into the library proper after construction hours each day to pull patron reserves and we will have them in the second building.

**Programs & Outreach**

Lauren is going to the Pflugerville Homeschool Fair this month. We will also be represented, possibly by staff and possibly by the FoL, at Pioneer Fest on April 26th. Ideally, whomever is there will have completed the advocacy training.

Because construction is unlikely to start before October, we can host the Wells Branch Neighborhood Association Art Faire on Saturday, September 27th after all. This would require the library to be closed for parking access, but I have several projects staff can do in this time.

DIY programs have come into balance with others for cost to participation. Our most well attended adult events are still crafts, by a long shot, followed by wellness programs like meditation. The puzzle swap has really gained momentum as well. Passive programs like brackets are grabbing attention and numbers. While we don’t have participation counts for things like the puzzle and loom, they are used daily by any number of people with no particular age trends.

Morning storytimes have had lower participation recently, but the evening ones are picking up. Our sign language teacher is retiring end of Spring, but we hope she will sell her company to someone willing to take on our weekly program. Our Family and All Ages programs are difficult to predict. Storytellers and cultural events have much lower attendance than parties and juggling/music shows. First Fridays have dropped dramatically since we stopped having crafts and switched to predominantly culture. Teen programs are doing well with great response to the Octopus Games specifically. Canvas painting was less popular than usual, but it was over Spring Break. Our afterschool program has transitioned from Magic to Time Travel to maintain interest in the 8-12 crowd.

Summer program planning is going strong. I’ve ordered sample prizes to see what attracts and we have most of the performers and special programming booked. Since we will not have access to the program rooms October to January, we are thinking of moving the Polar Express and Whoo-ville program to Christmas in July.

2025 Renovation Timeline / Activities

* 1/15 On site page turn meeting with 720 and FP
* 1/17 walk through with Library Interiors
* 1/20 Donita and Abbie review contracts from the Lawyer to send to FP
* 1/21 720 meeting
* 2/6 Design Meeting w/720
* 2/11 tour Cedar Park new library
* 2/14 Design Meeting w/720
* 2/26 Schematic Design Review
* 3/5 Design Meeting (all the carpets and tiles) with 720 & FP
* 3/9 Public Q&A meeting
* 3/20 Tech meeting (online) with 720 & FP
* 3/24 Tour from TSLAC, call with Lib Int, 720 teen design meeting
* 3/26 Page Turn Meeting on site with 720 & FP
* 3/31 Dallas Area 4 Libraries tour with 720, then 2 extra sites
* 4/3 toured 4 more libraries