**Director’s Report**

**Prepared by Donita Ward:  August 24, 2020**

**Attachments:**

* Statistics
* Balance Sheet
* Profit and Loss Report
* Proposed Services Policy

**Budget Adjustment Requests:**

* None at this time

**Policies for Review:** The following policies have been combined into one Services Policy (attached). Original policies are available to review on the library website.

* Community Posting Policy
* Green Policy
* LAB (Learn and Build) Policy
* Meeting/Event Room Policy
* Patron Computer Use Policy
* Program Policy
* Reference Policy
* Social Media Policy

**Finance & Administration**

Sales Tax Income for August was 134,130.91. That is 20% higher than last year and puts us above 2019 for YTD collections. I cannot explain that, but my best guess is that it was the CVS and other building (construction materials delivered to the site) that compensated for the small businesses that have been completely shut down or had their business significantly reduced.

Statewide collections for August (purchases in June) were higher in 2020 than 2019, so it is more than just the library experiencing this increase. The State of Texas as a whole is up 6.28% from last year YTD; we are up 6.81%. Nevertheless, we ordered the large format confidential payer report to determine if there is something obviously out of place. The report usually takes about 45 days to get. We sent in the request back in June.

The Wells Branch Community Library District will have an election this year on the General Election Date of November 3 for three (3) positions on the Board of Trustees. We have four (4) qualified applicants turn in their paperwork before the deadline. I submitted our order of election, election agreement, equipment acceptance, preliminary ballot language, and so forth to the county.  I will send in an updated Order of Election with the new early voting dates once the county confirms locations for early voting. Updated ballot language will need to be submitted after the order drawing on August 24.

The Library Districts Discussion Group we are hosting this month will be a virtual meeting with zoom instead of a live workshop.  Topics to be covered include SimpleE ebook integration, the upcoming legislative session and library representation, discussion of digital resources offered at different libraries and the relative popularity/success of those resources, updates from the state library and CTLS, and district libraries’ successes and failures in operating during a pandemic.

**Operations**

We remain closed to the public. I tied our service offerings to the Risk Level as determined by Travis County to make it clear for everyone. We are at Level 4 so contact-free services only. If there is a big spike in infection rates when school opens and we go Level 5, we will have to shut down. I hope that does not happen. When the risk reduces to level 3, we will offer computer appointments. At level 2 we can have lobby service and small programs.

Because the closure is going much longer than originally imagined, we are trying to get more of our circulation procedures back into line. Recently, we reinstated due dates but not fines in hopes of getting more items available for other patrons.  Most things are coming back.  We have also resumed circulation for launchpads and kindles.

There will always be invisible work at a library. Besides the catalog corrections, ordering, processing, etc, we are able to work on more elaborate projects. ALL the DVDs are now arranged alphabetically for patrons to browse when they return.  That workgroup has moved on to audiobook case checks.  Many of the cases are in sad shape. Kristin and Kaitlyn removed the pink stickers from all the series books and reintegrated them into juvenile fiction for ease of location.  They put shelf markers in place for the kids to find their favorites.  Gloria and Tee went through all the picture books and board books looking for crayon and food damage. Old paper files, like Internet Permission Forms, are being purged

Accounts began expiring again last month. Account expiration is important for us to be able to verify contact information for the patrons.  However, we do not want to force people to come out because of blocked/expired accounts. We are offering and encouraging 90-day extensions by phone/text/email for anyone who does not want to come in for the standard renewal.

With items coming back more predictably, we hope to be able to transition from our current (labor-intensive) contact-free circulation system back into Apollo reserves with an integrated ‘curbside’ model for pick-up.  That would let people get onto a waiting list for popular items.  Target date for the transition is Labor Day.

Digital material circulation for July was 3151 items. With total circulation for July at 7784, digital now represents more than 40% of our patron circulation. We are always looking to add offerings.

Acorn TV is a resource we wanted to offer digitally.  As we were in process of setting up a trial, they were bought by overdrive.  We put that on hold until they integrate. I did renew the Mango Language Learning subscription and the Tumblebooks subscription for another year.

We currently have a trial of online services called HelpNow & JobNow.  HelpNow provides learning resources for K-12 students, including live tutors and a virtual meeting space.  JobNow provides resume-building software, live interview practice, and job coaching services for job seekers. Finally on the review list is SimplyE, a state library sponsored platform to merge several eBook vendors into one app. I am asking other libraries about their experience before I commit. Specifically, I do not want to put in place something that makes our more vulnerable patrons suddenly unable to access their digital materials from home because of an ‘upgrade’.

Another technology mountain our community is facing involves virtual school. Both districts that serve Wells Branch are starting the year 100% virtual. They are NOT using the same software as last year, or the same software as one another. We have divided the staff into two groups. Half are going to learn the Pflugerville ISD system. Half are going to learn the Round Rock ISD system. I anticipate that we will be fielding a number of questions from frustrated parents.

We’re looking to put more curated information onto the website to meet contemporary patron needs. The Homeschool Resources Page is now live on the website.  <https://www.wblibrary.org/kids-teens/virtual-education-homeschool-resources>. We are also putting together a voting information page here with information for both Travis and Williamson Counties. <https://www.wblibrary.org/Voting-information/Voting-information>.

In voting/election news, the library will have a voter registration drive in the parking lot on September 19th and we will also be a polling location for the general election on November 3rd.

Contact Free Services are very popular and well used. We have:

* Borrowing books, movies, audios
* Borrowing launchpads and kindles \*NEW\*
* Phone appointments for technology help
* New library card applications for adults
* Launchpad and Kindle Agreement Applications \*NEW\*
* Library card renewals for adults
* Science in a Bag projects to go
* Craft in a Bag projects to go for kids
* DIY in a Bag projects to go
* Watercolor program on facebook and supplies available for pick-up
* Yoga on facebook
* CraftAlong each Wednesday on Zoom
* Monthly Special Projects for adults on Facebook and Zoom \*NEW\*
* Booksale Items to go- just take one off the cart every day at 2pm
* Storytimes and circle times on facebook
* Circle time on Zoom \*NEW\*
* Lego Lab on Zoom \*NEW\*
* Resume Review
* Bookflights- tell us what you like and we’ll select some books for you
* Celebrity Guest Storytimes on Facebook \*NEW\*

**Facilities**

Repairs are planned for minor issues with the plumbing and irrigation. We got a bid for $2150 to power wash the entire building. The masonry company that came out to look at our façade suggested we do that before looking to any brickwork repairs.

**Internal Affairs**

Staff are doing as well as we can without patrons or regular daily activity. Many aspects of the job that we most enjoyed are simply not a part of our days in this new reality, but we are all finding strategies to accomplish something similar when possible. We’ve trained the new employees on tasks that are happening now. When we do reopen, we will probably ALL need to review procedures and best practices.

I transitioned many of our traditional workflows to be more like the norm. We are now all working different areas and moving around to perform different tasks. Originally, I isolated employees to specific areas without crossover to minimize exposure. At this time, we are sanitizing ninjas and experts and wiping down workstations. I also reinstituted regular check-ins and we are looking at our goals and projects that were scheduled for 2020 to see how those can be adapted.

Teachers have gone back to work, but students will not be in class for a while. Kristin and I are working adapted schedules and re-evaluating as necessary. Right now, she has reduced her hours to be with her family more and I am bringing my 3rd grader in for a few hours a day to work in the quiet reading room behind my office.

The TML insurance renewal paperwork came through this month. The increase to medical insurance cost is very small and dental is unchanged. Open enrollment for all employees (25 hours or more) is October 15 to November 15.

Team Building is a struggle with social distancing, but we are going back to what has always worked well for our people- food. Managers are taking turns bringing in treats at random times to make sure we reach everyone. Hand written cards signed by all employees were sent out to the volunteers this month as well. I don’t know when we’ll be able to invite our volunteers to return, but I don’t want them to feel forgotten.

P**rograms & Outreach**

Zoom vs Facebook:  Zoom programming is balancing well with our Facebook offerings.  The advantage to our Facebook postings is that patrons can access them at any time during the day.  The advantage of zoom is that it is interactive for the participants instead of just watching.  One thing we found to be successful is to post a Facebook video of a project before the zoom craft-along.  We also have the writer’s guild and WWW book club using zoom to resume their regular meetings. We are having celebrity guest story-times on Fridays in place of our ASL story-time (teacher cannot continue).  So far, Kristin has lined up librarians from days past, Celia Israel, Gwendolyn from Pioneer Pals, Chris from Branch BBQ, and many others. The library-to-go projects are very popular, so we are continuing them beyond summer reading.

Lauren has resumed the homebound delivery service and is on her third rotation. We haven’t added any new participants, but those who use the service are quite appreciative. She’s also trying a social media book browse where she selects an area of the shelving and films book covers on the shelf. It’s ‘almost’ like being in the library.

Summer Reading Programs ended July 31.  While the numbers were low in comparison to previous years, we did have respectable participation in the reading incentive program.  Grand prizes and raffle prizes have been picked up and most folks who got participation prizes have come for those. In 2020, 230 people registered and 228 were active in the program. They completed 145 challenges, earned 2177 badges and wrote 83 reviews. All told, Wells Branch read 347393 minutes for this program. For comparison purposes, in 2019 we had 840 patrons log 1375218 minutes of reading and we hosted 167 programs over June and July.

I did get some numbers for a professional user and nonuser survey. To capture 200 responses with a 7% confidence rate on a phone survey would be over $12000 (English and Spanish only). An online survey would only go to our patron base and be posted locally (WBNA, MUD), which is something we could do ourselves.

**Next Meeting (via Zoom?)**

* Draft 2021 budget & Annual Reviews
* Election update
* Consider holiday schedule as part of the personnel policy updates