

Director's Report

Prepared by Donita Ward: January 8, 2021

Attachments:

All reports and attachments are online

- Statistics
- Balance Sheet
- Profit and Loss Report

The following items up for review can be found on the library website.

- None at this time

Budget Adjustment Requests:

- None at this time

Finance & Administration

Sales Tax Income for January was lower than last year, but within the expected range for this year's reduced budget.

Signature authority has been updated and verified for most banks that the District uses. TexPool is our last hurdle to complete. The paperwork was received on December 2, but the change did not go through. Original paperwork was overnighted to the Houston office this week to expedite the process in advance of the January 13 meeting.

The annual audit contract is in place and work has begun. We cannot do the journal entries until we have January 31 bank statements and February sales tax income numbers. We can, however, begin pulling documentation and gathering any samples requested.

4Q2020 sales tax was submitted to the comptroller on time. In normal circumstances, we can run a report from our print station detailing how much was collected for printing/copying/faxing and reverse the math from that number to come up with sales tax due. Since we are not charging for the first 5 pages during the pandemic, those reports are not useful. I've had to develop a more circumspect approach to determining taxable income by subtracting the fines noted through our circulation system from our total fees collected in the bookkeeping system and reverse the math from that number.

January is a good time to look at the calendar of upcoming reporting requirements for the district. These are annual administrative reports that are required by various laws and statutes. This list does not include the requirements specific to Human Resources issues like insurance open enrollment, trustee requirements or grant administration requirements. The election cycle also has a list of posting and filing deadlines that are all slightly different each year, but the first deadline for that is in June.

- quarterly sales tax revenue reports due to the comptroller
- March- annual report to state library
- March- debt transparency report to comptroller
- No specific date- NVRA implementation plan to secretary of state
- June - cybersecurity training certification to TML
- April - Audit report

Suggested meeting schedule for 2021:

- February- Collection and Circulation Policy, Pandemic Response Policies, set schedule for development of Long Range Plan, assign workgroups for special projects
- March- workgroup meetings
- April- Audit Report, Records Management, TexShare, Interlibrary Loan Policies
- May- workgroup meetings
- June- Conduct Policies, Procurement and Investment Policies
- July- workgroup meetings
- August- Call Election, Services Policy
- September- workgroup meetings
- October- Budget, Director Review
- November- workgroup meetings
- December- Swear in Trustees, ByLaws and Trustee Code, Personnel and HRA Policies

Operations

Our services are all contact-free and we have put sanitizing workstations into our daily procedures. We do not need to adjust services or schedules with the recent changes in pandemic risk level as determined by the county. We wear masks, social distance and maintain strict cleaning protocol already. We did have to suspend computer appointments when the county increased the risk level to four and cannot offer them again safely until we are back to level three. Right now, Travis County is at level five with the highest numbers reported to date.

We will begin circulating magazines next week. Magazines have been a pain point during the closure. As temporary items, they have never been cataloged. Magazines were always for in-house browsing more than borrowing since their appeal was usually in the covers or articles, which you can only find by looking at the physical item. Patrons are able to peruse the regular catalog from home and put items on reserve for circulation, which is what has enabled our circulation to continue even though the doors have been closed to the public since March. Since magazines were never cataloged, they were not available. We now have a system for temporary records that will allow patrons to reserve and borrow magazines again.

Also on the near horizon is circulation of games. We have a number of board games, card games, and educational STEM activities that the library purchased for programs. Those programs have been suspended for a long time and will probably not

resume before sometime this summer at the earliest. In the meantime, we can catalog many of those games (dominoes, uno, ticket to ride, code-and-go mouse) and allow patrons to borrow them. Families have been at home together for a very long time and would probably appreciate a new game to play together.

Many years ago, we had an issue with items going missing and still appearing in the catalog. For example, John Doe borrows the newest John Grisham book and doesn't return it. That item continues to show in our catalog. Patrons put it on reserve and wait for it. Our options were to set the system to delete egregiously overdue items, which would erase the fine and problem from John Doe's account (effectively expunging his record) or to leave it showing as something patrons could request, even though they would never get it. The workaround was a special line of coding in our system that moved the record to 'pending', thus hiding it in the catalog. Through the years, we've developed a list of hundreds of items on our books that don't really exist for us anymore. Those are being cleaned out.

Another behind the scenes activity involves Authority Control. Basically, when we download and upload MARC records for our materials, they aren't always in the same standardized format. JRR Tolkien might be listed as J.R.R. Tolkien, J R R Tolkien, J. RR Tolkien, etc. The computer will read these all as individual authors. We can go through the records of authors, titles, series and subjects and merge those, which will make the catalog cleaner and facilitate patron searches. It's time consuming and invisible from the outside, but important.

Brittany is creating a series of "Armchair Traveler" packs as a passive adult program. Each pack will focus on one country and include films, books, wildlife or travel guides, recipes, and other feature information to allow the borrower to take an imaginary vacation. The first three destinations are France, South Africa and China and they should be available in February.

Contact free services include:

- Borrowing books, movies, audios
- Borrowing launchpads and kindles
- Phone appointments for technology help
- New library card applications
- Homebound delivery
- Launchpad and Kindle Agreement Applications
- Library card renewals
- Resume Review
- Bookflights- tell us what you like and we'll select some books for you
- Digital Library with Overdrive and Hoopla
- Research and Language Learning Databases
- Tumblebooks for little kids
- Library to Go craft and science packs for families
- Brainfuse JobNow career services including online resume help and mock interviews and Brainfuse HelpNow with live on demand tutoring

- Reserves and waiting lists for high demand items
- hotspots to borrow
- storywalks along the fence
- NEW- magazine borrowing

Internal Affairs

Staff training and continuing education is trickier during a pandemic. I've been in contact with our EAP for specific topics including Sexual Harassment training (as discussed at the last board meeting), Time Management (the most requested topic by employees during annual reviews) and Resiliency. They have a webinar format available for each topic listed. We would have as many employees as possible log into the webinar at a specific time for the live virtual training, then send a link to a recording of our session to those who could not attend. It's a very flexible and affordable option. I am working to get the Sexual Harassment training scheduled for the first week of March.

We have developed a series of task list(s) for things we never anticipated having to do. The building has been closed for a very long time, and may be closed for several more months. Each week, there are things that should get checked when not in use, but these checks weren't being tracked. Items on the list include the coin collector for document release, self-check machines, and the bathrooms in the meeting building. We have also found that our regular task lists needed updating as many roles have adapted to new services and needs.

We have an intern starting next week as part of her practicum in library school. Katie Adams will be helping to develop our Library to Go packs, learning and assisting with material management, and creating a virtual storytime room for our website. Once this virtual classroom is live, it will link to Youtube Unlisted recordings of storytimes and patrons will be able to browse the 'room' to choose a story. Katie will be here 7 hours per week through the semester.

Team Building is also tough in these circumstances. The movie theater rental idea was met with great enthusiasm. Unfortunately, between the day we planned it and the day it was scheduled, COVID cases in the area skyrocketed and people were just not comfortable going out at all. If Cinemark continues to offer this service, employees have expressed an interest to try again later in the Spring. Until then, we are somewhat limited in what we can do to support that connection.

Facilities Issues

Large projects including renovation, flooring/carpet replacement, front desk removal, walling in the breezeway to create a solarium, and creation of a separated Teen Area are all on hold during the economic upheaval. Basic maintenance issues are being addressed and inspections are current. We have one sprinkler head leaking and some masonry repairs to schedule.

I'm still trying to get our internal book drop replaced and an external book drop ordered, but there has been a communication lag over the holidays. I hope to have proposals soon.

Programs & Outreach

Polar Express was unusual this year. Santa was sitting far from the kids and there were no crafts and cocoa. That said, we did have a program and those who attended were pleased with the steps taken to keep everyone safe. All other live programs were suspended when Travis County increased the risk level to four and will not resume until we are back to level three.

Current contact free programs:

- Science in a Bag projects to go
- Wacky Science weekly on Facebook to demo the science to go packs
- Craft in a Bag projects to go for kids
- Storytime and Craft on Facebook to demo the craft in a bag
- Yoga on Facebook
- DIY in a Bag projects to go
- CraftAlong each Wednesday on Zoom
- Booksale Items to go- just take one off the cart every day at 2pm
- Storytimes on Facebook
- Circle time on Zoom
- Lego Lab on Zoom
- New zoom phonics storytime each week for emergent readers
- Social Media shelf browsing
- Dial-A-Story
- NEW- Armchair Traveler Packs
- Winter Reading is live on Beanstack and will run through Jan 15.