

Director's Report

Prepared by Donita Ward: June 22, 2022

Attachments:

- Statistics and Digital Statistics
- Balance Sheet
- Profit and Loss Report
- Draft Minutes from May meeting
- Order Calling a General Election for Trustees

The following item(s) up for review can be found on the library website.

- Procurement
- Investment

Budget Adjustment Requests and Financial Items for Approval:

Increase of \$15K to line 565 Landscape Maintenance for extra sod and trees in the front play area.

Increase of \$18K to line 583 Legal Services to cover back billing from policy reviews and COVID procedure reviews as well as any upcoming concerns about investment/procurement policies.

Potentially increase staff wages by \$7500 to accommodate additional support staff on the weekends.

Finance & Administration

Sales Tax income has reached \$966,633.65 for 2022 thus far. That is up 40% from last year. Karen is checking our roll sheets regularly and we cannot see any potential discrepancies that would cause an audit recall.

It's time to call the 2022 General Election for three trustees. The draft Order Calling Election is posted on the website. In recent years, there have been multiple incremental changes from the county throughout the season. Many of those changes required updates to the Order of Election. It would be efficient to include wording in the vote allowing the Library District's Election Official to make any changes necessary to the approved order that accommodate updated legislation or offerings by the county without the trustees having to meet and vote.

Operations

Fines and fees were reinstated at the new rates on May 1. To date, we've had four nonconformance forms filed concerning the fines. Our biggest issue is the cash collector at the document station. One single penny (or other unrecognized coin such as foreign currency or the Sacagawea dollar) clogs the works and means that we need

to take it all apart, shake it upside down to dislodge the offending coinage, use a long stick with ticky-tack on the end to grab anything else that is clogged inside, and then reassemble the device. It's difficult and can cause a back-up while patrons wait for us to coerce the machine into submission. We have a call into the distributor looking for a new machine as this one is several years old already.

Circulation of physical materials in the library continues to rise. We have just passed a monthly average of 10000 items. The average was just over 6000 last year and 5300 in 2020. Pre-pandemic average peaked at 17000 items per month. Also on the rise are the number of new accounts we are issuing- double the monthly average from last year. Door counts, printing, and computer use are also rising. Digital use is holding steady with the exception of Pronunciator and Dial-A-Story, which are getting almost no use at all.

Internal Affairs

Trustee replacement is an important decision. There are two qualified applicants for the vacant position.

I will be at the Texas Library Association Annual Assembly downtown next month. This is mostly a business meeting and legislative update, but there are networking opportunities and some rules and regulations to stay abreast of that will be discussed. ARSL (Association of Rural and Small Libraries) will be in Chattanooga this year; Kristin and I plan to attend dependent upon coverage support and safety. Several offerings at ARSL this year have to do with building construction and development.

Volunteer hours are on the rise. Michelle is training new people each month and we now have at least one shelver for kids and one for adults scheduled to come in each day to help up keep up with the increased circulation. We also have special program volunteers for Wacky Science, Lego Lab, Storytime and Craft, etc. The Teen Library Council is very motivated and planning multiple programs each month.

We are hiring entry-level employees. The job posting originally went up to fill the hours that we are understaffed, which will allow us to offer open LAB hours again in the fall. Once posted, one of our established assistants asked to switch to the advertised schedule, which meant the posted position was filled and now her position needed to be staffed. That same week, another assistant announced that she is moving away from Austin, so there is her schedule to post. I'm doing interviews all this week and hope to have people selected by the July 4 holiday. This is an entry level, part-time position. That means we're looking for someone we can train who demonstrates friendliness and competence. While there are no specific pre-requisites for this position, preference is given to applicants who are bilingual, new workers in the neighborhood, library school students, and those who add diversity to the team.

Technology

New patron and public desk machines are being ordered that will run Win11. Because there are 18 machines to deploy, each needing to be attached to the server with appropriate software, security, management and driver installations and updates,

we will likely need to be closed for 2 days at August inventory. Several of our patron hotspots have also been replaced and the book club kindles were updated to hold all the upcoming selections.

Facilities

The installation of new grass and trees was completed this week and it looks wonderful. There was an additional pallet of sod delivered that we didn't order, so that was installed along the front walk at no additional cost. Sprinklers are set to go off for 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week, to get the new plantings established. While Wells Branch is under water restrictions, our landscape sprinklers operate using the cistern and well instead of metered water, so we are not in violation of drought protocols.

The new cleaning service started in June and seems to be doing a good job. The cistern was inspected this month and needs a new custom filter, which has been ordered. We also had the fire alarm, backflow, and sprinkler systems inspected. There were a couple of valves showing wear and those were replaced. Fire extinguishers all passed inspection as well. We are up to date on rodent prevention and extermination services and are having the grounds sprayed for mosquitoes each month. AED pads and batteries were replaced in April. The HVAC system had a biannual inspection and machines were topped up and treated as necessary. Trees are being trimmed back off the building rooflines.

Upcoming maintenance work includes a roof inspection due this year. We are going to schedule window cleaning and power washing the sidewalks for later in the summer.

The immediate projects from the large survey are for more toys and seating in the front yard and a separated teen area. The new tables for the yard have already been purchased. At the Library Districts meeting in August I will survey other librarians about construction companies they'd recommend for that interior wall. I'll also be looking at the options from vendors at the Annual Assembly in downtown Austin next month. There are often architects/remodel partnerships on the exhibit floor at these events.

Programs & Outreach

First Fridays are once again one of our best attended programs. There were 31 people at the Star Wars program in May and 40 came to read to reptiles. Adult book clubs are dwindling a bit, but will likely pick up again in the fall. The Try-It style programs like nail dip and shrinky-dinks bring a good crowd. Leslie has also found success with adult trivia programs and Bad Art Night.

In response to the survey, we added a third session of Lego Lab on Tuesdays so more kids could participate. It's still full. Kristin and Kaitlyn are looking at additional kits to purchase so we can expand the attendance limits even more. We also doubled some programs with back-to-back presentations and have dropped registration for

anything we reasonably can. Our kids' program calendar is back and the neighborhood is loving it!

LAB numbers are coming back up, but are not back to pre-pandemic levels. People have anecdotally asked about the open hours, so I think we'll have a decent response when that starts up again.

Summer Reading started with a HUGE program June 3rd. We had well over 200 people participate between the photo booth, balloon animals, tattoos, steel drum concert, and Kona Ice in the parking lot. This year we are giving patrons the option of virtual or physical tracking and dispensing prizes weekly based on interactions. It's been quite successful. We have already surpassed anticipated adult goal completion and ordered extra prizes. Folks love them if Facebook posts are any indication.

Lauren has been to many events in the area this year and is going to be at FourthFest sharing a table with voter registration. She is also offering expanded homebound delivery service at the Conservatory. We are working with Wanda Holcombe to have a library card sign up event at Affinity apartments in the fall.

Later in the year, we will try hosting an event either before or after library hours with a tour, informal orientation to library services, and time to access librarian(s) and snacks. Kristin is also looking into having field trips from our local schools visit again during National Library Card Sign Up Month in September.

Long Term Idea: If we do wall in the breezeway and create more space in years to come, I'd love to be able to add a couple of these. We don't have the floor space right now, but wouldn't it be awesome?!

