

Director's Report

Prepared by Donita Ward: October 2021

Attachments:

- Statistics and Digital Statistics
- Balance Sheet
- Profit and Loss Report
- Draft 2022 Budget
- Report from Director's Review
- Aged Overdue Fine Elimination Proposal
- Draft Minutes from August 7 meeting

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

- none for this meeting

Budget Adjustment Requests:

- \$60K from Re-Opening Expenses to Special Improvements
- \$50K from Net Income to Special Improvements

Finance & Administration

Sales Tax Income remains strong. Each month in 2021 has distributed higher returns than that month in 2020 with the exception of April.

Accreditation from the Texas State Library and Archives came through earlier this month. The Wells Branch Community Library District remains fully accredited. Several measurements for the 2020 Annual Report that would normally have been required for accreditation (such as number of fully open hours) were reduced or waived in light of the pandemic. Our 3Q21 sales tax report was completed and submitted.

There were two qualified candidates for two open positions on the ballot for the November 2021 General Election. I cancelled our election with the county. Matt Bucher and Ralph Simon were elected and will serve terms of two years starting at the first regular Board of Trustees meeting after the uniform election date of November 2.

Abbie and I met to discuss the draft budget 2022. The proposal as submitted does not include any extraordinary expenditures, but leaves \$292K unencumbered. Those funds can be purposed for an architect/engineer and accompanying costs for Phase 2 remodel, or can be held over into next fiscal year for future expansions.

- I set sales tax income at \$1.35M. That's right around our 2018 income number. It went up in 2019, down in 2020, and back up in 2021. It's a guess, but it's a thoroughly considered and conservative guess.

- Short Term Disability insurance, Employee Assistant Program and Vision Insurance have all rolled into Medical Insurance. TML expanded their offerings this year at renewal time.
- We have discontinued the booksale since we are not taking donations and that area was repurposed for contact-free reserves. Booksale items are rolling into Little Free Libraries for the neighborhood, prizes, and donations to schools and daycares.
- Income expectation for interest is much lower due to low interest rates. I also reduced the budgeted income for fines and fees in preparation for potentially discontinuing late fees for print items.
- Payroll wages are higher to cover the 13% increase we gave two of the librarian positions in 2021. It allows for a 5% increase to the Director and 3% to other managers/admin. The assistant managers move from a range of \$18-19 per hour to \$19-\$20 per hour depending on seniority and whether they possess an MLS. It also brings the entry level employees to \$15/hour. It is overall a 4% increase to the payroll budget.
- Webhost and subscription cost is down from dropping Brainfuse and switching from Mango to Pronunciator for language learning since Pronunciator had a citizenship component.
- Patron network cost is much higher as all the public machines are scheduled for replacement in 2022.
- No legislative cost in even numbered years.

Operations

We re-opened for regular hours on October 4. We have resumed 7 days of full access for browsing and studying. We are asking everyone who enters to wear a face covering. Those who are more comfortable limiting contact may still use reserves and remote printing to pick up at the front desk. This is also an option for anyone who is unwilling or unable to wear a face covering.

Some things will likely not get back to normal until the pandemic is under control. The document station, for example, is a high traffic and high touch zone. The Family Place Interactive Play Area cannot be made available until the littlest ones can be fully vaccinated. Closed rooms with limited airflow, including the quiet reading room, are locked. Programs are moving from virtual to outdoor to indoor one by one based on expected attendance and the vulnerability/comfort of attendees and presenters.

While we have everything set up for normal operations in circulation, the patron computers are a stickier subject. We have four softwares (regular Windows and other basic operating software like you would have on a home computer, Faronics security and antivirus software, Biblionix authentication software, and Envisionware session management software). These components must operate together for patron computers to work. Since they were last used, we had to replace both the staff and patron servers due to weather damage. We put through any number of 'regular' updates. As the updates catch up with one another, the systems struggle to work in tandem. Each day gets closer, and we hope to have everything working properly soon.

We will continue to suspend overdue fines through the end of the calendar year unless something significant changes. We are also going to continue allowing patrons to renew their membership over the phone, but limit the renewal to 30 days.

Circulation and use numbers necessarily went down dramatically for August and September. We expect them to rebound in the upcoming months.

Internal Affairs

During the remodel closing, all staff completed Red Cross First Aid/ CPR/ AED training online. We will schedule the in-person testing. I also completed the paperwork submissions to be a Texas State Notary. Once I determine and create a procedure for notary services, the other managers and Outreach Coordinator will be certified as well. There is no specific training requirement for Notary services, but there are many ways to violate the rules unintentionally. All staff went through National Voter Registration Act training and managers completed Deputy Voter Registrar training with Travis County as well.

As we got ready to reopen for normal hours, we had staffing windows to fill. We welcomed two new entry-level assistants to fill out the schedule. Eternity Wiggins and Karina Franco Estrada joined the team in August and September respectively. The only remaining open position we have is for a Librarian Manager in Adult Services. The search for the ideal candidate continues. We have interviewed two qualified applicants and are scheduling meetings with three more. Volunteers have been invited to return starting in October.

There are leftover funds in the payroll wages budget this year from losing the Adult Services Librarian in August. I want to take \$20K of that leftover and apply it to annual bonuses. Once again, it's been a crazy year and the team has had to flex and adjust constantly. They've done it with a smile (and many cookies) and deserve to be recognized. I have a \$650 base amount per employee. From there, I have added created a rubric using the product of their years of service and hours per week. That puts the lowest bonus at \$650 for an entry level employee who started two weeks ago and the highest at \$2600 for a salaried librarian who's been here since 2008.

Facilities

Construction projects are never simple, or quick, but the result is lovely. The new carpeting looks great and the shelving arrangement is going to allow for wonderful expansions through the years. Having a smaller desk right at the front gives patrons the opportunity to get what they need efficiently.

Once the remodel was complete, several shelf run ends became visible that were not obvious in the old configuration. I have a quote for prettier ends to match what is already on the floor.

We had a few HVAC units need repairs these past weeks, two were low on coolant and one needed a complete replacement. We also had the system flushed to clear out any airborne debris from demolition. We have three windows that need

replacement, two of which were accidentally broken by landscaping. Our windows are special and it is not a fast process, but we have Plexiglas covering the openings to maintain safety and facility integrity. Hanging repairs also include some of the lighting in the front that needs new ballasts and bulbs. That is scheduled for November 11, as it requires a lift and cannot be done safely with patrons in the building.

Programs & Outreach

The majority of our regular weekly programming is on zoom. Each program will transition to live when it is safe to do so. Those that can be delivered outside will go live first. Lego Lab and Special Programs are going to be live outside immediately. In October, we added a Spanish Storytime and a Sign Language Storytime into our weekly rotation of programming. We are also offering a second weekly Storytime and Craft for families.

Recurring Programming:

- Tuesdays at 10:15am Bilingual Storytime
- Tuesdays at 11am Spanish Circle Time
- Tuesdays at 3:15pm Lego Lab
- Wednesdays at 10:15am Baby Signs
- Wednesdays at 11am Circle Time
- Wednesdays at 11:45am Preschool Storytime
- Wednesdays at 6pm Craft-Along
- Thursdays at 6pm Storytime and Craft
- Fridays at 10:15am Alphabuddies
- Fridays at 11am Storytime and Craft
- 1st Thursday at 10:30am Yoga
- 2nd Wednesday at noon Meditation
- 3rd Thursday at 6:30pm WWW Book Club
- 4th Tuesday at 7pm Yoga

Special Programming:

- Young Rembrandts Art Classes on the Porch- Mondays October 4, November 15 and December 13
- October 1- John Klekman Jazz Concert in the Parking Lot
- October 16- D&D Mini-figure Painting Workshop
- October 23- Spider Show
- November 5- a talk with Dr. Sean Gulick about his work on NOVA's *The Day the Dinosaurs Died*
- November 13- Owl Program
- November 15- Winter Reading Begins
- December 1- Craft-stravaganza!
- December 3- First Friday (TBD)
- December 11- Polar Express

