

Director's Report

Prepared by Donita Ward: October 12, 2022

Attachments: posted to meeting page of website for review

- Statistics and Digital Statistics
- Balance Sheet
- Profit and Loss Report
- Draft Minutes from August meeting
- Draft 2023-2027 Long Range Plan
- Draft 2023 Budget
- Updated Services Policy
- Notes from the Architectural Enhancement and Improvement Committee (included at the bottom of this report)

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

- Services Policy

Budget Adjustment Requests and Financial Items for Approval:

- None at this time

Finance & Administration

Sales Tax income continues to be strong. If the trends continue, we could have enough funds to do the proposed remodel over the next year and still have a bit of reserve for emergencies. Watching other trends, performer costs and basic purchases (everything from toilet paper and printer ink to insurance coverage) are going up along with sales tax income, so we need to be prepared that most things are costing more than they did.

We must also watch average wages, as area libraries are starting part time workers at \$18/hour and we are at \$16/hour. However, other libraries are also mostly requiring a higher education level to start. The City of Austin passed a \$20/hour minimum for their workers recently. The budget draft I sent out has wage increases of 10% for entry level, 8% for mid-range and 6% for management. That brings our entry level to \$17.75. To get entry to \$18/hr we could do increases of 12%, 9% and 6% instead, which would bring the total for wages up \$5K in the 2023 budget. To go all the way to a \$20/hour entry rate would be increases of 25% for entry, 15% for mid level and 8% for librarians and would increase the draft wage budget by \$30K.

We are on target for a smooth 2022 General Election. Prior to the August meeting, I posted the deadline for filing and approved the joint election agreement and election services contract, completed the annual AVSR report, and verified the jurisdiction boundary map for the county. At the last moment, we got more applicants than available positions for the 2022 General Election. We sent our preliminary ballot

language, posted and hosted the ballot order drawing, updated the ballot information, went downtown to proof the English and Spanish written and auditory ballots, posted the Notice of Election on our website and with the county, and placed the required newspaper ad. All tasks and public postings are up to date. I also added candidate bio information to the 2022 Election Information page on the library website. This year, the library is not a polling location. We simply do not have the space to commit without cancelling multiple popular programs.

We got our annual report accreditation letter in the mail last month, so we are approved as a real library again this year. The ILL grant was completed and funds deposited. I also updated the contract with River Rock for our landscaping services.

Operations

Circulation numbers took the expected dip in September as summer reading and summer vacations draw to a close. The only areas to increase were magazines, hotspots, and board games. While all of our statistics continue to rise steadily, we are not back to pre-pandemic numbers.

Research and learning databases just don't get a lot of use here. I'm hoping that we can put more energy into featuring them as we have more live programming and access to the LAB for technology assistance. I am also looking into adding a periodical access feature and more digital collections in 2023.

The great procedures revamp project is nearly complete. Now I have tasked someone to go through all the individual employee folders to find hidden versions that need to be purged. Once that is complete, the new procedures will be sorted into folders to make them easier to find.

Internal Affairs

Sexual Harassment training was completed by all staff using the EasyLlama service. It went smoothly. Quarterly Reviews for all employees were also completed. There were no surprises. We have a couple of part time people who struggle with specific issues, but it is a positive group overall.

ARSL conference had some really good information, but no contacts for actual construction work or architects. I did get some pointers and ideas about things NOT to do, much like we did at St Andrews. I also went to a couple of programs about sustainability and found some programs we could offer here in coming years.

I went to the first live in-person PLAN (formerly CTLS) meeting last month in Buda. I got to tour the new library there and see some of their solutions to the hardships we all face in trying to make spaces do all the things.

Open Enrollment for TML insurance is November 1-15. Our rates for medical coverage have increased, but it is about 7% compared to the 13% I was expecting. I have all the paperwork prepared and distributed to eligible employees so that I can go into the portal and update everyone.

We have new part time employees working evening hours. Danny, Aria, and Liz are through training, but still in the probationary period. Alena (our amazing morning assistant) is leaving at the end of October to take a full time position at ACC. Another candidate from our last round of hiring will take those hours, which is great.

We are still looking for a new Youth Services Librarian. We've completed a number of initial interviews and some second interviews, but not settled on a perfect candidate as of yet. As previously mentioned, this is one of the most visible position at the library requiring skills in budgeting, collection development, personnel management, and program creation and delivery. It's important that we find the right fit.

Volunteer Appreciation last month had 16 people in attendance to play with goats and eat ice cream. We've since had a bump in applications for the volunteer program. The high school community access program participants come in most weeks to sanitize our toys. We have a full volunteer roster and the program is running well.

The new payroll system that we were transitioned into seems to be working as well as the previous interface, so that is good news. I cannot yet see how the end of year reports and tax filings will be presented, but I'm sure we will figure it out.

Technology

The new Windows 11 machines for staff and patrons are doing well. There have been some hiccups, but most everything on that side is working properly now.

We have a new dilemma in that our cash acceptor, which connects to the entire document station, has ceased to function. I was hoping to replace it with something that can take a card, but that is not currently an option with our system. For the moment, we are waiting to install a new motherboard into the machine that is in place. We have a workaround for patrons to be able to print both remotely and internally, but copying/ faxing/ scanning are not possible without that machine.

Facilities

People are loving the front yard with new grass and trees, especially when we've had nicer weather. We got the windows, cement, and exterior of the building power washed to freshen our look. I will order more of the comfortable Adirondack chairs to replace the ones that broke over the winter.

Library Interiors came out to look at the LAB cabinets and see what it would take to move them into the smaller room. That would give us access to Open LAB hours during programming, a big hurdle for increased offerings of both popular services. The delay is the wall covering as we did not install the metal feature behind the cabinets originally, so it needs to be matched.

Programs & Outreach

Regular kids programs are continuing without a youth librarian. The other employees have really stepped up to cover and make the programs successful. We also have employees giving up their office time each week to cover desks and do collection development tasks to keep things going smoothly until we have the right person in place.

Regular adult programs are going well. Silent Book Club had low participation and has been morphed into a Travelling Tea book club going forward to feed off the popular passive program. Meditation and yoga have both had increasing attendance. Adult computer classes are not filling, but they never have. Adult casual crafting, including Try-It, Nail Art and Bad Art, are always full registrations and full rooms. RPG painting also has a wait list for each event.

First Friday programs and other special performers have been well attended and people enjoy them. Weekly DIY programs and open LAB hours are increasing and appreciated. Library after Dark saw 10 teens come to play. The teens love the Breakout Box so we purchased an expansion pack for it.

Outreach is also picking up. Lauren was at National Night Out and did a library card sign up event at Affinity. She is in contact with the activity coordinators at both Affinity and Conservatory to see if there is an increased need for homebound services. We have updated all the paperwork and counted our delivery bags to see how many can be accommodated.

Architectural Enhancement and Improvement Committee

Jennifer and I met with Steve at St Andrews to look at their remodel and talk about what went well (and what didn't). Yancey did not join us. It was amazing to see what they've done enclosing the porches and I think we could do something similar here to gain quite a bit of space. Jennifer has reached out to Steve to get contact information for some of the professionals they used.