

Report presented to the Board of Trustees
by Margaret Morrissey, Director
May 24th, 2022

Budget FY2023

- The operating budget request agreed at the 2/17 administration meeting was \$567,427, following the guidelines provided by the Town Manager to submit a level funded budget. The Education and Human Service Sub Committee approved and recommended the library request 4/21. The Town Council approved the operating budget for the library at \$567,427.00. The required books and materials expenditure for State Aid is 15% of TAMI which would be \$85,115. The Town has approved \$45,000 in the operating budget. I am requesting the board contribute \$40,115 to allow the library to qualify for state aid.

Building

- Renaud HVAC was the lowest qualified quote we received for the replacement of RTU#4 and RTU#3. The supply chain has created a lead time of 22 weeks for the vendor to get the equipment. The quote for \$51,470 was approved and will be funded by the state aid account. The company began work on the project 5/23 and anticipate the two units being in operation 5/26.
- Fontaine Masonry is soon to start on the re-pointing of the brick façade on the Foster Street side of the building around the portico and the low retaining wall, as weather permits.
- The upgrade to the elevator – to install a stop switch II has been completed. The elevator has an extended permit which expires on 5/23/22. The re-inspection is scheduled for May 25, 2022. Elevator company has assured that the library will be covered by the permit 5/23-5/25.
- Backflow preventor test conducted 5/6 by the Water Department. Passed.
- The elevator button in the car was not functioning for the 1st floor. The tech. replaced the button and indicated the issue was caused by vandalism.
- The DPW starts ‘summer hours on 6/6. Our custodian will work Monday-Thursday 6 am to 4 pm. I am waiting to hear if we will have coverage on Friday.
- The two JEL mahogany signs are in need of restoration. Some inquiries sent out on pricing.

Children’s Room

- Weekly *Storytime* on Wednesdays and Friday continue.
- Regular programs Lego, STEAM, *Crafty Wednesdays* continue.
- *Wiggles and Giggles* grant was extended to June 7, 2022 funded by YMCA Family & Community Partnership Program (YFCP).
- WCAC joins us monthly on the first Friday of the month from 10-11 am for story and play time.

- Director will be attending Old Sturbridge Academy on the evening of May 24 (date changed) to celebrate Family Literacy Night
- Liz attended “Re-imagining School Readiness” workshop on May 10 from 10-2 at the Worcester Public Library.
- Children’s Room staff has most of the Summer Reading planning completed.
- Artist Audrey Helen Weber is working on a design based on her recent publication “On the Day the Horse Got Out” for the Children’s Room. Proposal to commission Ms. Weber was approved by the donor (memorial funding \$1,000) who would like to remain anonymous and was ratified at the November 2021 meeting by the Board.

Collection Development

- Staff is hoping to resume the inventory project once the new staff are fully trained in their respective positions.

Friends of the Library

- Children’s books are being offered free of charge from the carts on the lower hallway.
- FOJEL Booksale update - \$1,054 was the revenue from the May 2022 sale.
 - 2020 – no sale held
 - 2019 - \$1,303
 - 2018 - \$788.10
 - 2017 - \$501.00
 - 2016 - \$630.50
- FOJEL storage space is now all cleaned out and new donations are once again being accepted.
- Discover Books of Providence picked up the remaining books from the book sale on Monday morning.
- The annual Artful Friends fundraiser will not be taking place this June.

Gifts and Donations

- Memorial donations of \$475 have been received in memory of patron Paul Pettinelli.
- A gift of a stained glass transom from the former Notre Dame School, Pine Street in memory of Paul Tremblay, has been offered by Robert and Brenda Tremblay. The transom measures 24” x 84” x 1 ½”. I visited the storage site where the transom is stored and it is in very good condition. It has a wooden frame. Mike Julien, Building Inspector came by 4/6, to view the potential location for the installation. He agreed with the Reading Room being the place to install the stained glass. A support box would need to be built below the existing Reading Room sign and to secure the glass. I have visited the storage location and viewed the transom. It is a significant piece of Southbridge history and is in good condition.
- John and Ann (nee Knowles) Iacobucci donated some early newspapers and a photo of Hamilton Woolen Mills to the archive.

Outreach

- Met with Ben Marinelli to discuss the possibility of installing chess tables on the library lawn. Ben has been offering a weekly program on Saturdays at JEL. It has been growing in interest and the SCTV did a nice promotional video of the program a while ago. We have talked about improving the profile of chess and promoting it as a town-wide activity. He has previously met with DPW Director, Economic Development and the Planning Staff to discuss sustainability. A life size set (25") pieces and checkered concrete base is proposed with a few smaller chess tables and chairs installed as well.
- UMassHMH mobile unit visit was postponed due to inclement weather. The new date is Wednesday, June 15th, from 11:30 am to 2 pm on Main Street.
- Met with Janet Pierce, Executive Director of Central MA Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) to discuss the Image 2050 survey, the region-wide comprehensive planning initiative, to develop long range strategies for the 40 communities in the area. The visioning session will be held at the library on Wednesday, June 8th at 11 am. The project aims to identify the resources, problems, possibilities, and needs of the region; these findings will inform a plan to improve the welfare and prosperity of those who live, work, and visit Central Massachusetts.
- Attended the department heads meeting 5/19.

Programs

- *Literary Adornments* is the title of the May exhibit by Emily Daly of *EVD's Whimsies*
- Author Erica Plouffe Lazure presented a book talk 4/28, introducing her new collection *Proof of Me*, subsequently reviewed in the New York Times. Booklovers Gourmet provided copies of *Proof of Me* for the book signing. Southbridge Community TV was present to record the event for uploading to YouTube and the event was also broadcast on Facebook Live
- Paula Bradley presented a LCC grant funded program *Finding Her Voice: Women in Early Country Music* 5/19. The program was broadcast on Facebook Live and will be uploaded to YouTube.
- Well-known horticulturalist Christie Higginbottom will be the presenter on 5/26. *The Kitchen Garden: Tips from the Past for Modern Gardeners*. The program is sponsored by an LCC grant.

Service

- The number of visitors to the library has been increasing. Patrons are starting to return and new families are coming by. There is a steady flow of RMV clients who need to use the mobile printing facility to retrieve documents. The number of participants at the knitting group (started in 2007) continue to increase.
- The library will be closed on Monday, May 30 in honor of Memorial Day.

Staff

- Two new staff started 5/23 in the positions of Technical Services/Circulation Assistant (37.5 hpw) Samuel Korstvedt and Circulation Assistant (30 hpw) Megan Garlie. HR Specialist facilitated some of the orientation.

Summer Reading

- *Summer Feeding Program* will resume at the end of June for 6 weeks.
- The Massachusetts Library System has decided to move from the previous program to iRead. This year's theme is *Beyond the Beaten Path*, developed by iRead.
- Staff has already started on the theme of outdoor camping for the kids and planning events and prizes.
- Director participated in a remote meeting 4/28 with the elementary school administration to discuss the summer reading program and the need for the recommended reading lists
- We are reaching out to area service providers to provide some educational programming during the food service time.

Tax Abatement

- We anticipate the fifth senior tax abatement person starting to work 2 hours per week at the library. The requirement is to complete 65 hours of service for a \$500 reduction to their property tax.

Technology

- Staff continues to populate the various pages on the new website. We plan on switching over to the new website this week. There will still be areas to populate from the 'old' site but a schedule will be developed to continue to transfer and add content, as a dynamic process.
- Staff has since had the opportunity to check out the Touchview Interactive technology, demonstrated at the April meeting. Ockers (Integrated Solutions Group) left the device for a week for the staff to try out. I contacted Natick public library to learn about their recent experience with the installation of similar technology. A positive review was provided by the staff there.
- The WRTA Bustracker computer has stopped working and a new device is needed which will be provided by the WRTA and Bryley will install. The location of the device is over the stairwell and will need to have DPW facilitate the installation as well. The DPW will assist with the project after Memorial Day.
- The library's internet speed is 200 mbps download and 10 mbps upload. The network staff is inquiring from the internet provided on our behalf to determine if we can increase to 600 mbps download and 35 mbps upload and what would the costs associated with this upgrade be.

- Waiting for the quote from T Renaud Electric who reviewed the building and tech on 4/19 for an upgrade to the cabling and connectivity throughout the building. A request for funding was made through the ARPA program.
- Issues with the Evergreen ILS system on Saturday 5/14. The system was offline for approximately 60 minutes.
- Comcat – the interlibrary loan system was successfully upgraded by CWMARS on 5/18.

Teen

- The Adult Services Librarian has been developing *Take & Make kits for teens*. Twenty kits are prepared and are all usually distributed by the end of the month. Reaching a teen audience has been a goal for a while.

Training

- Children's Librarian attended a training at Worcester Public Library "Reimagining School Readiness" presented by Shelly Quezada of the MBLC on 5/10.