



**Report presented to the Board of Trustees  
by Margaret Morrissey, Director  
presented December 19th, 2023**

**Building**

- Town Manager is working on an RFP for the ceilings throughout the building. Waiting for an upgrade technical spec. from Sherwin Williams.
- Request for proposals for tree trimming sent to Coady Tree Service, Benoit Tree and Landscaping, and RBTre 12/8. Dave Coady has provided a proposal of \$2,500.00. Waiting for other quotes.
- Still waiting for the batteries for the emergency lighting. There was a series of mis-steps and delays and we are hopeful they will arrive before the end of the month.
- Since 6/14 we have been experiencing intermittent issues with the elevator that were eventually resolved. We have been advised that the elevator is at 'end of life' and we need to consider a modernization program. TK Elevator has bought US Ascension 2000 elevators and has developed a 'modernization plan'. \$120K is the quoted cost and any upgrades to the electrical service, fire service etc., will be additional costs. A request was submitted to the ARPA Committee for funding and I presented the request at the 8/31 meeting. The modernization of the elevator was given first priority status in the Capital Requests, recently submitted. 12/8.
- MPC was awarded the contract for HVAC in FY24. The preventative maintenance was conducted on 11/22. Two issues were identified in the report and a quote for the work has been requested and still waiting for the proposal.
- Mills room key not returned by Western Mass Labor Action 11/20. No response to calls.
- DPW replaced the rope on the flag pole 11/30
- Town Council approved the proposal from Guardian Energy 12/18, to replace the insulation in the 1966 attic area. There is attractive incentive being offered by MassSave. Total cost of the project \$40,494. Incentives \$22,620. The contract needs to be signed by the end of the month. I appreciate the support of the Town Manager, Economic Development & Planning Director and the DPW in facilitating this process.
- Met with Opacum Land Trust staff to review future plantings. An offer of more trees has been made to replace the one at the south east corner of the building and a series of trees to screen the area overlooking Wardwell Court.
- DPW Director and Director of Operations toured JEL to review projects on 11/29. Topics discussed/reviewed were:
  - The roof and particularly the EPDM (Rolled Rubber) roofing (2000 section of the building). Two holes were identified. I have since been in touch with Commercial Roofing in Putnam and have an appointment 1/2/2024 to provide a scope of work etc for this project repair. The roof covering is at end-of-life at 23 years (2000)

- Remove leaves trapped in sections
- Automatic louvres for 1914 attic
- Repair copper surround of the glass skylight
- Ascertain what MPC thinks of 2 RTUs that are original to 1998-2000 renovation
- 1966 attic would benefit from removal of old insulation and upgrade to higher R-values – Guardian Energy project approved 12/18/2023.
- Tree trimming now that leaves are off the trees
- Capital projects - ceilings, copper gutters, and RTUs
- Discussed custodian's duties
- There was a leak in one of the first floor bathrooms as a result of the storm 12/17-18. DPW was informed.

#### Chess Park

- A formal request for guidance on proceeding with the fundraising for the chess park has been made to the Town Manager. The rendering by Joe Coan, landscape architect has been posted to the website, the eNewsletter and a copy sent to the Town Manager 9/26.

#### Children's Room

- Programs offered in addition to the regular Story Time (Wednesdays and Fridays), Lego Club (Tuesdays and Thursdays), Crafty Wednesdays, STEAM and others.
- *Young Scientists Spring II* programs part of YFCP has been very successful. *Wiggles and Giggles* another YFCP sponsored program will resume in September.
- Summer Reading program 2024: *Read Renew Repeat*. Children's Librarian attended the iRead online event on 11/1. Coupon codes and ideas were shared at this event.
- *YFCP Wiggles and Giggles Littles* ages birth to 24 months and *Wiggles and Giggles* ages 2-5 will be returning in January (*Littles* is a new edition). Programs will be held on Tuesdays starting 2/9 for 6 weeks of back-to-back sessions starting at 9:30am ending at 11:00 am.
- The annual gingerbread house making was a resounding success 11/27, 12/2 and 12/4, sponsored by the Friends of JEL. 78 people participated.
- The annual visit from Santa and Mrs Claus 12/18 was also popular with 31 in attendance
- The Southbridge Cultural Council has funded two additional program during school vacation week – a puppet show with Pumpernickel Puppets 12/27 and Magic by George 12/28
- Reorganizing Children's room and weeding

#### Collection Development

- A 35 mm film was found in the Holmes Ammidown History Room and Archive in a can with a brief note indicating it was of Sacred Heart Church. It was a professional movie "Exclusive Pictures Taken for the Strand Theatre by Central Motion Picture Co. C.L. Raimondo Photographer". The film was thought to be in poor condition and it was vacuumed and is not deteriorated. I have spoken with Anthony Labbate, Preservation Manager at the Eastman Museum. He has provided some images of what we can expect from the digital version He was encouraging about the results we could anticipate from this process. A 4k scan has been done which includes editing and color correction. The funding for the project has been provided by Cornerstone Bank (\$500) and Southbridge Historical Commission (\$400.25) and Savers Bank

have offered to cover the remaining cost (\$3,148.75). We are waiting for the check to clear and the digital copy will be available. Please note: 1,000 ft of film was salvageable and 50 ft. was destroyed by rust and environmental issues. The payment has been received by the George Eastman Museum and they are ready to release the digitized materials 12/19. Southbridge Community TV Director will assist with the uploading of the footage and access. This project was a long time in gestation but I am pleased that the material has been preserved.

- The Children's Room is moving the Holidays and Media to provide improved access to the overall collections.

#### FOJEL

- Holiday book sale is set up on the lower level.
- The Friends approved sponsorship of some of the programs: Dr Teresa Fava Thomas (Hamilton Woolen Mills), Mark Wagner (Native Links) and the SMHS Jazz Band and Chorus.
- Date set for sorting the donations in storage

#### Grants and Donations

- The family of the late Jeanne Ayotte has selected the JEL Children's Room as the beneficiary of the memorial gifts. Ms. Ayotte was a beloved first grade teacher at Eastford Road School. A total of \$745 has been donated and toys were purchased – mostly for the youngest age group and some costumes.

#### Local History

- Attending the MOTT (MA Office of Travel and Tourism) grant group meeting to compile a database of historic buildings, as part of a series of walking tours that are being planned.

#### Long Range Plan

- Staff is promoting the databases. Constant positive feedback is being given to staff on their customer service but in particular the assistance they provide to patrons using the mobile printing.

#### Outreach

- I was unsuccessful in connecting to the second Zoom call to discuss a future Legislative Breakfast with a Southbridge only focus and followed up with a request for the group to advocate for fiber optic connectivity for the Southbridge area, in addition to the other worthy issues that have been previously discussed.
- Reached out to the National Guard staffer who is working with the folks who are being sheltered at the Sturbridge hotel to see if we can offer any assistance. I was thinking we have lots of programs and space. The major issue is transportation and the folks are unable to get to Southbridge. Literacy Volunteers of South Central MA provide two classes for English language learners each week.

## Programs

- Dr. Mark Wagner presented a program on *Native Links* 11/30
- *Afternoon Author Talk* with Rob Racicot on 11/29
- SMHS Holiday Concert 12/7
- JEL Book Club *From Time to Time* by Jack Finney 12/20
- *Tuesday Knitting* continues to attract participants from area towns and from CT too.
- *Chess on Mondays* starts at 5:15 pm. The group is growing in popularity.

## Reference

- During the month many research questions were responded to, mostly on genealogy and vital records. Assistance was also provided on Hamilton Woolen Co.

## Safety and Security

- 200 ml alcohol bottle found in Reading Room 12/1. Discussed with the police.
- Drug paraphernalia on the floor next to the first bathroom on main level 12/4. The Police Department assisted and escorted a patron under the influence off the premises.

## Staff

## Tax Abatement

- The Tax Abatement Program is wrapping up for the year. All five participants completed the program. Five more personnel have been requested for 2024.

## Technology

- Postings were made to social media and website.
- Town Hall has a new, updated Facebook page 11/27.
- ScanPro preventative maintenance 12/5
- Borrowing hotspots has become very popular with patrons. The library owns 5 devices. One has already been replaced. Staff is currently reviewing the procedure and loan rules as they are not circulating as we had hoped and there is a draft document proposed for your review today. Some folks are not returning the devices and we need to have stronger incentives so that they continue to circulate relevant in the recording. MM asked about follow up on hotspots & their return.
- Requested Officer Bergeron-Pennachio to follow up on two long over/lost hotspots
- Ticket opened with CWMARS to add the Cricut computer in Tech Processing to the network. Added to network + PC Desktop Support

## Teen

- The first Teen Art Show is on view during the month of December.
- The monthly *Take and Make* craft featured
- Teen Advisory Group (TAG) meeting