

Report presented to the Board of Trustees
by Margaret Morrissey, Director
April 26th, 2022

Budget FY2023

- The budget message from the Town Manager was to submit a level funded budget request. The operating budget request agreed at the 2/17 administration meeting is \$567,427. The Education and Human Service Sub Committee approved and recommended the library request 4/21. 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.
- 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. Letter has been sent to the elevator company asking for assurance that the library will be covered by the permit 5/23-5/25.
- The intruder alarm has been activated three times in the past month. Once was caused by a power outage. The sensors will be cleaned in the hopes that this will alleviate the problem.

Children's Room

- Weekly *Storytime* on Wednesdays and Friday continue.
- Regular programs *Lego*, *STEAM*, *Crafty Wednesdays* continue.
- School vacation week was busy with lots of kids taking out materials and playing in the library. We had 2 programs during the week :
 - *Pumpernickel Puppets* funded by an LCC grant from the Southbridge Cultural Council 26 participants
 - *Oscar the Wonder Dog* event funded by the Borgatti Trust via the Greater Worcester Community Foundation had 27 participants
- *Wiggles and Giggles* grant was extended to June 7, 2022 funded by YMCA Family & Community Partnership Program (YFCP). It is on a two week break and will resume in May.

- WCAC joins us monthly on the first Friday of the month from 10-11 am for story and play time.
- Children's Librarian Liz will be attending Old Sturbridge Academy on May 10 (evening) to celebrate Family Literacy Night
- Liz will be attending "Re-imagining School Readiness" workshop on May 10 from 10-2 at the Worcester Public Library.
- Children's Room has been working on inventory and completed a missing books inventory
- 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

- The Hoopla and Kanopy digital catalogs have become part of a national discussion of collection development as there were objectionable materials contained in the collections in their catalogs. Consideration of subscribing to these platforms is on hold, until the situation is resolved.

Friends of the Library

- Preparing for the book sale by sorting the books in storage.
- Children's books are being offered free of charge from the carts on the lower hallway.
- Request of \$400 made for the annual financial support for summer reading.
- Request for support of the annual *Pride in Southbridge* program 6/30.

Gifts and Donations

- Memorial donations have been received in memory of patron Paul Pettinelli. To-date \$475 has been donated.
- 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.

Outreach

- A First Amendment Audit was conducted in Charlton at the library and the town hall on 4/11. Training has been given to staff to prepare for videotaping in the library and how to avoid conflict.

- 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.
- Adult Services Librarian is participating in the Insurance Selection committee for employees.
- UMassHMH mobile unit visit was postponed due to inclement weather.

Programs

- Fine Lettered Poetry: Calligraphy is the title of the April exhibit by Stephanie Cyr, in celebration of National Poetry Month.
- Jasmin Rivas presented her poetry on 4/14.
- Ezekiel's Wheels Klezmer Band presented a lively concert on 3/24, sponsored by an LCC grant.
- On 3/31, Crocodile River Music also presented a great show, sponsored as well by the Southbridge Cultural Council.
- In preparation for the book reading by author Erica Plouffe Lazure, Booklovers Gourmet has provided copies of *Proof of Me* for the book signing on Thursday 4/28.
- Lynda Shoup presented a workshop "Using Historical Images in Mixed Media" on Wednesday afternoon 4/13. Feedback from the participants was very positive. The event was sponsored by an LCC grant through the Southbridge Cultural Council.

Safety and Security

- Pages from the local newspapers have been torn out, on a few occasions. The person was identified on camera and advised we were aware of the situation. She became verbally abusive. If this continues, we will issue a No Trespass order.
- On 4/16 a patron who had previously been unable to check out material due to 2 lost books at another library, returned to complain. He had been offered that the books be put aside for him until he could resolve the issue with the owning library. He was vexed that he had previously been able to check out materials at JEL as the other staff member missed noting the Lost Book Status and checked out materials to him. He claimed the staff member was rude to him and he wanted to know who I reported to. At one point he started becoming loud and pointing his finger at the staff member. He was told he needed to stop pointing and yelling as it appeared aggressive. He then claimed he did not point at that staff member! He asked when the next Board of Trustees meeting was, JM told him. He settled down and left without further incident.
- There was an accident in the parking lot. One car backed into a parked car. The Police were on scene 4/21.

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.
- Adult Services Librarian has proctored two exams.
- Complaint by patron when not able to check out due to 2 lost items from another library.
- The library was closed on Monday, April 18th in honor of Patriot's Day.

Staff

- Interviews to replace the two vacancies in Technical Services/Circulation Assistant (37.5 hpw) and Circulation Assistant (30 hpw) have been completed 4/26. Two candidates were identified and will be offered positions.

Summer Reading

- 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 theme for the kids and planning events and prizes.
- Meeting with School Department 4/28 to present on Summer Reading and ascertain how we can best support students.
- *Summer Feeding Program* will resume at the end of June for 6 weeks.
- We are reaching out to area service providers to provide some educational programming during the food service time.

Tax Abatement

- Four of the five senior tax abatement personnel continue 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.

Tax Preparation AARP Volunteers

- Tax preparation assistance offered by AARP volunteers finished on April 4th. The program was very efficient and worked well this year.

Technology

- Staff continues to populate the various pages on the website and checking to ensure the crossover to the new website is completed successfully. Most of the files and documents are now available at
- A presentation will be made at today's meeting by Ockers (Integrated Solutions Group) representatives, to upgrade the Pioppi and Reading Rooms to large screen Touchview

Interactive systems (and eliminate a projector style set up) and reviewed by the Board members.

- CWMARS Evergreen upgrade to 3.7 was completed on 4/13 without loss of service.
- 4/19 the estimator from Renaud Electric reviewed the cabling and connectivity throughout the building. A request for funding was made through the ARPA program.

Teen

- The Adult Services Librarian has been Teen: *Take & Make kits* (galaxy jars) distributed 20 to teen patrons.
- The May craft is creating bracelets from soda can tabs.
- A poetry slam was planned but due to lack of interest was cancelled.
- Shel Silverstein scavenger hunt was ongoing through the month