



Director's Report for February 20, 2024

Submitted by Alecs Schmidt Mickunas, MLIS, Director

Boards

- Library Board: The FPL Board will meet in the Library Meeting Room at 5:15pm on Thursday, February 20, 2025, with President Joneane Parker presiding.

Fiscal Responsibilities

- Matured Iowa State Bank CD: The Iowa State Bank CD #141851 that matured on January 19th was reinvested in a 12-month CD with a 4% APY.
- HOOPLA 2025 Funding Request: The FPL Foundation approved the Board's request for \$12,000 to fund HOOPLA for the next 12 months.
- Genevra Bell Art Funding Request: The Foundation approved the request for \$800, pending confirmation that the art work will be on standard size paper and that framing will not be a custom job.
- FY26 Budget Revision: Due to Iowa legislation passed in 2024 that reduces how much revenue counties and cities can collect through taxation, all City departments were asked this past month to adjust their budget proposals accordingly. Doug Reinert, Rebekah Loper, and Melanie Carlson met with President Parker and I the week of January 27th, and requested that our FY26 budget proposal be reduced by \$53,863. Trustees Parker and Smith reprised their roles on the Budget Committee and we were able to decrease the budget as requested. This was accomplished by reducing our projected electrical costs, cutting stationary and advertising costs, transitioning to a new lower cost library management platform, cancelling several underutilized digital resources, and reducing the full-time front desk staff member to part-time. The reduction in staff time allocated to the front desk necessitates that we reduce weekday business hours to 9am – 6pm M-F. Due to full-time front desk staff member Lauryn Shapter resigning effective 2/28, the Library must adjust business hours in March, and will reallocate funding in the salaries budget to increase shelver hours. I have also included the revised budget document alongside the packet.
- Library Partnerships: Given the current economic environment, I would like to initiate a strategy to expand our partnerships with local business, financial institutions and manufacturers in an effort to ensure continued annual funding for the Library. I have a vision to develop a plan for providing incentives for annual partners where these businesses would be recognized on our website, in monthly emails, and on print promotional materials. I would like support of the Finance Committee on this initiative.

Policies & Procedures

- Naming & Recognition Policy: I have not revised the draft of this policy or expanded its contents in the last month. I have, however, shared it with City Attorney John Morrissey's office for review. I hope that Samuels Group's Capitol Plan document can help guide us in our fundraising efforts.

Personnel

- Front Desk Aide Sean Charleson has resigned to accept a position with a marketing agency in Fairfield. His position will be filled by a the most qualified applicant with a projected start date of February 17th.
- Front Desk Manager Lauryn Shapter has also submitted a letter of resignation with her last day being on February 28th. This position will not be re-filled due to funding for the position being decreased at the end of the fiscal year.
- Four staff members were out sick this past month for a week at a time, which made coverage at the front desk more challenging. However, staff have worked very hard to provide the best service, given the circumstances.
- Leadership Fairfield: I was unable to attend this month's meeting due to illness.

Collection Development

- Digitization: A grant available from the Iowa State Historical Resources Development Program opens for applications in the last week of February. These grants, each providing up \$30,000, are specifically for photographing and digitizing historical documents. It is my hope that Carnegie's Jake Schmidt and I can submit a grant to digitize the 1800s Tribune books and bundle in more of the Library's microfilm reels. Advantage Archives provided information about the grant and would be contracted to do the the work.
- Library Software Migration: Regarding the collection management software migration, I have received quotes from Apollo and ByWater Solutions for their products and services. Either option is \$15,000 less than what we pay to TLC annually. ByWater's Aspen product is my top choice at this point; However, the timeline to accomplish the migration before we must renew with TLC is tight and may require that we pay something additional to expedite the process. I want to collect estimates from two more vendors and speak more with Librarians in Iowa who use these products.
- Consumer Reports Online will be cancelled this month due to low usage for the last two years.

Facility, Grounds & Equipment

- Building Renewal Project: On Monday, February 17th, MSRDesign will be sharing their Library Services Report with pricing prepared by Samuels Group for the project proposals and deferred maintenance projects. With this report in hand, I recommend forming a Building Renewal Planning Committee to develop a timeline for implementing building improvements. I recommend the Building & Grounds Committee members as active members of this committee.
- Lobby Ceiling Repair and Repainting: I have requested an updated estimate from Pilcher Construction with the cost of the necessary electrical work included in the estimate.
- Bathroom Floor Drain Flush: In February e had floor drains in the staff bathroom and meeting room bathroom back up for the third time in 12 months (\$2,282). Plumbco successfully flushed the drain, but recommends installing an additional clean-out line to avoid future overflows. Installing a high capacity flush on the staff bathroom is also recommended.
- Garden Tool Collection: After some consideration of our current priority areas, I would rather not develop a tool lending collection this spring. Hower, I would allow the Beautification Commission to use the outdoor storage closet to store their tools and supplies.

Volunteers & Community Engagement

- Dolly Parton Imagination Library: The Imagination Library for Jefferson County is now actively taking registrations. Sara Martindale is supporting Deanna Julsen and Joella Corrie to plan a formal kick-off event at the Library in March. At last count, there are 89 children in Jefferson County registered.