**Director’s Report**

**September 2023**

In was a busy and productive summer. Bookworm was one of our best ever. We had 2,088 readers who logged 1,822,625 reading minutes! Planning is already in the early stages for next summer. The theme will be, “Adventure Begins at Your Library.”

Late summer was also a busy time for personnel changes, landscaping and the Annex renovation. We’ve had folks leave for bigger opportunities and found folks to fill those vacancies. We’ve seen big changes to the interior spaces at the Annex; we’re still on schedule for a late November completion. The plantings are done around the Main/Annex parking lots and we’ve started planning next steps for landscaping on Paint St. and in Frankfort.

Book-A-Bike is growing. We’ve added two bikes to Paxton and are adding self-check outdoor kiosks at Main and Northside, as well as on Riverside near the bike path. That partnership with the Health District and city continues to grow. We will be sharing more information with the community soon about the phone app, *On Bike Share*, that lets you use the kiosks.

We’re starting a deposit collection/partnership with the Quinn Library at Ohio University Chillicothe. It’s a “lucky day” collection, meaning it’s entirely current bestsellers that are not reservable. There is an iPad self-checkout stand. You can even make a library account on the spot if you don’t have one. We’re waiting on some final graphics before it goes live, so stay tuned.

 We received word recently that the next two book lockers are ready for delivery. We’ll start on the graphics and site prep for those and have them installed by this fall. These are the lockers for Massieville (via a partnership with Horizon) and Adelphi (via a partnership with the Adelphi United Methodist Church).

As you know, September is National Library Card Sign Up Month. Courtney Lewis, our Communication Manager, has created a robust campaign this year around the theme of “More to Explore.” In addition to unveiling four new library card designs, several local businesses are offering discounts during the month when you present your library card! A full list of offers can be found on our website:

https://www.crcpl.org/explore

NEW BUSINESS:

**Personnel [ACTION]**

* 1. Review and update job descriptions:

Our staff gathers no moss! Everyone is growing, either where they are or in new opportunities. With the various changes to staffing and departments, it was a good time to review all of our job descriptions. They were last significantly revised when Kelly Smith was hired as HR Manager and last approved by the Board in June of 2022. This review only includes minor tweaks and standardized language. The Personnel Committee has reviewed the updates.

* 1. Hire Kendra Kempton, grant writer, effective August 14:

Kendra has been an English teacher for many years at Zane Trace High School. She has already written a handful of small grants since she started. She jumped right in and has started gathering details for more funding opportunities.

* 1. Accept Logan Mills’ resignation, effect August 19

Logan accepted a full-time position at the City of Lancaster’s IT help desk. It is a closer commute and more compensation for him.

* 1. Accept Rachel LeMaster’s resignation, effective August 31

Rachel accepted a full-time role at Sports Plus where she has worked since high school and while working part-time at the Northside library.

* 1. Accept Melissa Lawson’s resignation, effective September 2

Melissa accepted a new position at Columbus City Schools coordinating library services for several locations.

* 1. Hire Galen Kalterbach, part-time Enrichment Clerk, effective September 12

Galen is currently a student at Ohio University Chillicothe and student worker at the Quinn Library. Galen is interested in an advanced degree in library science. This part-time clerk will be a beneficial opportunity for everyone.

* 1. Hire Morgan Alexander, IT Assistant, effective September 18

Morgan worked as a part-time clerk at Mt. Logan and Main for a short time last year before leaving to take a temporary full-time IT position. He is very excited to return to the library in his chosen career and we’re glad to welcome him back.

**Policy Updates and Resolutions [ACTION]**

* 1. Update Procurement Policy:

With the recent updates to the Ohio Revised Code, we need to update our internal policy. The fiscal office is also asking for an increase in our library credit card limit to create more flexibility with billing and available balances.

* 1. Key Release and Building Access:

We have a procedure and form that new hires and vendors sign when they are given a key, but it isn’t currently covered in policy. The new language also includes references to electronic access (swipe cards and keyfobs). This would be Administrative Policy 13.

* 1. Update HR policies 4.12 and 4.14, Professional Conferences and Memberships & Tuition Reimbursement:

We made two additions to these policies. We added, “Professional Membership annual fees where membership benefits CRCPL may be paid by the library for staff in management positions when funds are available as approved by the Executive Director.” Practice has been for the library to cover membership fees for the Ohio Library Council and American Library Association, but this expands the policy to include memberships in other organizations specific to a staff person’s area of expertise, such as the Society for Human Resources or the Public Library Association, etc.

And, we expanded the tuition reimbursement to include more than degrees. The new language reads, “Technical certifications or re-certifications will be paid 100% when required by CRCPL. Elective certifications must be preapproved by the Executive Director and funds will be allocated based on availability.” This could apply to IT certifications such as networking, or OSCHA certifications for maintenance staff, or others.

I would also like to discuss updating this section: “If budgeted and approved, employees will be reimbursed 50% of the cost of coursework up to $2000 per semester….” This policy was last updated in 2018. As you can imagine, $2,000 doesn’t cover as much as it did even just five years ago. Current tuition at Kent State for a library master’s degrees is about $7,000 per semester.

* 1. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement/Resolution:

Several grant-funding agencies require a Board-passed DEI statement to be eligible for awards. Kendra, Courtney and I drafted this statement to be considered as a resolution:

“Chillicothe and Ross County Public Library is a place where diversity is celebrated, equity is prioritized, and inclusion is a guiding principle. Your library is committed to providing a welcoming and accessible space for everybody in the community to ensure that each individual feels valued, respected, and empowered. Your library strives to achieve this through the collections, programs, and services provided, all of which aim to represent the identities and cultures that make up this beloved community. By cultivating an environment where differences are embraced, barriers are dismantled, and opportunities are accessible to all, the library hopes to create a space that celebrates the spirit of inclusion and serves as a beacon of unity within your county.”

* 1. Highland County library boundaries resolution:

Suzanne Roberts, the Highland County Director, sent an email to her surrounding counties asking our library boards to pass a resolution recognizing their service area as Highland County and certifying that we have no boundary disputes with them. Although she didn’t say, this is typically the first step in a levy campaign and is required by the taxing authority to determine revenue estimates. Fortunately, county designations are easy to navigate. In larger metro areas, a county maybe fall under more than one library service area.

**Buildings [ACTION]**

* 1. Annex renovation update:

The Annex renovation is in full swing with many visible changes. As we prepare to occupy the new spaces, we’re gathering quotes for needed furnishings.

* + 1. Transfer building fund to furniture
    2. Outreach shelving
  1. Main Landscaping proposal from Rhodes:

Most of the landscaping at the Annex was done under the LMG contract. However, we have recently used Rhodes to re-invigorate the area around the bus stop and under the bay window on the south end of Main. Although we had hoped to do a complete redesign of the front of Main, we’ve decided to postpone that for now and concentrate on rolling that work into a future bigger connector-building project. However, in the meantime, we have several mature boxwoods on Paint St. side that have been stricken with the blight that’s new to our area. We asked Rhodes to make a plan that would replace the dying bushes with native plants.

**Other**

* 1. Accept levy rates **[ACTION]:**

An annual requirement to continue to receive local monies.

* 1. In Service Day, October 9 [information]:

The agenda is set for this year’s In Service. We have programs about unconscious bias and strategic planning. As in past years, the October Board meeting will be during In-Service in front of the staff. Lunch will be provided. Board members usually present service awards.

* 1. Student trustee applications [information]:

We received the most applications ever for our next student trustee. We have a good county-wide representation. We will need to establish and ad hoc committee to conduct interviews.

* 1. Future board vacancies [information]:

Susan Congrove’s term expires at the end of 2023. With her approaching retirement, she has decided to not re-join. Her seat is a Commissioner appointment. Susan represents the northeastern corner of Ross County. I would like to continue to have someone from the Zane Trace School District area, which includes Adelphi and Kingston. Recommendations are welcome.

**Next meeting Monday, October 9 at noon**