



PALOS HEIGHTS
PUBLIC LIBRARY

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Palos Heights Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting
April 20, 2023

Library News

Building & Grounds News

The air conditioning unit in the Server Room has been repaired. We had GT Mechanical come and pull it off the wall to chase the refrigerant leak in the wall. They found the leak, so hopefully it will be smooth sailing with that unit for a while.

Both of our new self-checkouts are now deployed and working well. It isn't a flawless system, but it's a huge step up from the old one. We also finally replaced the 1990s-era cash register at the Circulation Desk with a tablet-based POS system. This has streamlined our payment processing by giving us one system for both cash and credit card transactions for the first time. As with the self-checkouts, technology now allows us to make this change without having to spend thousands of dollars on purpose-built hardware. An iPad and a few hundred dollars of equipment is all we needed to get this up and running, and Circulation staff are loving it!

Other projects that are in the works include getting the new handrailing installed by the front entrance and replacing the fence around the air conditioning unit behind the building, which collapsed over the winter.

Budget News

We repaid our loan to the City on time, prior to the April 1st due date. This was right at the time our FY22 tax receipts to start coming in, so the timing was perfect. As of this writing, we have already received 93.5% of our expected tax revenues for the first half of the fiscal year, which is excellent considering the we're only a week past the payment due date. That gives us enough cash on hand to make it through the end of September. Assuming tax bills for the second half of the year aren't delayed this year, and there is no reason to think that they will be at this point, we are in good shape even without the remaining 6.5% that is hopefully coming in the next few weeks.

Our salary benchmarking project with HRSource is nearing completion. They have completed their pay schedule analysis relative to comparable libraries and are in the process of evaluating our current pay levels relative to that analysis. I expect their final report to be forthcoming in the next few weeks, which will set us on course to ensure that our staff continues to be properly compensated.

Staff News

Our Head of Technical Services, Susana Leyva, was elected as a Trustee at her home library, Alsip-Merrionette Park Public Library District. Susana is an amazing leader on our staff, and she will be an amazing Trustee for them. I'm also excited for what this experience will teach her about library governance and how that will make her even better at what she does here. Congratulations, Susana!

I had a wonderful vacation to Ireland during the last week of March followed by two weeks of misery in which my family and I all had first strep throat and then COVID. So my 1-week absence turned into 3 with me not returning to the office until April 14th. We are all now back on the mend. My COVID isolation meant that I was unable to travel to Springfield to speak for the Director's University crowd.

Other News

Legislative Update

HB2789, the anti-book-banning bill, has passed the House and is making its way through the Senate. There seems to be very little opposition, so I expect this to become law in the coming months. I'll continue to keep us posted.

Upcoming Events

- Thursday, April 20: Long Range Planning Committee Meeting at 6:30pm
- Thursday, April 20: Regular Board Meeting at 7pm
- Thursday, May 18: Fundraising Committee at 6pm
- Thursday, May 18: Regular Board Meeting at 7pm
- Saturday, May 20: ATLAS Trustee Workshop at Alsip-Merrionette Park Public Library
- Saturday, June 3: Summer Reading Block Party, 10am

Agenda Items

Item 1: Approval of Resolution Formalizing Transition to Annual Budget System

Per our discussion last month, I recommend that we follow the City's example in moving away from the annual appropriation to an annual budget system. The main change here is that our legal authority to spend will be derived directly from our budget as opposed to a separate appropriation document. This will simplify our financial operations both internally and externally by giving us one less set of financial documents to have to adhere to and explain to the public. I have drafted a resolution for your approval to formally commemorate this change.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve the resolution formalizing our transition to the annual budget system.

Item 2: Approval of Revisions to the Financial Policy

Our Financial Policy is the main policy that lays out our budget, levy, and appropriation procedures. It actually only makes one mention of the appropriation, and only in passing. So I'm proposing a few small changes to this policy to align with the new system.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve revisions to the Financial Policy as recommended by the Policy Committee.

Item 3: Approval of Rescission of FY23 Appropriation

I don't know if it's strictly necessary, but it seems like a good idea to formally reverse action that we previously took that we no longer intend to follow through on. This way, nobody can come back a few months from now and say that we are obligated to adhere to a financial document that we approved earlier in the year regardless of whether or not we followed through on filing it with the County.

Recommendation: I recommend that you approve rescission of the previously approved FY23 appropriation.

Respectfully submitted,
Jesse Blazek
Library Director