



PALOS HEIGHTS
PUBLIC LIBRARY

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Palos Heights Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting
June 20, 2024

Library News



Our **Summer Reading Kickoff Party** went off almost without a hitch on June 1st. The hitch was that the weather didn't cooperate. It was a drizzly day, which posed a pretty big problem for our outdoor event. So we pivoted and brought almost everything inside, opening the building for business from 10am until 2pm that day. The petting zoo remained outdoors, and we had to cancel the bounce house. We were able to tent the two food stations, and Tropical Sno was moved into the Meeting Room. The performer, the face painting, balloon animals, and crafts were all moved upstairs to the Youth and Teen Services Department. Considering that we were adjusting on the fly, everything went really smoothly! We had over 500 visitors and signed up around 200 people for Summer Reading. Despite the weather and moving everything indoors, we exceeded last year's total attendance by at least 100 people. A number of those were first-time visitors who were signed up for library cards. It was a great event! Special recognition needs to be given to Emily Navarro (Public Services Librarian) and Mary Kate Klassen (Youth and Teen Services Librarian) for taking charge and doing a great job of planning and executing an event with so many moving parts.

Over Memorial Day weekend, someone stole one of the computers from our **public computer** lab. On a quiet Saturday morning, they unhooked all of the peripherals from the computer and removed it from its mount under the table. They took it into the bathroom and used a razor blade to remove the library's tags from the device. Then they put it in their bag and left. We think we can identify the person on the security footage based on the timing of everything, but we don't have evidence that is legally actionable. The

suspect is not someone staff recognized as having been in the building before. Nothing like this has ever happened to us in all of the years of having unsecured computers in the public computer lab. I think this is a bit of a wakeup call that we should be more vigilant about the security of these expensive devices. I met with our IT consultants immediately after the incident to gather what evidence we have to report to the police and to discuss how to secure this equipment going forward. We have installed a new security camera in the computer lab. This won't prevent a future incident, but it would allow us to clearly see the culprit after the fact and perhaps lead to effective prosecution and recovery of property. Additionally, we have changed how the computers are secured in the lab so that they can't be removed without some tools and significant effort. Staff don't love this as it has made it a lot harder for them to physically access the machines when they need to do so. However, this isn't needed very often, so I think this is an acceptable burden to secure our devices.



The **Gadgets & Gizmos** collection is up and running. We installed a slatwall display and vinyl wall decal, which I think looks pretty nice. Each item has a tag. When the item is checked out, the patron takes the tag off its little hook, and Circulation takes the tag and retrieves the item for the patron. On the display, when an item is checked out, the tag that remains on the wall shows what the item is and that it is checked out. Items in this collection are not holdable and are only available to Palos Heights cardholders. Kudos to Susana Leyva and the rest of Technical Services staff for their huge efforts getting these items processed, packaged, cataloged, and displayed. This was a major task in addition to their normal workload over the past few weeks.

The program that I mentioned last month, **“LGBTQ+ Terminology and How to Be an Ally with PFLAG,”** happened on June 13th. There were no issues. We had 14 attendees who were engaged and asked good questions. Still, it was a good opportunity to work with a presenter who has dealt with protesters in the past and work with staff on how to handle difficult situations, should they ever arise.

Building & Grounds News

All of the issues with the children's diner have been fixed. I reattached the table to the wall. Our Owner's Representative worked with Library Furniture International to come up with better ways to secure the sink and oven panels and to attach new knobs. We'll see how sturdy the new fasteners turn out to be, but I'm happy that everything was back in good working order in time for the Kickoff Party.

We had the server room air conditioner serviced, and the HVAC company noticed that one of the main air conditioning exhaust fans was not working. The motor was seized and in need of replacement. Because the fan is 21 years old, I opted to replace the whole unit rather than just fix the motor and replace the whole unit upon a further failure at some point in the next few years. The cost of that replacement was

\$3,550 (the motor would have cost \$1,200 by itself), and our Capital Needs spreadsheet has been updated accordingly.

The bent spigot in the island of the parking lot has been repaired. We had a hard time finding someone to do this work. Our normal plumbers quoted us almost \$6,000 for what I thought was a pretty small job. We sought bids from a number of other plumbers and ended up receiving one other proposal (after talking to over a dozen companies) from DiFoggio for a cost not to exceed \$3,200. This is still more than I was expecting for this work, but we ended up engaging DiFoggio who completed the work in early June at a cost of \$3,200.

We have been accruing a lot of small electrical work that needs be addressed. We have a half dozen light ballasts that need to be replaced along with a couple of can lights and 2x2 fixtures. Our normal electrician seems to be tied up in bigger jobs. He referred us to another electrician who he has been subcontracting with. We also reached out to a few other companies. We received no response other than the company that was referred. Their proposal is for an eye-watering \$4,000, which I believe to be fair but is nonetheless unplanned. I have engaged Ryan Electrical Services, Inc. to complete this work.

Budget News

We received a few more small tax distributions in late May and early June. These comprise late payments from last year and earlier this year. While this represents a bit less than 1% of the expected receipts, a few more distributions like this will have us much closer to full payment for each fiscal year. We will continue seeing small payments like this over the coming months and even years.

The audit continues to be delayed as the City has yet to provide the IMRF data needed to complete our report. They are filing for an extension, and we will get that data whenever they get to it. I have asked our auditor to tentatively plan to present at our August meeting. I'm not sure how likely that is to actually happen.

Upcoming Events

- June 20: Personnel Committee Meeting at 6pm
- June 20: Regular Board Meeting at 7pm

Agenda Items

Item 1: Parking Lot Repair Project

As requested, our Owner's Representative Dan Eallonardo has procured three proposals for the engineering portion of the parking lot repair. You will find the three proposals in this month's packet. They are from Erikson Engineering in the total amount of \$16,600, Manhard Consulting in the total amount of

\$26,250, and Product Architecture + Design in the total amount of \$14,750. Dan will be at the meeting to discuss the proposals and guide us in this decision.

Recommendation: I don't have a specific recommendation at this time as I'm still attempting to parse the proposals. I believe Dan will guide us to the right decision.

Item 2: Personnel Committee Recommendations

The Personnel Committee is meeting immediately prior to the Regular Meeting to discuss issues related to staff benefits and the director's annual evaluation. I don't expect that they will have any recommendations that will need immediate action, but we have an agenda item just in case.

Recommendation: No action is needed at this time.

Respectfully submitted,
Jesse Blazek
Library Director